



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## SBSTTA-7 HIGHLIGHTS WEDNESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2001

Delegates to the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) continued to meet in two working groups during the day. Working Group I (WG-I) on forest biodiversity, discussed: conservation and sustainable use; assessment and monitoring; enabling environment; and bushmeat. Working Group II (WG-II) discussed incentive measures, indicators and environmental impact assessments (EIA).

### WORKING GROUP I – FOREST BIODIVERSITY

**CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE:** WG-I Chair Paula Warren (New Zealand) reported on the contact group, noting: agreement on examining goals, objectives and activities, as well as implementing actors, timelines and process targets; an emphasis on sustainable use; and consideration of benefit-sharing under enabling activities. The contact group also proposed a framework for discussion looking at: threatening processes; protection, recovery and restoration; and sustainable use and impacts of harvesting techniques. Delegates then debated how to proceed, ultimately agreeing to consider the work programme based on the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) report (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/6).

Chair Warren invited comments on the ecosystem approach to conservation and sustainable use. EL SALVADOR, NIGERIA and SENEGAL highlighted the use of the approach in restoration of degraded forests and the need for guidelines. BRAZIL, with NIGERIA, called for reference to benefit-sharing. COLOMBIA, with AUSTRIA, FINLAND and SWEDEN, said the ecosystem approach should be an overarching principle in the forest work programme. BANGLADESH, with SUDAN and TUNISIA, suggested prioritizing capacity building. TANZANIA, with BANGLADESH, proposed pilot studies. HAITI suggested workshops to train decision makers and managers in the foundations, principles and modalities of the ecosystem approach.

SWEDEN, with the SEYCHELLES, requested clarification of the relationship between the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management. GERMANY proposed reference to managed forests. The NETHERLANDS proposed to invite Parties to implement the ecosystem approach and to report on their experiences at future COPs. The US proposed reference to forest fragmentation, infrastructure development and invasive species' dynamics. The EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC), with the NETHERLANDS, said that the work programme should include targets, timetables, main actors and indicators of progress in order to be action-oriented. AUSTRALIA emphasized the mandate to develop a targeted work programme.

The FIRST NATIONS TRIBES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA called for full integration of Article 8(j) and methodologies, criteria and indicators reflecting social values and indigenous concerns. The GLOBAL FOREST COALITION outlined targets regarding underlying causes, addressing: national analysis and policy reform, consumption and production patterns, and financial institutions.

Noting the slow rate of progress, Chair Warren requested delegates to submit written comments on the work programme. Regarding concerns expressed about linkages with the existing work programme, Chair Warren noted that WG-I would consider the AHTEG's report, and the Secretariat would analyze the differences with the existing programme and report to COP-6.

In the afternoon, WG-I reviewed proposed changes from the morning discussion, as well as those provided to the Chair. GERMANY proposed a new objective on establishing a representative network of protected areas incorporating the prior informed consent of indigenous and local communities. BELGIUM stated that the issue of access and benefit-sharing should be linked with the draft Bonn Guidelines. GREENPEACE INTERNATIONAL called for prioritizing global targets.

**ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING:** Chair Warren presented proposed changes to the programme element on assessment and monitoring. The SEYCHELLES and CANADA questioned a new reference to international standards and protocols under national forest classification systems. COLOMBIA requested inserting a reference to knowledge in the element's title and consideration of ecological and socioeconomic factors using the ecosystem approach, which AUSTRALIA questioned. PORTUGAL expressed concern about the feasibility of developing a harmonized classification system.

Regarding proposed activities, AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND questioned reference to socioeconomic and cultural components in classification systems. The US called for integrating forest biodiversity data collection into existing forest monitoring and assessment activities. BURKINA FASO and CAMEROON supported regular forest inventories with adequate financial resources. BRAZIL suggested shifting the focus from inventories to monitoring. GERMANY noted the need to understand thresholds for forest biodiversity loss and ecosystem change. FINLAND, FRANCE and PERU called for language emphasizing synergies with other organizations. AUSTRALIA proposed including cross-cutting issues within a preamble.

**ENABLING ENVIRONMENT:** Chair Warren presented proposed changes to the programme element on enabling environment. The NETHERLANDS noted the importance of benefit-sharing, and COLOMBIA stressed capacity building as an overarching objective. On a proposal regarding fire prevention and the effects of fire on biodiversity loss, MALI and SWEDEN noted fire's importance in some ecosystems, while BRAZIL called for deleting the reference.

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Regarding illegal logging, BRAZIL suggested broadening this to illegal exploitation, trade and consumption of timber, non-timber resources and genetic resources. On a proposal regarding certification as a tool to combat illegal logging, CAMEROON said that for many countries certification is not feasible in the short term. FINLAND noted certification as a voluntary, market driven tool and stressed the importance of third party auditing. BOLIVIA noted that legal systems not ensuring sustainability would be of limited significance. BELGIUM noted the importance of halting import of illegal timber. The EC opposed a proposal to delete reference to mitigation of economic distortions.

Chair Warren noted that a contact group would be formed to incorporate the proposals into the existing draft text.

**BUSHMEAT:** Chair Warren introduced a draft recommendation on bushmeat. BELGIUM suggested broadening the focus to cover unsustainable hunting of forest animals. KENYA called for collaboration with other relevant agreements and institutions. CAMEROON stressed the importance of alternative protein sources, and called for inclusion of trade in bushmeat. Chair Warren proposed that a small group consider the issue further.

## WORKING GROUP II

**INCENTIVE MEASURES:** The Secretariat introduced documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/11 and Add.1. CANADA reviewed the workshop on incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (October 2001, Montreal) and presented the workshop's proposals for design and implementation of incentives and suggested recommendations for further cooperation. Most delegates welcomed the proposals and recommendations. Many said that incentives need to be tailored to national conditions and priorities. SWITZERLAND said specific institutions were needed for implementation. The EC, NEW ZEALAND and SOUTH AFRICA stressed that work should not be restricted to economic incentives. BELGIUM, COLOMBIA, MEXICO and SPAIN stressed incentives for the purpose of benefit-sharing. Many noted that incentives should be discussed in the context of each CBD thematic programme. FRANCE favored focusing on forest-related incentives.

NAMIBIA highlighted incentives for local and indigenous communities. VENEZUELA said that limitations imposed by the World Trade Organization should be considered. BRAZIL and PERU called for evaluation of existing incentives. CHINA said that incentives should contribute to reducing poverty. ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA cautioned that incentive measures should not increase living costs. The WORLD BANK and the ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) noted ongoing work in regard to information exchange, capacity building and payments for environmental services.

ARGENTINA noted that agricultural land set-aside schemes and organic farming payments should not be considered as positive incentives. The EC said there is empirical evidence that set-aside schemes improve biodiversity, and, with KENYA and SOUTH AFRICA, supported organic farming payments. The OECD stated that set-aside schemes have reduced inputs associated with biodiversity loss.

On the proposals for design and implementation, GERMANY, NORWAY, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and the UK stressed prioritizing assessment of perverse incentives and obstacles for their removal. DENMARK suggested compiling case-studies on perverse incentives for presentation at COP-6 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. FRANCE said that incentives should be present in all national strategies but that international cooperation regarding shared resources should be contemplated only after national progress.

On the suggested recommendations for cooperation, BELGIUM and the NETHERLANDS supported creating an inter-agency coordination committee. COSTA RICA suggested that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change prioritize incentives addressing deforestation. COLOMBIA called for clarity regarding macro-economic agencies. SLOVENIA noted that joint work plans with other conventions should focus on incentives. NORWAY stressed the importance of information exchange. COLOMBIA and FRANCE underscored the value of the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) to share countries' experiences. BELGIUM suggested that the OECD handbook on incentives for biodiversity be made available through the CHM.

Chair Lily Rodriguez (Peru) said she would prepare a draft to accommodate suggestions.

**INDICATORS:** The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/12. A number of delegates expressed disappointment about progress on indicators, proposing continued work with ongoing activities as a starting point. GERMANY, supported by BELGIUM and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, noted that the list of available indicators is incomplete. For development of indicators, GERMANY suggested including evaluation and early warning indicators. SWEDEN and CANADA requested adding reference to freshwater ecosystems. BELGIUM and SWITZERLAND said indicators should be closely linked to CBD thematic areas. NORWAY said biodiversity conservation should be based on the same indicators for all countries, while NEW ZEALAND said global indicators were inappropriate. BRAZIL noted that indicators could not be implemented without base-lines due to differences in country conditions.

NEW ZEALAND supported continued work on indicators in a liaison group. ARGENTINA and MEXICO called for financing such work. BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL, FAO, OECD and UNEP/WORLD CONSERVATION MONITORING CENTER highlighted their work including databases, regional indicators and pilot projects.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:** The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/13, containing draft guidelines for incorporating biodiversity considerations into EIA and strategic environmental assessments (SEA). The INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IAIA), followed by many, highlighted the draft guidelines as an important first step, which requires further elaboration. Several delegations supported establishing a work programme in collaboration with IAIA. COLOMBIA proposed creating an expert group to develop guidelines. GERMANY recommended involving practitioners and incorporating experience gained with other CBD topics. The EC noted the new EU directive on SEA that incorporates impacts on biodiversity. ERITREA, TANZANIA, TOGO and UGANDA highlighted the need for capacity building. The UK suggested closer links with the ecosystem and precautionary approaches. AUSTRALIA, SWITZERLAND and the US called for expansion of public participation.

The EC questioned the inclusion of both environmental and socio-economic concerns in the EIA definition. The US suggested using COP language on environmental concerns and interrelated socio-economic, cultural and human health aspects. NORWAY called for databases compiling information on biodiversity-related EIA aspects. CANADA called for involving indigenous people, incorporating traditional knowledge and forwarding the discussion's results to the Working Group on CBD Article 8(j). SWITZERLAND stressed links with national biodiversity strategies. BELGIUM suggested several additions to the listed examples of environmental functions derived from biodiversity. The RAMSAR CONVENTION reported on EIA and SEA as elements of the second joint work plan with the CBD.

Chair Rodriguez said that she would prepare a new draft on guidelines and recommendations.

## IN THE CORRIDORS

As delegates ventured into discussions on the forest work programme, frustrations rose over pervasive confusion on how to manage the various drafts, the outputs of the contact group and relations with the existing work programme. One participant quipped that procedural, not political concerns were currently the biggest obstacle to addressing forest biodiversity loss. On the other hand, WG-II delegates seemed close to finalizing their work without major controversies.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**WORKING GROUP I:** WG-I will meet at 10:00 am in Assembly Hall 1 to review the outputs of the contact group on the work programme on forest biodiversity.

**WORKING GROUP II:** WG-II will meet at 10:00 am in Assembly Hall 2 to discuss the Chair's drafts on agricultural biodiversity, plant conservation strategy, incentives, indicators and EIA.

**GBO:** The Secretariat will launch the Global Biodiversity Outlook at 12:55 pm in Room 3 on the first floor.