



CBD COP-7 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2004

On Wednesday, COP-7 delegates met in two Working Groups (WGs). WG-I continued discussing protected areas (PAs). WG-II considered the follow-up to the WSSD, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) and operations of the Convention, and started discussing the international regime on access and benefit-sharing (ABS). A brief Plenary was held in the afternoon to hear progress reports on WG-I and WG-II's work, and statements by organizations. A contact group met in the evening to discuss ABS.

WORKING GROUP I

PROTECTED AREAS: A number of Parties, opposed by CANADA, NEW ZEALAND and BRAZIL, proposed to establish an open-ended working group on PAs. GERMANY recommended that the working group focus on monitoring progress of the work programme's implementation. COSTA RICA and MADAGASCAR called for indicators to measure progress. BRAZIL and THAILAND suggested reporting on the work programme's implementation at each COP until 2010. Saudi Arabia, for the ASIA AND THE PACIFIC GROUP, suggested simplifying reporting requirements.

Many delegations called for additional technical and financial resources, and capacity building. BRAZIL requested commitments regarding financial support and technology transfer. PERU called for evaluating PA-related costs. INDONESIA suggested establishing a trust fund for marine and coastal PAs. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION stressed the need for funding priorities. BULGARIA, MALI and COSTA RICA suggested prioritizing existing PAs, and BURKINA FASO enabling activities.

Several Parties called for flexibility to allow for the adoption of regional and national targets. TANZANIA, BRAZIL and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA suggested that targets and timeframes be determined according to national priorities. MALAYSIA and JAMAICA noted concern regarding the targets' tight timeframes, and BANGLADESH requested flexibility. The GAMBIA stressed the importance of national-level analyses to evaluate capacity needs. The SEYCHELLES cautioned against the budgetary consequences of a broad work programme. GHANA proposed integrating the targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation into the work programme.

THAILAND, KENYA and BELIZE highlighted the importance of marine PAs (MPAs), with THAILAND and COSTA RICA supporting reference to areas beyond national jurisdiction. NORWAY and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA stressed the need to act according to the law of the sea framework. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA emphasized the importance of ensuring consent of concerned countries when establishing PAs in the high seas. TURKEY requested deleting reference to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

KENYA, AUSTRIA and ARGENTINA noted that biodiversity in areas surrounding PAs must be protected, with KENYA suggesting the establishment of buffer zones. KENYA and JAPAN noted the importance of ecological corridors. BRAZIL proposed that activities on indigenous territories comply with domestic legislation and prior informed consent requirements. The MALDIVES highlighted the importance of effective management plans and, with the PHILIPPINES, emphasized regional cooperation. Guatemala, on behalf of CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES, suggested reinforcing regional PA systems. MONACO stressed the benefits of regional instruments for MPAs.

The ASIA AND THE PACIFIC GROUP and GHANA underscored participatory PA management. Many Parties called for community involvement. CHAD suggested involving youth in decision making. Colombia, on behalf of GRULAC, noted the work programme's bias towards conservation rather than sustainable use and benefit-sharing.

NEW ZEALAND and INDONESIA expressed concern over illegal activities in PAs. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION and CHINA highlighted the importance of transboundary PAs. KIRIBATI called for a global PA network. NORWAY and JAPAN said the work programme should be based on scientific information. KENYA proposed establishing international core areas, adopting mitigating measures, and conducting environmental impact assessments.

ARGENTINA called for biodiversity indicators and PA selection guidelines. TUNISIA and SAUDI ARABIA called for a unified classification system of PAs. BOLIVIA called for an information network that pools national databases, and advocated South-South cooperation. The BAHAMAS proposed using the Clearing-house Mechanism to disseminate information on the work programme's implementation. INDIA suggested disseminating successful PA management models. CUBA emphasized the need to define ecological networks. YEMEN stressed private sector cooperation. VANUATU underlined the socioeconomic aspects of PA management.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL highlighted women's rights and rejected commercial activities in PAs. The INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION said law enforcement in PAs entails risks for rangers. The INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY (IIFB) said the work programme must guarantee indigenous peoples' rights to participate in decision making and to access natural resources within PA borders. The UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES proposed itself as a partner for implementing the work programme. KALPAVRIKSH called for recognizing community conserved areas. FAO stressed that the effectiveness of PA networks depends on land-use management practices. UNESCO proposed references to biosphere reserves.

WG-I Chair Hans Hoogeveen (the Netherlands) proposed, and delegates agreed, to establish a contact group.

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WORKING GROUP II

WSSD FOLLOW-UP: WG-II Chair Desh Deepak Verma (India) opened discussions on MDGs, MYPOW and operations of the Convention (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/20).

CBD Work Programme and the MDGs: The Secretariat introduced documents on the Convention's work programme and the MDGs (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/20/Add.1 and INF/23).

Ireland, on behalf of the EU and Acceding Countries, Bulgaria and Romania, called for mainstreaming biodiversity into other fields, such as trade and development cooperation. Many delegates said the 2010 target to significantly reduce biodiversity loss is key to alleviating poverty, and supported strengthening cooperation with relevant bodies. AUSTRALIA opposed discussing MDGs not directly relevant to the Convention's work. BRAZIL called for a cross-cutting CBD initiative on hunger and malnutrition.

SWITZERLAND stressed the need to assess progress towards the 2010 target and use it as a milestone for the MDG on ensuring environmental sustainability. TANZANIA requested that the GEF prioritize national MDG-related initiatives. CANADA and KENYA stressed the need for development activities consistent with the CBD, with KENYA suggesting reference to the HIV/AIDS-related MDG. CUBA, supported by many, said integrating the MDGs would require financial resources, monitoring and indicators, and strengthening of national capacities.

Multi-year programme of work: The Secretariat introduced documents on MYPOW (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/5 and 20).

Palau, on behalf of SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS), supported addressing island biodiversity as an issue for in-depth consideration at COP-8. He stressed the need for more preparatory work, financial assistance and an approach to island biodiversity that reflects SIDS' situation. The EU called for a strategic, concrete and coherent programme and a focused review process. NEW ZEALAND said the COP should assess progress, identify impediments and provide technical and practical advice. The IIFB proposed references to social indicators. TANZANIA requested that ABS be reviewed no later than at COP-8. COLOMBIA and Egypt, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, requested that MYPOW include more issues related to sustainable use activities. BRAZIL suggested focusing efforts on implementing existing decisions.

Operations of the Convention: The Secretariat introduced documents on the review and consolidation of COP decisions (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/20/Add.2 and INF/16).

The NETHERLANDS supported retiring COP-3 and COP-4 decisions, and proposed that COP-8 retire COP-5 and COP-6 decisions.

The Secretariat presented additional items for consideration: the review of the effectiveness of amendments to Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure (term of office of the President and the Bureau); and the review of administrative arrangements between the CBD and UNEP regarding the appointment of the Executive Secretary. Delegates requested documentation and time to consult on these issues.

ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING: The Secretariat introduced documents on ABS (UNEP/CBD/ABS/EW-CB/1/3, UNEP/CBD/COP/7/5, 6, 17, and INF/17 and 39). AUSTRALIA said the WSSD's call to negotiate an international ABS regime contains a commitment to promote the Bonn Guidelines' implementation, does not cover matters beyond the CBD's scope, and should not lead to amending national ABS legislation.

The EU, CANADA and SWITZERLAND encouraged prioritizing the implementation of the Bonn Guidelines to help identify problems and gaps, and committed to negotiating a regime building on these experiences. INDONESIA cautioned against premature determination of the regime's nature, scope and modalities, and suggested assessing the Guidelines' effectiveness.

JAPAN emphasized that the regime should both facilitate access and achieve benefit-sharing, and be practical and non-discriminatory. He said its scope should not cover derivatives.

COLOMBIA supported including derivatives and traditional knowledge. The IIFB said the CBD should guarantee indigenous peoples' rights and self-determination before initiating negotiations on an international ABS regime.

The AFRICAN GROUP and others supported a legally binding regime that balances access with benefit-sharing concerns and includes technology transfer. TANZANIA stressed States' sovereign rights over their genetic resources, and UGANDA said the regime should respect communities' rights. ARGENTINA stressed the need for further work on the regime's scope before discussing its modalities.

COLOMBIA underscored that the CBD should take the lead on developing an ABS regime and, with ALGERIA and Mexico, on behalf of the LIKE-MINDED MEGADIVERSE COUNTRIES (LMMC), called for convening a negotiating working group. UGANDA requested concentrating on the negotiating group's terms of reference. SWITZERLAND and COSTA RICA suggested establishing an expert panel.

NORWAY called for developing multilateral approaches, such as an international certificate of origin. The LMMC and Colombia, on behalf of GRULAC, expressed preference for a certificate of legal provenance. The LMMC said the regime should ensure, *inter alia*, compliance with national access legislation and technology transfer. The INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS (UPOV) highlighted that breeders need access to all breeding materials for society's benefit.

Delegates established a contact group to address the international regime and other approaches. The contact group met in the evening and discussed the operative paragraphs of the draft decision on the international ABS regime.

PLENARY

WG Reports: WG-I Chair Hoogeveen and WG-II Chair Verma reported on progress made in their respective WGs.

Statements: The INTERNATIONAL PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES INSTITUTE called for strengthening the knowledge base on the links between biodiversity and food security. The COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT highlighted the need for awareness-raising programmes and grassroots innovations.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The establishment of a contact group on an international ABS regime came as no surprise, considering the amount of bracketed text. While some delegates commented that an inherently complex debate was further complicated by the lack of clear negotiating positions and groupings, others were quick to note that this was inevitable at such an early stage. Some delegates hoped that the contact group would not only clean up, but also significantly shorten, the terms of reference to provide the ABS Working Group with a simple and broad mandate.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUP I: WG-I will meet at 10:00 am in the Dewan Merdeka Hall to start discussing the Strategic Plan and integration of outcome-oriented targets in the Convention's work programme.

WORKING GROUP II: WG-II will convene at 10:00 am in Room TR4 to initiate consideration of Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge). Look for a Chair's text on WSSD follow-up, possibly to be circulated in the afternoon.

PLENARY: Participants will reconvene in the daily Plenary at 5:30 pm to review progress.

CONTACT GROUPS: Look for a revised draft work programme on PAs to be considered by the contact group on PAs, which will convene at 7:00 pm. The contact group on ABS will reconvene at 1:00 pm.