

UNCCD CRIC 7 AND CST S-1: MONDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2008

CRIC 7 considered the terms of reference (TOR) and programme of work of the Joint Inspection Union (JIU) on the assessment of the Global Mechanism (GM), and the work plans and programmes for the Convention's bodies during its second day. A contact group convened in the evening to consider the Convention bodies' work programmes.

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

PRESENTATION OF THE TOR AND PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE JIU ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE GM: The JIU introduced the TOR on the assessment of the GM, including its objectives, intended impact, scope, methodology, missions and expected output, as requested by COP 8 (ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.5). He said major issues to address include: work and functions of the GM; lack of clarity in institutional arrangements and accountability; and alignment between the GM and Secretariat's programmes.

Chad, for the AFRICAN GROUP, said the TOR should align with the decision established at COP 8. Myanmar, for the ASIA GROUP, highlighted that the Secretariat's restructuring has made communication with parties more difficult. Chile, for the LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN GROUP (GRULAC), supported the review and TOR, and urged the Secretariat to make funds available. Turkey, for the NORTHERN MEDITERRANEAN, supported the review and called for examining, *inter alia*, indicators and financing. The EU stressed that: the COP Bureau should be more involved in elaborating the TOR; the review should build on previous reviews; and costs must be minimized. The G-77/CHINA said the impact of the funds mobilized by the GM is small, and urged full funding of the review.

The US said the review should demonstrate the GM's comparative advantage and examine the GM's undertaking in relation to the organizations and subjects identified in UNCCD Articles 20 and 21 and emerging financing mechanisms. Ukraine, for CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (CEE), emphasized optimizing the JIU budget. CÔTE D'IVOIRE suggested task adjustment, given resource constraints. NIGERIA said the GM must do more to finance the JIU evaluation. SOUTH AFRICA proposed taking account of the GM mandate in the context of the changing financial architecture, institutional arrangements and accountability, and sought clarification of

the criteria used to select the study countries. SAUDI ARABIA urged close study of the Convention articles to settle the dispute on the institutional question and clarification of the GM's cooperation with other international financial institutions and support at the national, subregional and regional levels.

MOROCCO said the Secretariat and GM are accountable to the COP and should find the money for the assessment. The GAMBIA recalled that the JIU assessment of the Secretariat was cheaper than the proposed GM assessment, and suggested reducing costs. SWAZILAND highlighted the current "unhealthy environment," in which some parties are labeled supporters of the Secretariat and others supporters of the GM. He anticipated that the JIU assessment could help resolve the situation.

CHINA suggested adding an assessment of the GM's organizational structure, staff composition and professional competency to the TOR. THAILAND supported combining the mandate of the Secretariat and GM at the regional level. The JIU said it will make efforts to reduce costs, and the financial issue for the assessment should be resolved urgently.

CONSIDERATION OF THE WORK PLANS OF THE

CONVENTION BODIES: Deputy Executive Secretary Grégoire de Kalbermatten introduced the Secretariat's draft multi-year work plan (ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.1), costed draft two-year work programme (ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.2), and draft joint work programme (JWP) of the Secretariat and GM (ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.5). Christian Mersmann, GM Managing Director, presented the GM's work plan and costed work programme (ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.3 and Add.4).

The Chair called on speakers who were not able to comment during the general discussion on Friday, 7 November. BRAZIL said the UNCCD's regional approach is unique, but the work programmes do not adequately reflect this aspect. He lamented that his region's meeting did not take place as planned, questioned the need for a Secretariat conference services unit, and suggested combining the policy and advocacy and awareness raising units. He supported a Secretariat role in resource mobilization and emphasized that the UNCCD is not a climate or land convention. BURUNDI highlighted the need to align NAPs with the Strategy.

Executive Secretary Gnacadja said: the UNCCD should address land degradation in order to respond to climate change, food security, poverty reduction and sustainable development; the Secretariat's restructuring sought to adapt to the Strategy,

improve capacity and eliminate redundancy; and parties should take the restructuring into account in their regional coordination and cooperation.

Chad, for the AFRICAN GROUP, stressed the importance of: the RCUs; funding for NAPs; capacity building for focal points; and resolving differences between the GM and Secretariat. Saudi Arabia, for the ASIA GROUP, said indicators for the GM's work programme should be quantitative. GRULAC called for a region-focused approach, a clear timetable for the regional priorities, and quantitative indicators and measures. The NORTHERN MEDITERRANEAN called for a sequential and consistent methodology of implementation across the regions, and suggested the CST's involvement in developing the methodology. The CEE expressed regret that the GM's work programme lacked activities for his region. The G-77/CHINA called for indicators that provide baseline data, and said the lack of regional consultations before CRIC 7 had constrained the Group's ability to make valuable contributions.

The EU stressed: ensuring effectiveness; postponing the high-level scientific dialogue; ensuring that the Secretariat plays a supportive role without pre-empting COP decisions; and distinguishing the activities to be funded through core and voluntary resources. He said the GM's: work plan and programme meet requirements but are difficult to read; expected outputs should be concrete; performance indicators should be precise on expected results; and investment framework should measure impact and client satisfaction.

CANADA congratulated the GM for its efforts to align its approach with the Strategy and in presenting a funded work programme, and said other Convention bodies should use the GM example to identify performance indicators. He said the GM and Secretariat have different mandates and their JWP should constitute a small area of their work.

The US called for: quantitative indicators; a clearer division of labor between the GM and Secretariat; the GM's disaggregation of the "innovative" mechanisms; clarity in the causal links between expected accomplishments and performance indicators; and clarification that the focus on soils and land pertains to drylands.

CHINA inquired about the relationship between the Secretariat's new structure and the UNCCD's six activity areas. He said capacity building activities are omitted, RCUs should be strengthened, and the GM is a resource mobilization, not a project implementation, body, which should coordinate with the Secretariat, RCUs and national focal points.

SWITZERLAND said activities in the GM work programme are connected to its fundamental role, but together they risk dispersing the GM's action. She noted that the JWP includes results expected from the GM work programme. ARGENTINA said regional activities are the "heart" of the JWP, with the Secretariat working from the global to regional levels, and the GM working from the regional to local. MEXICO emphasized the need for a global information strategy and suggested creating a documentary with someone of international prestige to enhance the Convention's global impact.

Algeria, for the AFRICAN GROUP, said the JWP is doable, the GM work programme is fully aligned with the Strategy, and indicators must be specific, easy, precise and implementable. NIGER and ZIMBABWE welcomed the JWP, with NIGER highlighting the importance of national capacity building. CÔTE D'IVOIRE stressed the importance of resources from the GEF and national level coordination. MOROCCO said some indicators are redundant.

EGYPT expressed interest in hosting an RCU, proposed the establishment of a global trust fund and, with NIGERIA, proposed integrating the GM under the Secretariat. PAKISTAN

said the communication strategy must be effective and the new reporting strategies are "stressing" parties. COLOMBIA said, at COP 9, the work plans and programmes should demonstrate how they support NAPs and resource mobilization, and called for greater clarity regarding RCUs.

ISRAEL suggested: determining an agreed baseline; identifying a quality control mechanism for the materials to be posted to the website; and organizing a structured brainstorming to consider the UNCCD's focus. MALI said NAPs are a major element of UNCCD implementation, but the documents only refer sporadically to them. THAILAND prioritized capacity building. TUNISIA said the GM should focus on fundraising to implement NAPs.

The GAMBIA emphasized the need for a functional regional mechanism that could be close to the implementation level. JAPAN asked what the Secretariat has done to implement the work plan. CSOs suggested developing a mechanism to facilitate CSO participation in the Convention, and adopting the slogan "Yes we can and Yes we must!"

Responding to the comments, de Kalbermatten said the consensus on the Convention's focus is desertification, but other related issues should be considered. He recognized the gaps in servicing national programmes, and agreed on the need to provide support for regional coordination, but said the Secretariat is limited in delivering all the services requested by parties. He supported moving towards quantitative indicators, and said capacity building is in the work programme, but the Secretariat's focus is on monitoring and reporting. Gnacadja added that the five operational clusters of the Secretariat are derived from the Strategy. Mersmann observed that there was an apparent acceptance of the Secretariat's proposed basic structure, agreed with Nigeria on the GM's advisory role, and clarified that the GM does not have regional offices, stating that it works with consultants on a project-by-project basis.

REPORTS ON THE CST 4-YEAR WORK PLAN AND 2-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME AND CRIC 2-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME: CST Chair Dar introduced the CST's multi-year work plan and the costed work programme for 2008-2009 (ICCD/CST (S-1)/4/Add.1 and Add.2), and made an oral presentation of the report of the CST's meeting held from 5-6 November 2008. He noted that the CRIC will take them into account to ensure coherence with the work plans of the CRIC and Secretariat.

The Secretariat introduced the CRIC two-year work programme (ICCD/CRIC(7)/2 Add.6), noting that COP 9 is expected to give it a new mandate and operational modalities, making a four-year work plan difficult to develop. Parties will discuss these items on Tuesday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Contact Group 1, on work programmes of the Convention's institutions and bodies, was chaired by South Africa's Maria Mbengashe and met for the first time on Monday evening. According to informal reports, the discussion, which lasted one hour, focused on the objective of the group and the purpose of an informal paper circulated by the Secretariat to facilitate discussion. In the end, no substantive discussion was reported to have taken place, due to participants' varied interpretations of the group's mandate. However, participants apparently agreed to have the regions consult over the Secretariat's draft text on Tuesday morning and solicit their additional input for submissions to the Secretariat by 1:00pm Tuesday, on the basis of which the Secretariat would prepare a revised document for circulation to the Contact Group on Tuesday afternoon.