

## UNCCD CRIC 7 AND CST S-1: WEDNESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2008

CRIC 7 considered the report on indicators and monitoring of the Strategy and the draft reporting guidelines in regard to improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports submitted to the COP. Contact Group 1 met during the afternoon to continue its consideration of the Convention bodies' work plans, and Contact Group 2 convened for the first time to discuss indicators and reporting principles.

### COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT ON INDICATORS AND MONITORING OF THE STRATEGY:** The Secretariat introduced the report on indicators and monitoring (ICCD/CRIC(7)/2/Add.7). He explained that parties were invited to submit indicators for consideration at CRIC 7, and that while parties presented diverse views, they agreed on the need to select a minimum set of indicators.

Saudi Arabia, for the ASIA GROUP, stressed the need for a quantitative assessment of the Strategic Objectives. Chile, for GRULAC, encouraged: defining a limited number of simple and measurable indicators; prioritizing the outcome on integrating NAPs into development planning; and accounting for existing country experience. Turkey, for the NORTHERN MEDITERRANEAN, said his annex had developed monitoring indicators in cooperation with the European Commission.

The G-77/CHINA sought clarification on the expected outcome of the discussion. The EU urged the Secretariat to prioritize drafting a consolidated set of indicators, which, he said, is a necessary basis for consultations. CHINA highlighted the need to: determine which indicators should be quantitative and qualitative; provide more details when describing indicators for the regional and national levels because desertification varies geographically; and define who is responsible for monitoring results. Many countries stressed the need to develop baselines where relevant.

SWAZILAND, the AFRICAN GROUP and TANZANIA requested the Secretariat to prepare a set of simple, applicable and measurable indicators before COP 9, and stressed the need for baseline information. Chad, for the AFRICAN GROUP, supported by TANZANIA and VENEZUELA, highlighted the need for human and financial resources. BRAZIL, with VENEZUELA, BENIN and ARGENTINA, called for consideration of countries' special needs when developing indicators.

GUINEA requested resources to support reporting and, with PAKISTAN, called for simple, measurable indicators with a defined baseline inventory. THAILAND highlighted the shortcomings of indicators and, with EGYPT, stressed the need for benchmarks and an agreed unit of measurement to assess progress.

VENEZUELA and CHINA called for a glossary to define the terms in the document, and suggested producing a procedural manual on how to implement the indicators. GUINEA and ARGENTINA stressed the need for regional indicators. CAPE VERDE expressed its desire to see the indicators developed and implemented for sustainable land management.

Based on the assessment of poverty, BURUNDI emphasized the problematic nature of indicators, and asked who was expected to respond to the CST questionnaire on indicators. JAPAN inquired about the source of funding for this exercise. BURKINA FASO urged developing simple and straightforward indicators that take into account ongoing activities, and highlighted their awareness-raising and educational roles. MOROCCO concurred on the need for simple, quantifiable and measurable indicators.

### IMPROVING PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION AS WELL AS THE QUALITY AND FORMAT OF REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE COP: CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT REPORTING

**GUIDELINES:** The Secretariat introduced the documents on reporting guidelines (ICCD/CRIC(7)/3 and Add.1-Add.7). Chad, for the AFRICAN GROUP, raised the issue of funding for the preparation of national reports. Myanmar, for the ASIA GROUP, encouraged standardizing the format and size of national reports. Chile, for GRULAC, said the GM and GEF must account for information provided by the CST, and highlighted the importance of assessing the impact of donor country and subsidiary body support for regional and subregional action programmes. The G-77/CHINA stressed the cost of collecting and storing data for reporting and asked if the GM or GEF would fund national reporting.

The EU supported the recommendations contained in the document on the draft reporting guidelines, and urged the Secretariat to produce the draft reporting guidelines before COP 9. His comments on the addenda, *inter alia*, addressed the areas of: good practices and experiences; financial reporting; submission of the national reports; performance indicators; regional financial mechanisms; and regional information centers. PAKISTAN said additional financial resources should be sought for meaningful reporting. SAUDI ARABIA highlighted the importance of capacity building.

MOROCCO said all parties should be involved in the design of the implementation guidelines. PERU called for capacity building and sufficient and timely funding to ensure

broad national consultation in reporting. The US suggested that failures, in the context of lessons learned, should be documented, and called for ensuring parity in financial reporting by developed and developing country parties. CHINA proposed the improvement of reporting processes and formats, establishment of a special fund and collaboration between the GM and Secretariat and others in capacity building. SWITZERLAND noted that, unlike developing countries, developed countries and the GM are required to report the impacts from their financial contributions.

BRAZIL said finances for national reporting must not take away from finances for implementing the Convention. He stressed that the GM must provide strong information on mobilization of financial resources. BURUNDI said the GM must report on the impact of its activities on parties, and noted that collection of statistics is difficult because they are often biased or incomplete. YEMEN highlighted that countries require resources to establish databases to collect relevant data from different institutions.

SWAZILAND said donor and affected country party reports must be aligned to trace the impact of financial flows. He stressed the importance of accurately measuring financial flows for implementing the UNCCD. CANADA said donor countries may need to revise sector coding to measure such flows, while BRAZIL highlighted the problem of double counting.

NIGER emphasized the need for technical, financial and institutional capacity building. SURINAME highlighted that the need to align work programmes and NAPs with RBM, particularly without adequate financing, may "take us back to square one." SYRIA highlighted awareness raising, capacity building and provision of financial resources for reporting. VENEZUELA stressed financial support and harmonization in producing the reports.

The Secretariat urged the parties to provide further input for the preparation of the reporting guidelines. She said impact indicators will be taken into account when drafting the reporting guidelines. In response to Switzerland's concern that only developed countries were required to provide information on impact indicators, she said the point was not to burden developed countries, but that the suggestion was made in recognition of the financial burden the request would place on developing countries.

### CONTACT GROUP 1

In the afternoon, the contact group on work programmes of the Convention's bodies resumed discussion of the CRIC's draft report on the multi-year work plans and programmes. Chaired by Maria Mbengashe (South Africa), the group completed a first reading of the subsections on the GM, the Secretariat and the Secretariat-GM JWP. The Secretariat also circulated and introduced a new text, also for consideration by the Group, containing the CRIC's report to the COP on the future format of the CRIC.

A recurrent debate was whether to begin the paragraphs with "parties" or "some parties" because the report is simply a reflection of statements made. Some delegates proposed following CRIC 5's report structure that avoids the use of "parties," as it is a qualitative measure of the level of consensus. Other delegates said this would jeopardize the Committee's work. Some parties also objected to the tendency: by delegates to propose amendments requiring action by COP 9, which some cautioned was decision taking and therefore a COP role; and to negotiate text, as the report was a reflection of statements made in plenary.

On the outstanding provisions in the subsection on the GM, new text was submitted: reflecting the interlinkages between resource mobilization and policy necessitating collaboration between the GM and Secretariat at the national level; and requesting the GM to develop indicators to better measure its activities and to provide more detailed "annual" information on its financial support to parties, quantifying different kinds of

funding, including innovative funding that is disaggregated by sector. There was agreement to retain references on the need for the GM, where it plays a supportive role, to avoid overlap with the Secretariat.

On the Secretariat, some parties disagreed that its new structure was "welcomed and appreciated," due to the incapacities that had resulted in the regions, with some suggesting that the new structure may be re-visited at COP 9. Consequently, all references expressing support for the Secretariat's new structure are preceded by "some parties." The view that there was poor communication between the Secretariat and regions was a recurring point of divergence. Other amendments sought to ensure that the Secretariat: undertakes work contained not only in the Strategy, but the Convention as well; demonstrates its "comparative advantage"; prepares for, but does not pre-empt, COP decision making; and limits its activities on land and soil, in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation, to the drylands.

On the JWP, amendments highlighted: the need to specify who was responsible for the JWP; the enhancement of the JWP in the implementation of SRAPs, in addition to NAPs, but in the context of the Secretariat and GM mandates; and a request to the GM and Secretariat to "include" further details on concrete steps taken to implement the JWP. The Group also agreed to add text reflecting that parties believe the JWP is one of the most important and complex of the Secretariat's and GM's programmes, and that the JWP must be analyzed in depth at COP 9.

**FUTURE FORMAT OF THE CRIC:** Introducing the draft report, the Secretariat highlighted that the draft will constitute the final section of the CRIC 7 report, and reflects the deliberations of the Committee that seemed to have a common understanding and support for some of the Secretariat's recommendations. He explained that the first section recalls relevant COP 8 decisions, the second addresses how to conduct a review across regions and over time and the inputs of the institutions in the review process, and the last section is on the frequency and type of review. He said the report includes a recommendation to the Secretariat to prepare a revised proposal on the future format and the new TORs of the CRIC.

The report highlights parties' agreement to: eliminate alternating reporting so that all entities report concurrently; review the two-year and four-year working programmes; and focus on reviewing the performance indicators and Operational Objectives every two years and the impact indicators and Strategic Objectives every four years. The report indicates that there is no consensus on the duration of the meeting.

Parties completed a first paragraph-by-paragraph reading of the report.

### CONTACT GROUP 2

The contact group on indicators and reporting principles, facilitated by Markku Aho (Finland), met at 5pm and adopted the TOR of the Group. A draft document prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of the CRIC 7 deliberations was distributed, which will be discussed by the Group on Thursday. The document to be revised by the Group will constitute part of the CRIC 7 final report. The EU distributed a paper on its position on the two issues, which will be included in the revised document.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

As CRIC 7 participants awaited their evening "Boat Trip and Gala Dinner," hosted by the Government of Turkey, some commented on how the meeting's debates have echoed what has been said at UNCCD meetings over the years, wondering whether the call for change wasn't simply "more of the same." Others pointed out that, while the Strategy was developed with the goal of moving the Convention in new directions, the compromises and achievements of the first ten years should not be overlooked as the Convention moves into its next ten years.