

SBSTTA-11 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2005

Participants to the eleventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-11) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) met in the working groups (WGs) throughout the day. WG-I considered the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), incentive measures and invasive alien species (IAS). WG-II addressed the review of the implementation of, and integration of outcome-oriented targets in, the work programmes on dry and sub-humid lands, forests and mountain biodiversity.

WORKING GROUP I

MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT: The NETHERLANDS, with SLOVENIA and ROMANIA, called for an international effort to bridge the gaps identified in the MA. CANADA and the US noted that sustainable consumption issues are better dealt with by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL stressed the need for the CBD to address unsustainable consumption patterns.

AUSTRIA emphasized the importance of addressing drivers of biodiversity loss at the regional level. The Tebtebba Foundation, on behalf of the INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY, suggested strengthening support for the sustainable customary use of biodiversity by indigenous communities.

BRAZIL asked to refer to developing countries' special needs and circumstances and, with many others, called for requesting the financial mechanism to assist developing countries to implement the MA findings. JAPAN and the GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY noted that the Conference of the Parties, not the SBSTTA, should discuss the financial mechanism.

On integrating the MA findings, BRAZIL opposed highlighting particular findings. CANADA suggested including a reference to illegal fishing. Liberia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, stressed impacts of overfishing on inland water ecosystems, and underscored capacity building for controlling the introduction of IAS.

SLOVENIA and ROMANIA stressed the need to review and update targets as part of the process of revising the Strategic Plan, while CANADA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, BRAZIL, AUSTRIA and LESOTHO opposed setting specific time-frames.

CHINA, AUSTRALIA, Peru on behalf of LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (GRULAC) and others opposed a reference to the consultation process established by the 2005 Paris Biodiversity Conference, with BRAZIL underscoring the need to strengthen SBSTTA rather than establish a parallel science mechanism.

INCENTIVE MEASURES: The Secretariat introduced documents regarding positive incentive measures and valuation tools (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/11/8 and 9, and INF/9, 11 and 15).

Positive incentive measures: ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA noted difficulties in applying incentives in developing countries and, calling for further research, suggested deleting recommendations encouraging their application. The NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, SWEDEN, the UK and AUSTRALIA supported retaining these recommendations. The NETHERLANDS suggested coordinating efforts to design innovative incentives. NEW ZEALAND opposed developing innovative incentives without exploring potential costs.

SWEDEN called for reference to access and benefit-sharing as an incentive and, with SPAIN, to non-monetary incentives. The FAO distinguished between incentives for agricultural and for wildlife biodiversity. SWITZERLAND cautioned against distortions in competition and market discrimination and, with AUSTRALIA, stressed the need for mutual supportiveness with other international agreements. CHINA, supported by ARGENTINA, NEW ZEALAND and BRAZIL, proposed deleting a recommendation regarding World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations on environmental goods and services. BRAZIL questioned whether SBSTTA is the best setting to discuss incentive measures.

CHINA and MALAYSIA stressed that incentives should be adaptable to local conditions. ARGENTINA warned against incentives negatively affecting livelihoods, sustainable development or biodiversity of third parties. CAMEROON drew attention to local community involvement in protected area management. CANADA stressed the role of indigenous people in developing and implementing incentives. TURKEY suggested sharing experience through the Clearing House Mechanism (CHM).

The UN CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT described its BioTrade Initiative to promote sustainable biodiversity-based trade. GREENPEACE proposed the CBD take the lead in developing an international environmental taxation mechanism. The INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE warned that enhanced market access can lead to unsustainable use of biodiversity. FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL underscored focusing on incentives' impacts on women, the poor and indigenous people.

Valuation tools: CANADA supported indigenous and local community participation in the work on biodiversity valuation and with NEW ZEALAND, capacity-building efforts. ARGENTINA called for developing a common understanding of valuation techniques. MALAYSIA stressed enhancing regional efforts. The PHILIPPINES called for assistance for South-South cooperation. SWITZERLAND favored case studies in developing countries. The CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH drew attention to its project on an integrated approach to the valuation and sustainable management of agro-biodiversity.

WG-I Chair Annemarie Watt (Australia) established an informal drafting group, which met in the evening to prepare a Chair's text on incentive measures.

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES: The Secretariat introduced the main conclusion and recommendations from the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on IAS (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/11/16 and INF/4). SWEDEN and ARGENTINA stressed the importance of homogenizing IAS terminology. BRAZIL, MEXICO, LIBERIA and HAITI stressed the need for national-level capacity building. BRAZIL, opposed by the EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC), called for an IAS funding mechanism.

The EC, ARGENTINA and JAMAICA, opposed by CHILE and NEW ZEALAND, supported retaining and refining, rather than deleting, a recommendation on incentive schemes. SWEDEN and the NETHERLANDS supported convening a meeting to discuss how to complement the International Plant Protection Convention. PALAU and JAMAICA highlighted small island countries' vulnerability to IAS. Discussion on IAS will resume on Wednesday.

WORKING GROUP II

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK

PROGRAMMES: WG-II continued discussions on target 10.1 (transfer of genetic resources) in Goal 10 (benefit-sharing) of the provisional framework for goals and targets. COLOMBIA, supported by GRULAC, proposed amended text, stating that the fair and equitable benefit-sharing arising out of the use of genetic resources is in line with the relevant CBD provisions. SWITZERLAND, NORWAY, CANADA, and the EC opposed this amendment. The EC also cautioned against duplication of targets and, with GHANA, suggested consistency with language agreed at previous SBSTTA meetings. A Friends of the Chair group was established.

In the afternoon, IRAN reported on the outcomes of the Friends of the Chair group, which did not reach consensus but proposed five options on the target language, as well as a second option for Goal 10, adding reference to access to genetic resources. COLOMBIA, BRAZIL and TURKEY favored forwarding the options for consideration at COP-8, and opposed reopening discussions on Goal 10. SWITZERLAND, CANADA and the UK said Goal 10 should be refined, with the UK proposing compromise language on "facilitating" rather than "ensuring" access to genetic resources.

On the draft outcome-oriented targets for the work programmes on dry and sub-humid lands, forests and mountain biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/11/INF/23), TANZANIA, supported by many, suggested adding "fair and equitable" in reference to benefit-sharing in work programmes' visions. BRAZIL proposed references to poverty alleviation, and CANADA, to local and indigenous communities. Several parties emphasized aligning terminology with the CBD's objectives and Strategic Plan.

On Goal 1 (ecosystem conservation), delegates agreed to refer to "at least 10%" of each ecological region effectively conserved. CANADA, with AUSTRALIA, MALAYSIA and CHINA, but opposed by BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, the EC and the UK, suggested a reference to protected area networks.

On Goal 2 (species conservation), MALAYSIA stressed target consistency across work programmes, while GERMANY suggested setting specific targets for each work programme.

On Goal 3 (conservation of genetic diversity), COLOMBIA, opposed by BRAZIL, stressed that the target on forests should apply to genetic diversity of all species, rather than only those of socioeconomic value. NEPAL proposed a reference to non-timber forest products.

Regarding Goal 4 (sustainable use and consumption), GREENPEACE asked that unsustainable consumption of forest resources and its impact on forest biodiversity be considered under target 4.2 for forest biodiversity.

On Goal 5 (habitat loss, land-use change and degradation), KYRGYZSTAN and GABON proposed referring to the rate, and not area, of forest loss. BRAZIL noted that GREENPEACE's

proposal to halve forest loss by 2010 may not be achievable in all types of forest tenure. CANADA favored retaining the original language.

Regarding Goal 6 (threats from IAS), TANZANIA, BRAZIL and BURKINA FASO suggested the language consistency across all three work programmes.

On Goal 7 (climate change and pollution), AUSTRIA suggested deleting a reference to long-range and localized pollution regarding forest biodiversity.

On Goal 9 (diversity of indigenous and local communities), BRAZIL, supported by the BAHAMAS and CANADA, suggested adding protection of traditional knowledge under targets for forest biodiversity, and TANZANIA proposed including respecting, preserving and maintaining the rights of indigenous and local communities.

On Goal 11 (capacity for implementation), SWITZERLAND added reference to specific sources of new and additional financial resources.

DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS BIODIVERSITY:

Regarding the draft recommendations on dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/11/4/Add.2), BRAZIL emphasized the need for taxonomic studies and capacity building on taxonomic knowledge. NORWAY proposed a reference to the Strategic Plan of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. The NETHERLANDS, with MEXICO, suggested deleting references to time-frames for the work programmes. MAURITIUS called for capacity building and adequate financial resources to achieve the goals and targets in small island developing States. Many countries requested further refinement of relevant indicators, while GHANA noted that countries can develop their own indicators, with the Secretariat noting the CHM would be an appropriate forum for this. The INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CAUCUS called for ensuring full participation of indigenous and local communities in the development of national goals and targets.

MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY: WG-II Chair Claudine Ramiarison (Madagascar) introduced the document on mountain biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/11/10). MALAYSIA said references to indicators should take into account their provisional nature, and proposed to add a reference to natural disasters regarding the loss and degradation of natural habitats in mountain areas. MEXICO and INDIA requested addressing relevant indicators. COLOMBIA, MAURITIUS, GABON and SAINT LUCIA asked that the reference to capacity building and adequate financial resources apply to all developing countries, rather than specifically to the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition. The INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CAUCUS called for the protection of traditional knowledge.

FOREST BIODIVERSITY: The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/11/15). Many stressed the need to reduce the number of indicators and not burden parties with additional reporting. CANADA, supported by FINLAND, JORDAN, SWITZERLAND and AUSTRIA, proposed establishing a small expert group to review indicators. COLOMBIA favored reviewing indicators in a transparent manner. The INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CAUCUS called for ensuring indigenous peoples' participation in the expert group.

IN THE CORRIDORS

WG-I deliberations on the MA findings remained in the realm of science, a first indication that delegates followed Chair Prip's appeal to avoid politicizing discussions and stay focused on the provision of authoritative scientific advice. Discussions on incentive measures, however, did not share the same spirit – an all-too-expected development given similar experiences at COP-7 and SBSTTA-10. Trade-related issues, including a reference to the WTO negotiations on environmental goods and services, inevitably led to polarized debates and an early establishment of an informal drafting group. Some delegates joked that parties themselves need to be incentivized to reach a thus far elusive consensus on incentives.