



MSP HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2001

Delegates to the Open-ended Inter-session Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation (MSP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) met in two working groups in the morning, in a brief afternoon Plenary to review progress, and in one working group in the afternoon. Working Group I (WG-I), on the strategic plan, discussed operational goals and a section on communication. Working Group II (WG-II) addressed national reports and continued work on implementation and operations of the Convention.

PLENARY

In the afternoon Plenary, delegates heard reports from the Chairs of the two Working Groups. WG-I Chair Peter Schei (Norway) reviewed progress on the strategic plan. WG-II Chair Elaine Fisher (Jamaica) summarized progress on national reports, implementation and operations of the Convention.

WORKING GROUP I – STRATEGIC PLAN

In the morning, Chair Schei called for comments on the strategic plan's cross-cutting operational goals (UNEP/CBD/MSP/2). BELGIUM reiterated a proposal to include separate sections on the role of science and capacity building. Regarding language on national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), CUBA proposed integrating NBSAPs with other sectoral strategies. BELGIUM and POLAND suggested harmonizing them with national plans on sustainable development.

Regarding language on providing resources, in particular for capacity building, BRAZIL and others suggested separating the two issues. CAMEROON and HAITI suggested that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other mechanisms provide financial resources. NORWAY suggested referencing implementation support mechanisms. COLOMBIA called for facilitating cooperation through the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM). POLAND requested reference to research development and PANAMA suggested alliances with scientists to facilitate decision-making.

Regarding language on integrating biodiversity considerations into national and international sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, delegates supported including regional plans and preferred reference to biodiversity "concerns" over "considerations." COLOMBIA called for explicit reference to the CBD objectives.

Regarding language on key actors effecting implementation, IRELAND and others suggested broadening the reference to include those effecting and affected by implementation. CANADA said the term should be understood very broadly. Delegates then debated language on the CBD's leadership role in the international arena and support of its implementation by other international processes. SWIT-

ZERLAND suggested wording specifying the CBD's leadership role with regard to biodiversity-related conventions and ensuring that other processes support its implementation. ARGENTINA and BRAZIL disagreed and a group was formed to draft compromise language. The agreed-upon language states that the CBD is playing a leadership role on international biodiversity issues in cooperation with other conventions, while other international processes shall actively support the CBD's implementation consistent with the respective frameworks.

Regarding language on mechanisms for understanding biodiversity, management techniques and best available science, BRAZIL and others suggested deleting reference to the Global Taxonomy Initiative, noting that no particular emphasis was needed. The NETHERLANDS called for referencing information exchange systems, and HAITI for research findings. CANADA suggested reference to traditional knowledge.

COLOMBIA proposed an additional element on promoting transfer and development of technology for identifying potential economic uses of biodiversity components and market research strategies. The SEYCHELLES opposed reference to market strategies and no agreement was reached.

Turning to operational goals regarding reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss, delegates debated reference to management of representative species, populations and ecosystems. Some delegates questioned the meaning of the term "representative," arguing for its deletion, while others preferred to retain it. Different language was proposed but no agreement was reached. Delegates then proposed additional operational goals, including establishment of a global ecological network and mitigation of biodiversity loss due to poverty.

In the afternoon session, Chair Schei called for comments on reducing incidence and impacts of unsustainable use. Regarding language on NBSAPs and biosafety frameworks identifying the uses of biodiversity at the national level in a regional context, TANZANIA, with others, suggested deleting reference to the regional context. Delegates also agreed to include reference to biodiversity components, as suggested by COLOMBIA. EL SALVADOR called for a reference to sustainable use. Delegates then debated a suggestion by BELGIUM to include an element on the Biosafety Protocol's implementation. No agreement was reached and a drafting group was formed to provide compromise language.

Regarding language on developing tools, technologies and management systems that facilitate sustainable production and use of biological components, BRAZIL suggested explicit reference to the national level. Delegates debated a reference to production and a small drafting group was expected to prepare compromise text.

BELGIUM on behalf of the EU, supported by HUNGARY, proposed a new goal that would establish guidelines for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into relevant sectoral or cross-

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sectoral plans, including accounting systems, labeling and certification schemes. BRAZIL objected and AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND noted the topic is covered under cross-cutting goals. ARGENTINA and CANADA proposed compromise language. Following consultations in a drafting group, the text calls for establishing and implementing a framework for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans.

Regarding benefit sharing, delegates debated goals on mechanisms and measures to facilitate access and benefit sharing (ABS). BELGIUM proposed calling for implementation of the draft Bonn guidelines on ABS, while BRAZIL, supported by many, opposed such reference, noting the guidelines' voluntary nature. PANAMA's suggestion to delete a reference to international and regional mechanisms was accepted. On intellectual property rights (IPR), delegates discussed language describing IPR's role in promoting the CBD objectives. BRAZIL proposed that IPR should respect indigenous and local communities as well as the country of origin to ensure benefit sharing. Following GERMANY's opposition, the formulation remained bracketed.

Regarding language on assessing, inventorying and recognizing traditional knowledge, NAMIBIA called for reference to the involvement and prior informed consent of local and indigenous communities. CANADA, with others, suggested using language from CBD Article 8(j) on preserving and maintaining such knowledge. The CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC and others suggested "preserving and protecting" it, while GHANA and others supported the original text. Delegates debated different formulations and, following consultations in a drafting group, they agreed that the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of local and indigenous communities should be respected, preserved, maintained, and promoted for wider application with their full and effective involvement and approval.

Regarding language on promoting the role of biodiversity in reducing poverty, many supported a proposal by BRAZIL to delete a reference to food security as an example, but no final agreement was reached. Delegates agreed on a new element suggested by COLOMBIA on promoting biotechnological and biochemical research and development activities that utilize genetic resources in their countries of origin.

On the plan's section on communication, NORWAY, with BELGIUM and the NETHERLANDS, suggested deleting the section, proposing instead to address communication as a cross-cutting operational goal. The SEYCHELLES and others opposed the idea. BRAZIL suggested that NORWAY's proposal be included in the original text on communication. As disagreement continued, the proposal remained bracketed.

Chair Schei said a draft would be prepared to accommodate suggestions.

WORKING GROUP II

In a morning session, Working Group II discussed national reports and reviewed draft texts on operations and implementation of the Convention.

NATIONAL REPORTS: Using documents UNEP/CBD/MSP/3, and UNEP/CBD/MSP/INF/2, 3, and 4, delegates considered national reports, including: options for analysis; harmonization; linkages; and a preliminary synthesis of the second national reports. SWITZERLAND and others suggested that the Executive Secretary analyze national reports to identify obstacles and challenges, and make the results available through the CHM before the third national reports. DENMARK and the NETHERLANDS suggested a deadline of the COP-6. MEXICO said analysis should address the strategic plan's vision on sustainable development, while PORTUGAL suggested using the analysis for developing the next strategic plans.

Regarding streamlining and harmonizing reports, NEW ZEALAND did not favor more efforts on harmonization, calling instead for more effective and widespread reporting, while the UK said harmonization could help reduce bureaucratic burdens. CANADA called for attention to pilot projects. NORWAY said countries should include information about assistance given or received. IRAN suggested periodic revisions of national and thematic reports.

On the relation between national reporting and the strategic plan, NORWAY said there should be a fuller consideration of how the reports feed into the COP and CBD implementation.

NORWAY and the UK said report questions should address targets and obstacles. Several said that some questions in the format are ambiguous. ERITREA stressed timely release of GEF funding in order to avoid delays in reporting. ESTONIA noted a need to analyze causes for delays or failure to report. The REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA noted the absence of references to technology transfer in most reports.

OPERATIONS OF THE CONVENTION: Delegates considered UNEP/CBD/MSP/WG.II/CRP.2. MEXICO requested adding text to help identify which COP decisions have been implemented. ARGENTINA suggested deleting recommendations on pilot review of COP decisions and the COP's own review of its decisions, while the UK opposed the deletion. On resources for translating the CBD handbook, BURKINA FASO said that most elements have already been translated and the focus should be on making it available in other languages.

COLOMBIA and others did not favor using an independent evaluator to review the recommendations of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), preferring assessment by Parties. Other comments addressed: using a roster of experts identified by Parties through the CHM; involving SBSTTA in the process; and identifying specific procedural problems. To facilitate review of the CBD's implementation, NEW ZEALAND and others supported adding text to address developing-country participation at meetings and on the bureaus.

GERMANY, GRENADA and HUNGARY supported text on strengthening regional and subregional implementation mechanisms and institutions. DENMARK proposed text that would, *inter alia*: acknowledge the role of such institutions; encourage Parties to strengthen regional cooperation; and invite support for developing regional processes. NEW ZEALAND, supported by JAPAN and SAMOA, suggested deleting language on pilot regional and subregional institutions, mechanism and networks.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: Delegates discussed UNEP/CBD/MSP/WG.II/CRP.1. With regard to development of NBSAPs, COLOMBIA, supported by others, stressed the importance of consulting with indigenous and local communities. MEXICO noted the need for innovative ways to facilitate within-country tracking of implementation.

With respect to generating private and institutional support for NBSAPs, COLOMBIA called for supporting regional, subregional and bioregional NBSAPs in addition to national ones. GRENADA and others suggested a specific reference to financial resources. On GEF support for capacity building, the NETHERLANDS proposed adding a reference to CBD Article 7 (Identification and Monitoring), while NEW ZEALAND questioned prioritization.

DENMARK and HUNGARY suggested language calling for review of biodiversity services and establishing regional capacity-building mechanisms to support implementation of priority actions in NBSAPs. On transmitting a message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) on implementation, DENMARK said more elements should be included.

The Chair said new drafts on operations and implementation, and a draft on national reports would be prepared.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As delegates engaged in lengthy debates on the strategic plan's operational goals, some expressed concern that the meeting would fail to deliver a concise, powerful statement that would raise the CBD's profile in time for the WSSD. Others noted that even pragmatic goals in the strategic plan may be unrealistic if not accompanied by the building of capacities in those developing countries harboring a majority of the world's biodiversity.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUP I: WG-I will meet at 10:00 am to review a Chair's draft on the strategic plan's introductory paragraph, mission statement, vision, constraints and challenges, and communication; and to discuss draft recommendations.

WORKING GROUP II: WG-II will meet at 10:00 am to continue discussions on implementation and operations of the Convention and national reports.