



## **CBD COP-5 HIGHLIGHTS WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2000**

On the third day of CBD COP-5, delegates continued their discussions in Working Groups. In the morning, Working Group I (WG-I) addressed a work programme for dry and sub-humid lands, which was further discussed by a contact group in the afternoon. Working Group II (WG-II) discussed access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing (ABS) in the morning and operations of the Convention in the afternoon; two contact groups were established on these issues and met in the evening.

### **WORKING GROUP I**

**DRY AND SUB-HUMID ECOSYSTEMS:** At the request of WG-I Chair Peter Schei (Norway), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/2, 3 and 19) and SBSTTA-4 Chair Christián Samper reviewed SBSTTA recommendations IV/3 and V/8 on the work programme. The CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CCD) highlighted its collaboration with the CBD Secretariat and the need to encourage synergies among local activities that maintain ecosystem stability and livelihoods. Many countries supported the work programme, although AUSTRALIA expressed concern over its lack of specific targets, such as timetables. PORTUGAL, on behalf of the EU, and RWANDA supported a two-track approach incorporating assessments and targeted actions. NIGERIA, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, stressed the issue's importance for developing countries. Numerous countries highlighted the relevance of poverty, food security, alternative livelihoods and the incorporation of the knowledge, innovations and practices of local communities, farmers and pastoralists.

Several countries supported collaboration with the CCD, as well as with the UNFCCC, Ramsar Convention and other relevant bodies. TURKMENISTAN urged caution in developing joint work with the CCD, noting its emphasis on Africa. Numerous developing countries called for expanding GEF resources and activities, with specific prioritization of its work on land degradation. PAKISTAN suggested that the GEF expedite rehabilitation projects, and the CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH recommended capacity-building for restoration activities. RWANDA, TANZANIA and TURKEY also stressed the need for capacity-building

BOTSWANA, the G-77/CHINA, the EU and TURKEY highlighted the need for assessments of biodiversity status and trends. The EU called for development of indicator sets. MALAWI, on behalf of the SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC), stressed that they be locally appropriate. The US encouraged implementation and reporting. BOTSWANA

stressed attention to technology transfer and public awareness. PERU called for incorporation of cultural considerations and economic compensation for traditional knowledge. RWANDA suggested that the technical expert group address mitigation and protective measures. KENYA and ETHIOPIA called for adequate representation of effected countries in the expert roster. TANZANIA called for a review of the work programme's implementation at SBSTTA-7 and supported creation of an *ad hoc* technical expert group at COP-6.

BRAZIL, GREECE and others stressed appropriate interaction with the CBD's other thematic areas, including agrobiodiversity, inland waters, Article 8(j), forests, sustainable use and incentive measures. The AFRICAN GROUP, the EU and ITALY highlighted the need to address each dry and sub-humid ecosystem type, with a view to enhancing regional cooperation, management and information exchange. GREECE stressed the need for cooperation with other fora that address these specific ecosystem types. BRAZIL emphasized the needs of sub-humid ecosystems, and ARMENIA highlighted arid mountain regions. CANADA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for clarification on inclusion of polar and tundra ecosystems.

The AFRICAN GROUP and SADC called for adaptive and integrated management, and TURKEY suggested the use of adaptive technologies. The AFRICAN GROUP, PARAGUAY and TANZANIA highlighted the importance of water management and inland waters. SOUTH AFRICA called for collaboration with water management authorities. CANADA requested reference to biodiversity's role in soil and water conservation. CHINA indicated that identification of land degradation causes is a priority. BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL emphasized the role of women and youth. UGANDA and ETHIOPIA drew attention to the value of wild relatives of crops. SENEGAL called for incorporation of invasive aquatic species, and DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE called for discussion of alien species in all ecosystems. A contact group, chaired by Sem Shikongo (Namibia), was established.

The contact group considered a revised draft decision and annexed work programme, incorporating views expressed in WG-I. Delegates adopted amendments to the decision, including text: urging parties to foster cooperation among countries within regions and sub-regions; identifying SBSTTA-7 for the first review of the status and trends of dry and sub-humid biodiversity, with timing of subsequent reviews to be determined by the COP; requesting the Executive Secretary to seek input from countries with sub-humid lands; and requesting the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the CCD and other relevant bodies in establishing the roster of experts and possibly an *ad hoc* technical expert group. The paragraph endorsing the work programme remains unresolved due to concern over the lack of specific targets for the work

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programme. On the annexed draft programme of work, delegates agreed on most points and made some textual changes, including a footnote clarifying that polar and tundra ecosystems are not addressed. One delegation proposed, and it was agreed, to add management and sustainable use of water resources in the activities referring to targeted actions in response to identified needs. One delegation expressed concern that the ways and means to carry out the proposed activities are not targeted enough. One delegation added text on strengthening local institutional structures for resource management.

## WORKING GROUP II

**ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES:** WG-II Chair Elaine Fisher (Jamaica) invited delegates to continue discussion on ABS, focusing on the draft decisions and the Expert Panel's recommendations. DENMARK, IRAN, NORWAY and SWITZERLAND supported an *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group for ABS. Several countries supported continuing the Expert Panel provided that it incorporates a more participatory process. DENMARK highlighted the need for user countries to promote ABS measures in conformity with provider countries. The SOLOMON ISLANDS urged the COP to promote development of legally binding measures to ensure users' compliance. The PHILIPPINES stated that all stakeholders should be involved in developing ABS measures and encouraged further work on *sui generis* systems. The SOLOMON ISLANDS and a representative of the MAORI PEOPLE stressed linkages between the Expert Panel and the Working Group on Article 8(j).

The US and SLOVENIA, on behalf of the CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN States (CEE), supported designation of national focal points and competent national authorities. The ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAITS ISLANDER COMMISSION and COICA stated that indigenous peoples should be consulted before adoption of any ABS agreements. GERMANY drew attention to a number of international multi-stakeholder workshops hosted to foster common understandings. A number of countries called for capacity-building and funding.

COLOMBIA noted that the elements raised during the informal consultations on *ex situ* collections provide a good basis for further work, although more discussion is needed. The FAO drew attention to its report on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/Inf.12). CHINA and INDIA called for discussion of pre-CBD *ex situ* collections in the ABS discussion. NIGERIA stated that *ex situ* collections are a food security issue and that new measures should not prejudice existing traditional exchange of plants. COSTA RICA, FRANCE and JAPAN stressed the need to consider other ongoing initiatives, processes and competent organizations on *ex situ* collections. COLOMBIA suggested developing clear guidelines on the issue, either within the work programme on agricultural biodiversity or in the Expert Panel. JAPAN noted that responses to the questionnaire prepared on *ex situ* collections must be voluntary.

NORWAY, supported by DENMARK, stated that the CBD should seek observer status in the TRIPs Council. The THIRD WORLD NETWORK, speaking for an NGO coalition, asked the COP to address TRIPs regarding the revision of Article 27.3(b) and to reject patents on life forms. The INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE asked for the full and effective involvement of the private sector. A contact group, chaired by A.H. Zakri (Malaysia) was formed and met later in the evening.

**OPERATIONS OF THE CONVENTION:** The Secretariat introduced the background documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/4, 17, 17/Add.1 and Inf.1). SBSTTA-5 Chair Samper reviewed the recommendations of the Intersessional Meeting on the Operations of the Convention (ISOC) related to the work of SBSTTA. Regarding the periodicity of ordinary meetings of the COP and its

subsidiary bodies, WG-II endorsed the proposal for biannual COP meetings and annual SBSTTA meetings. SWITZERLAND and KENYA preferred changing the COP Bureau at the end of its ordinary meeting rather than at the start. CANADA, INDONESIA and the US stressed the need for guidelines for financial arrangements. ETHIOPIA, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, stated that ordinary meetings of the COP should focus on reviewing intersessional progress. COSTA RICA and PERU proposed that the COP's duration should be one week.

Many countries supported developing a strategic plan for implementing the CBD and suggested that SBSTTA should provide inputs to the plan's development. PORTUGAL, on behalf of the EU, suggested the strategy be approved at COP-6. CANADA, CHILE, MEXICO and PERU called for input from Parties and regional consultations. BRAZIL stated that a long-term strategic plan needs to address cross-cutting issues. PANAMA stressed the need to consult with local communities.

On SBSTTA's operations, NEW ZEALAND suggested holding an ISOC specifically on their improvement following SBSTTA-6. BRAZIL, the NETHERLANDS, the UNITED KINGDOM and the US called for strengthening scientific assessment. The NETHERLANDS and the UNITED KINGDOM supported a step-by-step approach to this scientific assessment. NORWAY endorsed the establishment of a scientific assessment mechanism to provide policy-relevant advice. CANADA and JAPAN opposed establishing a new mechanism. Several countries called for a clear and limited mandate for a technical expert group on forests, should it be established. BRAZIL, supported by COLOMBIA, PARAGUAY and PANAMA, supported establishing a subsidiary body to review CBD implementation on socioeconomic aspects. With regard to cooperation with the Millennium Assessment, many countries asked for further information and clarification on work to date.

Regarding other operational issues, COSTA RICA supported strengthening the CHM and, with the CEE and the NETHERLANDS, encouraged regional activities. CANADA called for recognition of the Global Biodiversity Forum in CBD implementation, and stated that regional activities should not take priority over national implementation. A contact group, chaired by Jonathan Tillson (United Kingdom), was formed and met in the evening to draft decision text on the operations of the COP, SBSTTA and the strategic plan.

## IN THE BREEZEWAYS

As the Working Groups progressed on their agendas, many delegates were anticipating the discussions on the forest work programme, especially given the recent conclusion of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. Some participants hoped that calls at SBSTTA-5 to make the work programme more action-oriented would spur progress before COP-6. Others thought that re-opening the work programme at this point would be thorny and provide few benefits. Several delegates saw potential in focusing activities on the Proposals for Action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests relevant to the CBD.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**WORKING GROUP I:** WG-I will convene at 10:00 am in Room 2 to consider Chair's text on incentives and sustainable use. Following that discussion, the contact group on drylands biodiversity is expected to reconvene.

**WORKING GROUP II:** WG-II will meet at 10:00 am in Room 1 to continue discussions on the operations of the Convention, specifically national reports.

**INTER-LINKAGES:** A presentation on synergies and coordination between MEAs will be held from 1:00-3:00 pm in Room M-310.