



CCD COP-6 HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2003

Delegates met in morning and afternoon sessions to exchange views in an inter-agency panel which included presentations by heads of agencies and an interactive dialogue with ministers. The Heads of State and Government concluded their round table session with the adoption of a Declaration in the morning. Informal consultations on Regional Coordination Units (RCUs) took place throughout the day, and another group met in the afternoon to discuss the outcomes of the WSSD, rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure, follow-up to the regional meetings, and synergies.

INTER-AGENCY PANEL

The inter-agency panel convened to discuss the theme: "The UNCCD: A new opportunity for an enhanced framework of cooperation in ODA funding for the promotion of sustainable development in arid ecosystems." The session was moderated by Ian Johnson, Vice-President of the World Bank.

Hamdallah Zedan, CBD Executive Secretary, stressed synergies among the three Rio conventions, and outlined current work by the CBD Secretariat on dryland biodiversity. Koos Richelle, Director-General for Development of the European Commission, addressed the importance of integrating NAPs into a single national strategy. Len Good, GEF CEO, underlined the GEF's strong commitment to the CCD's implementation, with US\$500 million earmarked over the next three years for this purpose. Jack Wilkinson, President of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, called for the involvement of farmers in decision-making.

Lennart Båge, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, emphasized the importance of integrating desertification issues into national development plans and of working on indicators for desertification. Abdoulie Janneh, UNDP Assistant Administrator, called for enhancing womens' livelihoods in rural areas in order to achieve the MDGs and combat desertification. Shafqat Kakakhel, UNEP's Deputy Executive Director, said desertification is a multidimensional challenge requiring joint efforts from all Parties and agencies. Pekka Patosaari, Head of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), noted that the work of the UNFF and CCD are complementary, and urged enhancing cooperation and synergies between the two Secretariats. Joke Waller-Hunter, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, noted that the adverse effects of climate change worsen desertification, and that measures to promote adaptation to climate change can alleviate poverty and contribute to combating desertification.

In the debate, Ministers highlighted the need for enhancing partnerships, assessing the quality and methodology of projects, increasing funding, and addressing the vulnerability of SIDS. BURKINA FASO stressed that the CCD is the ideal framework for assisting the poor. BOTSWANA called on the Panel to identify measures to sustainably use wildlife and land, and safeguard human lives. SOUTH AFRICA called for increased cooperation among MEAs and multilateral agencies, and expressed regret at the Panel's gender imbalance. CUBA stressed the scope for south-south cooperation and emphasized the need for national-level capacity to interpret scientific and technical data.

CAMEROON called on participants to draw on the lessons from countries experiencing desertification and land degradation when identifying solutions. PAKISTAN suggested that funds be equally distributed among regions, and called on the GEF to provide detailed information on the amounts available, and on requirements for preparing programmes and projects. BANGLADESH called for more ODA for capacity building and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods. ZAMBIA requested that the World Bank and IFAD clarify financing available for programmes that support sustainable livelihoods and food security, particularly in rural areas, which do not attract mainstream funding.

The facilitator closed the panel debate by saying that agencies will address country specific issues informally.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE OF MINISTERS: President Simeón Negri nominated Pierre Marc Johnson (Canada) as the facilitator, and delegates elected Anne Marie Skjold (Norway) as the rapporteur of the interactive dialogue of ministers. The facilitator requested several countries to react to the remarks of the inter-agency panel.

BARBADOS underscored the absence of funding as the most important reason for insufficient action to carry forward the agenda for the mitigation and resolution of "environmental threats." She pointed to long project cycles and complicated prequalification criteria as obstacles to project delivery. She said the Caribbean has suffered decreased ODA through a misperception of the region's wealth. PAKISTAN stressed the need for close collaboration between development agencies and developing countries. Noting that the CCD is weaker than other conventions, he said it requires support from donor agencies for its implementation. He also said projects need to be prepared in consultation with developing countries. The US said implementation must be country- rather than donor-driven. He underscored the active participation of stakeholders, including NGOs, women and farmers' organizations. On finance, he noted that implementation



must attract private sector investment from both foreign and domestic sources that can contribute to co-financing, and to raising the productivity of women and men for eradicating poverty.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: Several Ministers were requested to make introductory remarks on the theme of the inter-agency panel.

On ODA inflow to rural development, BURKINA FASO noted declining ODA and identified effective rural development as a priority for eradicating poverty. Regarding poverty eradication, SOUTH AFRICA noted that ODA can help to: implement programmes that improve rural infrastructure and market access; increase food supply; extend areas under sustainable land management and reliable water control systems; and strengthen agricultural research. INDONESIA said persistent poverty creates conditions that can lead to dangerous social and political consequences at the national and subnational levels. On the CCD's potential to deliver strategic priorities, the EU said long-term measures towards political, institutional and fiscal decentralization are needed to empower local communities. Regarding the GEF and synergies, GEORGIA noted that the CCD's implementation would be more effective if Parties recognized that desertification affects the entire world, and not only African countries. GUATEMALA outlined national and regional actions to create synergies between the focal points of the relevant conventions, in order to efficiently use the resources made available by the GEF.

ROUND TABLE

Chair Castro Ruz reconvened the Heads of State and Government round table, reminding participants of their task to discuss and conclude the drafting of a Declaration. Several speakers reiterated the importance of education and literacy campaigns, south-south cooperation, and the need to establish a new global economic order. A representative of the ANDEAN PARLIAMENT proposed a resolution outlining a commitment to work jointly with legislatures to coordinate local, national, subregional and regional policies, which would be independent of the final Declaration. CCD Executive Secretary Diallo proposed that this be considered in the upcoming Forum of Parliamentarians. Chair Castro Ruz, VENEZUELA, and SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES exchanged views on poverty, highlighting insufficient ODA and inequitable global trade structures. SOUTH AFRICA underlined the importance of addressing peace and security.

Executive Secretary Diallo then presented the Declaration for adoption. The Declaration reaffirms the need to implement the JPOI, recognizes the CCD as one of the most important tools for eradicating poverty, and recalls Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 which recognizes that SIDS are ecologically vulnerable and a special case for sustainable development. It also commits governments to pursue peace, sustainable development, multilateralism, and comply with international law. The Declaration notes that people living in affected areas need to be at the center of all programmes to combat desertification, and urges the improvement of economic, social and environmental conditions of the poor. It calls on the WTO to note the impacts that agriculture and trade subsidies have on rural development and desertification, and consider phasing them out. It invites all affected Parties to integrate the CCD in national strategies for sustainable development, and include programmes to combat desertification in policies on land, water, rural development, forests, energy, and education and culture.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

REGIONAL COORDINATION UNITS: Drafting continued throughout the day. While several Parties preferred a decision ratifying the existence of the three RCUs, others felt that more information is needed to warrant such a step by the COP. Two textual proposals were made. One requests the Secretariat to undertake a costed feasibility study of collaborative arrangements, "making best use of existing regional and subregional entities," for consideration by COP-7. The other proposal asked for submission of views on the functions and modalities of the RCUs before 1 April 2004. It also requests the Secretariat to compile the submissions, prepare a preliminary feasibility study to be discussed at a workshop in conjunction with CRIC-3, and prepare a formal feasibility report for COP-7, which would finalize the terms of reference of the RCUs.

THE OUTCOMES OF THE WSSD: Delegates continued their informal consultations, discussing a revised paper submitted by the facilitator, which remains heavily bracketed.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE REGIONAL MEETINGS: The group was unable to agree to text inviting developed countries and multilateral agencies to voluntarily contribute to activities for implementing action programmes, with some developed countries preferring reference to "other interested agencies, both public and private," and deleting "developed" from the text, which remains bracketed.

RULE 47 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE: Participants discussed an informal paper submitted by the facilitator of the informal drafting group. Parties deliberated whether the issue should be discussed at this COP or deferred to COP-7.

SYNERGIES: In the informal consultations convened on synergies, a group of countries suggested text on access to financial resources by SIDS under the GEF operational programme on sustainable land management. The issue will be taken up again on Wednesday, 3 September.

IN THE CORRIDORS

On a positive note, the CCD Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species, on Tuesday. Several delegates hoped that this event may provide additional impetus to the informal consultations on synergies. However, they expressed concern that the event was "a minor footnote" in comparison to the signing of the Heads of State Declaration and the Joint Statement of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the EU.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

SPECIAL SEGMENT: The inter-agency panel will reconvene from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm in Sala 1, to conclude the interactive dialogue with ministers and hear statements by heads of delegations, UN agencies and international organizations.

COP PLENARY: The COP will convene from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm in Sala 1, to discuss the draft decisions forwarded by the CST and CRIC.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal consultations will be held throughout the day to continue drafting COP decisions regarding RCUs, the programme and budget, synergies, the outcomes of the WSSD, and rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure.