



SBSTTA-9 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2003

Delegates to the ninth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-9) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened in Working Group sessions throughout the day. Working Group I (WG-I) addressed sustainable use, the ecosystem approach, and invasive alien species (IAS). Working Group II (WG-II) continued discussions on outcome-oriented targets, and considered Conference Room Papers (CRPs) on monitoring and indicators, and biodiversity and climate change.

WORKING GROUP I

SUSTAINABLE USE: Practical principles and operational guidance: Delegates considered recommendations on practical principles and operational guidance for sustainable use, including the draft Addis Ababa principles and guidelines (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/9 and INF/8). ARGENTINA and BRAZIL called for addressing sustainable production and sustainable consumption. GERMANY and the UK suggested adopting the draft principles and the recommendations without amendment, respectively. AUSTRALIA stressed that sustainable use is dependent on biodiversity conservation. NORWAY and GERMANY proposed setting timeframes. MADAGASCAR requested systematizing research results and promoting cooperation between researchers and users. FINLAND proposed including a reference to other quality standards in the operational guidelines. NEW ZEALAND and AUSTRALIA requested referring to the "precautionary approach" rather than the "precautionary principle." The EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) agreed, under condition that reference be made to Rio Principle 15 (Precautionary approach).

Forest biodiversity: Delegates considered proposals for the prevention of losses caused by unsustainable harvesting of timber and non-timber forest resources (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/9/Add.2), and recommendations on the management of forest biodiversity to derive products and services and benefit-sharing (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/9/Add.1). CANADA and AUSTRIA suggested presenting the recommendations as lessons learnt, and GERMANY and FINLAND proposed simplifying them. INDIA called for promoting the long-term interests of indigenous peoples and ensuring fair and equitable benefit-sharing.

Incentive measures: On proposals for ways and means to remove or mitigate perverse incentives (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/9/Add.3 and INF/10), the UK suggested the Executive Secretary consider the need to further elaborate, refine and advance methodologies for evaluating biodiversity. ARGENTINA urged an exclusive focus on the removal of perverse incentives, and MEXICO stressed the importance of focusing on compensatory policies.

DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE requested making clear, throughout the documents related to sustainable use, that perverse incentives undermine biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH: The Secretariat introduced guidelines on implementing the ecosystem approach and its relationship with sustainable forest management (SFM) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/8). Jan Plesnik, Co-Chair of the Expert Meeting on the ecosystem approach, presented the report of the Expert Meeting (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/4). Gil Shepherd, IUCN, proposed ways to implement and operationalize the principles on the ecosystem approach.

GERMANY and SWEDEN suggested requesting the Executive Secretary to assess the implementation of the ecosystem approach for consideration by SBSTTA prior to COP-9. GERMANY, SLOVENIA and SPAIN suggested adding a paragraph on the need for cross-sectoral integration of SFM, and CANADA and FINLAND opposed, the latter noting that SFM is already significantly broad. SWITZERLAND said the principles should only be revised if their practical application reveals such a need. TANZANIA felt it was premature to forward recommendations to COP-7 on certification and similar programmes that potentially restrict Parties' sovereignty. The NETHERLANDS suggested focusing on facilitating the application of the principles. The FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) suggested that the CBD develop a case-based knowledge management system. The ARAB CENTER FOR THE STUDIES OF ARID ZONES AND DRYLANDS stressed the need to continue collecting data and case studies, and to build capacity to apply the ecosystem approach.

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES: The Secretariat introduced documents on gaps and inconsistencies in the international regulatory framework related to IAS (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/15 and INF/32).

AUSTRALIA, ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, and the US reiterated their opposition to COP Decision VI/23 (Alien species), and asked that all references be deleted or footnoted throughout the document to record their reservations. NEW ZEALAND stressed that the Guiding Principles on alien species had not been adopted, and raised concerns about contradictions with Rio Principle 15 and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND opposed recommendations welcoming the INF document on IAS, noting that they had had no time to review it prior to the meeting. NEW ZEALAND requested, and NORWAY and the EC opposed, removing the chapeau of the recommendation on trade liberalization and, supported by ARGENTINA, deleting references to the WTO and negotiations on bilateral and regional free trade agreements. BRAZIL stressed that the recommendations should not contain discriminatory trade barriers.

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Palau, on behalf of the ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION, supported by NEW ZEALAND, stressed the vulnerability of island States to IAS and the need for a sustainable funding mechanism and technical support. SOUTH AFRICA requested references to unintentional or opportunistic introductions, and to intentional introductions through trade in species for non-food purposes and *ex situ* conservation projects as pathways. The UK recommended harmonizing the CBD and the International Plant Protection Convention and, with the SEYCHELLES and NORWAY, requested that pet trade be added as a pathway.

The PHILIPPINES proposed that tourism be identified as a non trade-related activity for introducing IAS, and ARGENTINA identified several technical insufficiencies in the document. CANADA stressed that prevention efforts should be import-focused, and that risk assessments must be applied to a range of species. LIBERIA noted financial constraints to monitoring transboundary trade, and recommended strengthening regulatory mechanisms at national and regional levels. INDIA proposed linking CBD efforts with those made under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

The SUNSHINE PROJECT drew attention to the relevance of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE noted gaps, including unidentified inconsistencies between the CBD and other relevant international legal instruments, and failure to addressing the risks of communicable diseases.

WORKING GROUP II

WG-II Chair Asghar Fazel (Iran) invited written comments on Chair's texts on the synergies between the CBD and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and technology transfer and cooperation.

OUTCOME-ORIENTED TARGETS: Regarding the Executive Summary on the integration of outcome-oriented targets into the CBD's programmes of work (PoWs) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/14), FINLAND suggested disseminating work on indicators and targets through the Clearing-house Mechanism (CHM). Concerning text on maintaining biodiversity goods and services, ARGENTINA requested referring to the application of best practices. Noting that Parties cannot decide single-handedly on factors constituting threats to biodiversity, the UK requested maintaining a list of threats. UNEP-WCMC, on behalf of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), said the CMS will contribute to work on indicators. A representative of a coalition of NGOs stressed its readiness to contribute to developing and testing indicators, and supported harmonizing targets.

In the afternoon, Chair Fazel presented a Chair's text, inviting written comments in order to prepare a CRP.

Global Strategy for Plant Conservation: The Secretariat introduced a document on ways to promote the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/14/Add.2). IRELAND, BRAZIL and HAITI asked for guidance on developing and implementing national targets and, with MALAYSIA, recommended the nomination of national focal points. CANADA expressed concern over the practicability of national focal points, and supported cooperation with FAO on targets for agricultural biodiversity. MALAYSIA, MEXICO and CANADA noted that some timelines for implementation are unrealistic, given many Parties' limited capacities and financial means. THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION FACILITY described its contributions to information exchange, training and promotion of partnerships and networks.

In the afternoon, Chair Fazel presented a Chair's text on the GSPC, inviting written comments to prepare a CRP.

Inland water biodiversity: The Secretariat introduced a document on outcome-oriented targets and deadlines for the implementation of the revised PoW on inland water biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/14/Add.1). Noting developing countries' lack of monitoring capacity, MEXICO proposed that countries identify goals they are able to monitor. The Philippines, for the ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION, called for assistance for *in situ* conservation of

inland water biodiversity. The UK, SWEDEN and NORWAY called for a review within two years. The NETHERLANDS said COP-7 should review the targets in relation to other PoWs. The RAMSAR CONVENTION stressed the need for harmonizing indicators, and WWF proposed additional indicators.

Marine and coastal biodiversity: The Secretariat presented a document on outcome-oriented targets for the implementation of the PoW on marine and coastal biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/14/Add.3).

The PHILIPPINES and GERMANY proposed taking into account regional initiatives. GERMANY suggested adding a definition of marine protected areas (PAs), and ARGENTINA and BRAZIL requested referring to the significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss, rather than its halt, by 2010.

The PHILIPPINES, ARGENTINA, CUBA, INDONESIA, and NORWAY said the targets are too ambitious and premature, highlighting financial and capacity constraints to their achievements by 2010. BRAZIL said many of the proposed goals and targets fall outside the CBD's scope, and SWITZERLAND pointed to the excessive number of goals, targets and indicators. FINLAND, BRAZIL and NORWAY proposed establishing a process to further work on targets, with BRAZIL suggesting adopting the goals and activities at SBSTTA-9. FAO said process-oriented indicators are more realistic.

MONITORING AND INDICATORS: Chair Fazel introduced a CRP on monitoring and indicators (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/WG.II/CRP.1). Regarding coordination between sets of indicators within the CBD, CANADA and NEW ZEALAND suggested emphasizing the need to develop national-level mechanisms for coordination. On the collaboration between the CBD and other organizations for the development of indicators, the EC proposed adding a reference to "monitoring." NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL and the UK objected, preferring to keep these concepts separate. Chair Fazel requested consultations on this issue, and delegates adopted the CRP with other suggested amendments.

BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE: In the afternoon, the Secretariat presented a CRP on biodiversity and climate change (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/WG.II/CRP.2) incorporating amendments proposed by Parties in writing. The document was adopted with several minor amendments, including a reference to the reports of UNFCCC workshops on synergies and cooperation with other conventions and to the IUCN Man and Biosphere Programme. Chair Fazel suggested informal discussions on a proposal from PERU to refer to specific projects mitigating the impact of human activity.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates in WG-II whipped through considering the CRP on biodiversity and climate change. Although there was general satisfaction with the document, a number of delegates noted that the document's impact will be minimal at most, given that it requests SBSTTA to merely "develop advice or guidance to promoting synergy," rather than develop guidelines.

Although discussions on IAS were expected to rouse the ghosts of COP-6 that have spooked biodiversity-related negotiations ever since, many delegates remarked the cooperative spirit of discussions. Some noted that the Secretariat's late distribution of the information document on IAS could have easily frustrated the good will.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUP I: WG-I will meet at 10:00 am to consider Chair's texts on the ecosystem approach and IAS, and CRPs on PAs and mountain biodiversity. It will continue discussing these documents in the afternoon.

WORKING GROUP II: WG-II will convene at 10:00 am to remove brackets in the CRPs on biodiversity and climate change, and monitoring and indicators, and discuss CRPs on the GSPC, outcome-oriented targets, and technology transfer and cooperation. It will continue discussing these documents in the afternoon.