



SBSTTA-10 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2005

Delegates to the tenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-10) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened in working groups throughout the day. Working Group I (WG-I) considered the draft work programme on island biodiversity, and discussed agricultural biodiversity. Working Group II (WG-II) continued commenting on the draft reports of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), considered goals and sub-targets to facilitate coherence among the CBD's work programmes, and addressed indicators for assessing progress towards the 2010 target. A contact group met in the evening to discuss targets and timeframes for the island biodiversity work programme.

WORKING GROUP I

ISLAND BIODIVERSITY: WG-I Chair Theresa Mundita Lim (Philippines) opened discussions on island biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/4 and INF/26). SPAIN reported on the outcomes of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Island Biodiversity.

Fiji, for ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, supported by many, requested that the document produced by the Liaison Group on Island Biodiversity be considered as the basis for discussion, while NORWAY and TUVALU favored the AHTEG's document. MEXICO proposed deleting recommendations on access and benefit-sharing (ABS) and on the development of draft legislation and regulation by the Executive Secretary. The PHILIPPINES requested references to the rights and participation of indigenous and local communities. Regarding natural disasters, THAILAND called for environmental impact assessments and for targets related to recovery. INDIA, BRAZIL and JAPAN highlighted linkages with other thematic work programmes, cross-cutting issues and conventions and, with the NETHERLANDS, cautioned against duplicating existing targets. AUSTRALIA stressed that global goals and targets should not be mandatory or time-bound.

LIBERIA and TUNISIA requested a classification of islands on the basis of their levels of biodiversity, and called for adequate financial resources to implement the work programme. CUBA and VANUATU emphasized Island States' dependence on biodiversity for their economic development. INDONESIA and MADAGASCAR opposed singling out Small Island Developing States, stressing that small and large islands face similar problems. The EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EC) and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA called for scientific studies on island biodiversity. FRANCE said demographic growth should be taken into account.

The GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY said the SBSTTA has no mandate to address financial issues. IUCN noted that its Red List addresses islands. The INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY called for references to prior informed consent of indigenous peoples and *sui generis* systems for the protection of indigenous intellectual property.

Delegates established a contact group to address the timeframe and targets of the work programme.

AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY: Biodiversity for food and nutrition: Delegates considered options for a cross-cutting initiative on biodiversity for food and nutrition (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/13). They broadly supported the initiative, highlighting its potential to showcase biodiversity's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals. IUCN noted the absence of a reference to biodiversity in the report of the Millennium Project. GERMANY and PALAU, opposed by PERU, called for the inclusion of medicinal and aromatic plants. COLOMBIA and the PHILIPPINES said trade-related issues should be addressed. TURKEY called for references to technology transfer, and fair and equitable benefit-sharing with countries of origin. NEW ZEALAND said the initiative duplicates existing activities.

Soil conservation and sustainable use: Delegates discussed the further development of the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Soil Biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/14). GERMANY, supported by many, called for broadening the Initiative's scope to include other terrestrial ecosystems. PERU stressed the need to adopt the ecosystem approach and, with ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, to refer to sustainable consumption and indigenous land-use practices. COLOMBIA stressed the need to work closely with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and address incentives. The NETHERLANDS called for better soil-related policy making. AUSTRALIA requested limiting the Initiative's elements and excluding poverty alleviation to avoid overlap with other international processes. The COMMUNITY BIODIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMME (CBDC) said farmers should be partners in research on soil ecology and management.

Genetic use restriction technologies: Supporting the report of the AHTEG on Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/15), BANGLADESH proposed that it be considered by COP-8. PERU requested including all the AHTEG's recommendations in the report. CANADA, AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND said the report should not be presented as a consensus document, noting that it was prepared by the AHTEG's Co-Chairs only, without subsequent review by its members. Many delegates supported referring the report to the Article 8(j) Working Group, and conducting further research. AUSTRIA and the EC called for a SBSTTA recommendation restating COP decision V/5 (Agricultural Biodiversity). The NETHERLANDS stressed that GURTs' impacts had yet to be confirmed and, with CANADA, recommended strict risk assessments, on a case-by-case basis. Acknowledging the need for risk assessments, an INDUSTRY representative said GURTs should not be treated differently from other biotechnologies. The ETC GROUP called for specific recommendations to protect the livelihoods of local and indigenous peoples and ensure their food security. The CBDC called for recognizing farmers' rights to seeds and for a ban on GURTs.

**WORKING GROUP II**

MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT: The CZECH REPUBLIC stressed the need for greater involvement of the scientific community and feedback from national focal points. The NETHERLANDS suggested further determining the causes of biodiversity loss and providing policy options.

GOALS AND SUB-TARGETS: Delegates considered documents on the refinement of goals and sub-targets and their integration into the work programmes, including draft global outcome-oriented targets for the work programmes on marine and coastal biodiversity and on inland water ecosystems (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/8, and 8/Add.1 and 2). Clive Wilkinson, Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, gave a presentation on coral reef ecosystems. Spyros Kouvelis, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, presented the Ramsar indicators, noting their suitability to assess implementation in the CBD context.

JAPAN stressed the need to avoid a proliferation of targets, and opposed including specific timeframes. NORWAY, GERMANY, SWEDEN and SOUTH AFRICA supported ambitious goals and sub-targets. INDIA and CANADA said targets need to be developed in line with national priorities. TANZANIA and GABON requested references to sub-regional goals and targets. The EC stressed that refinement of targets should remain within the mandate of COP decision VII/30 (Strategic Plan). Several countries stressed the need to support developing countries and economies in transition in achieving the targets.

Regarding a target on conserving effectively at least 10% of each of the world's ecological regions, SWITZERLAND, supported by SOUTH AFRICA, said the target is applicable to inland waters if an adequate number, rather than a surface area, of river basins is included. ICELAND opposed the 10% target regarding marine ecosystems, while SOUTH AFRICA noted its adoption by COP-7. THE GAMBIA, AUSTRALIA and BRAZIL requested references to marine protected areas (MPAs), with BRAZIL referring to no-take MPAs. GERMANY and GREENPEACE proposed a reference to marine ecosystems beyond national jurisdiction. The PHILIPPINES requested a reference to the full respect for the rights and participation of indigenous and local communities. ICELAND and the US said deep sea trawling should only be addressed in conjunction with vulnerable ecosystems.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA said the target on promoting the conservation of genetic diversity may not be realistic due to the lack of information on inland and marine genetic diversity.

Regarding the goal on sustainable use and consumption, INDIA and NEPAL requested references to the needs and livelihood options of local communities in the context of marine ecosystems. On preventing species from becoming endangered as a result of international trade, BRAZIL stressed the need for enhanced international cooperation, and ICELAND requested deleting references to CITES listings.

Regarding the reduction of pressure from habitat loss, land use change and degradation, and unsustainable water use, the PHILIPPINES and SWEDEN suggested referring to restoration and rehabilitation efforts.

On controlling threats from IAS, GERMANY referred to human-induced introductions of invasive plant species.

On addressing challenges from climate change and pollution, COLOMBIA said the CBD's contribution to addressing climate change is not clear. TANZANIA and GABON suggested a substantial reduction of pollution, and FRANCE requested a reference to pesticides.

UGANDA said the capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods should be enhanced, not only maintained. GERMANY proposed restoring depleted ecosystems.

On the protection of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, and ensuring benefit-sharing, AUSTRALIA, CANADA, COLOMBIA and BRAZIL requested consistency with the wording of CBD Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge), with AUSTRALIA, CANADA and COLOMBIA suggesting addressing these issues within the context of the Article 8(j) and ABS *ad hoc* working groups.

The US underscored that access to, and sharing of benefits arising from, marine genetic resources beyond the limits of national jurisdiction should be addressed by the *Ad Hoc*

Open-ended Informal Working Group established by the UN General Assembly at its 59th session.

INDICATORS: Delegates considered a note on indicators for assessing progress towards the 2010 target (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/9). The UK reported on the conclusions of the AHTEG on Indicators.

Many delegates supported the indicators, including five additional ones, and their alignment with the 2010 target, while stressing the need to clearly define terms and measurements. SPAIN opposed adopting the indicators due to lack of measurement methods. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA called for simple indicators. AUSTRALIA suggested that the indicators be reviewed by the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention. SWEDEN called for a stepwise development and implementation of trial indicators. Several developing countries called for capacity building and financial assistance to use indicators.

MEXICO noted difficulties in linking national data to global-level indicators and, supported by many, proposed mainstreaming indicators into national reporting. ASIA AND THE PACIFIC cautioned against using indicators to assess implementation.

INDIA suggested linking indicators on the status of species with those on ecosystem fragmentation. TURKEY proposed including socioeconomic indicators. Several delegates said the ecological footprint can be used as an indicator of sustainable consumption. MEXICO, FINLAND and others opposed using certification systems as indicators of sustainable use. NORWAY opposed using official development assistance as an indicator. THAILAND and the TEBTEBBA FOUNDATION suggested further work on the indicators related to food and medicine, as well as communities' well-being. TUNISIA and TANZANIA expressed concerns about using the number and cost of alien invasions as an indicator of the control of threats from IAS. GERMANY proposed indicators on forest genetic resources and genetic diversity of domesticated animals and cultivated plants. DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE suggested referring to species types and ecosystems invaded. The CBD NGO ALLIANCE recommended indicators on the link between trade and biodiversity. IUCN proposed revising the indicator related to endangered species and international trade.

Discussing the draft outline of the second Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/10), many delegates supported using the GBO as a tool for communicating indicators and assessing progress towards the 2010 target, stressing that it should be concise and not too technical, and target policy makers, the media and the public. SWEDEN proposed strengthening a section on limitations, uncertainties and methodological difficulties in monitoring progress towards the 2010 target, and TURKEY on the status of capacity building, and access to, and transfer of, technology. The UK urged the Secretariat to prepare the draft GBO for SBSTTA-11, as a means for testing the headline indicators.

CONTACT GROUP

The contact group on island biodiversity, chaired by Horst Korn (Germany), started discussions on the timeframe, global targets and priority actions for the work programme on island biodiversity. Delegates agreed to revert to COP decision VII/30 annex II (provisional framework for goals and targets), and to correlate goals with specific actions proposed by the AHTEG.

IN THE CORRIDORS

In spite of seemingly smooth discussions on the work programme on island biodiversity, a Small Island State delegate lamented the lack of coordination and common position between various Island States.

In contrast, discussions on genetic use restriction technologies appeared as a battlefield, with an expected polarization of views. Proposals to refer the issue to the Working Group on Article 8(j) left some delegates wondering if the long-lasting odyssey of the report of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group, from one CBD body to the other, would ever come to an end. Noting similar suggestions for referral during discussions on targets, one delegate thought this was but a confirmation of an emerging trend in the SBSTTA to shy away from delicate politically-charged issues.