

## **CBD COP-8 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 22 MARCH 2006**

Delegates to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-8) met in two working groups throughout the day. Working Group I (WG-I) addressed: forest biodiversity; inland waters; and marine and coastal biodiversity. Working Group II (WG-II) considered: Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge); communication, education and public awareness (CEPA); progress in implementation; and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA).

### **WORKING GROUP I**

**FOREST BIODIVERSITY:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1/Add.2 and 8/3). The UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) reported on the role of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in implementation. The UN FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF) reported on the outcomes of its sixth meeting (February 2006), highlighting: a resolution for adoption by the UN Economic and Social Council on the future international arrangement on forests; and agreement on adopting a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests by UNFF-7.

INDONESIA and others invited collaboration and harmonization with UNFF, FAO, regional Forest Law Enforcement and Governance processes, and the International Tropical Timber Organization.

Many countries opposed, or advocated a precautionary approach to, the use of genetically modified (GM) trees before thoroughly assessing risks. NORWAY and GREENPEACE requested establishing an expert group on the use of GM trees. AUSTRALIA, with CANADA, requested the Executive Secretary to synthesize existing information on GM trees. IRAN, the WOMEN'S CAUCUS, GREENPEACE, GLOBAL FOREST COALITION and the INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY (IIFB) called for a moratorium on GM trees.

Delegates reported on national and regional activities for implementation. The MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE stressed the importance of regional cooperation in the implementation of international commitments. Noting unauthorized harvesting and unsustainable use of forests, GHANA, with many, highlighted the importance of forest law enforcement and the ecosystem approach.

Liberia for AFRICA, with others, suggested that the mandate of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on forest biodiversity be extended, and the EU and CANADA called for an AHTEG meeting before COP-9.

**INLAND WATERS:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/3 and 26/Add.3). Many highlighted strengthening collaboration with the Ramsar Convention and specialized regional bodies. ZIMBABWE

urged parties and donors to enable sub-regional management of shared water bodies. THAILAND suggested that COP take note of Ramsar COP-9 resolutions on designation of transboundary Ramsar sites. JAPAN and the PHILIPPINES highlighted harmonizing national reporting under the CBD and Ramsar Convention.

INDIA and ZAMBIA emphasized the lack of information, in particular on the extent and distribution of inland waters beyond Ramsar sites. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA suggested developing inventories of species specific to inland water ecosystems. CUBA supported creation of an AHTEG to review and update goals of the work programme. The RAMSAR CONVENTION welcomed collaboration with the CBD and called on COP to consider avian influenza concerns.

**MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/3, 26/Add.1 and INF/23). MEXICO reported on the UN General Assembly (UNGA) *Ad Hoc* Working Group on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, with GHANA and KENYA expressing disappointment with its limited results.

**Biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction:** VENEZUELA and SOUTH AFRICA proposed recognizing that the CBD, in the framework of the UNGA Working Group, is the appropriate instrument to promote activities for the conservation and sustainable use of such biodiversity. COLOMBIA, CUBA and ARGENTINA preferred that CBD provide technical advice and UNGA Working Group legal guidance. NORWAY suggested the CBD focus on scientific information on biodiversity and threats to it, and the UNGA Working Group on options for mitigation. The EU suggested the CBD contribute to the ecosystem and precautionary approaches, and COP-8 support the establishment of a follow-up process by UNGA on such biodiversity. PERU called for cooperation between CBD and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). AFRICA argued that text on UNCLOS regulating marine activities beyond national jurisdiction undermines the CBD mandate.

PALAU, THAILAND, CHILE and the PHILIPPINES made proposals on language calling for an interim prohibition of high seas bottom trawling. NORWAY and JAPAN prioritized implementation of the ecosystem approach, and PERU and INDIA for capacity building.

**Deep-seabed genetic resources:** COLOMBIA requested text on benefit-sharing. TUVALU suggested referring to genetic resources "of great interest for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity," rather than for their value for scientific research, sustainable development and commercial applications. INDONESIA called for a holistic and integrated approach on genetic resources under the UN. CUBA called for increased access to existing information and technology.

**IMCAM:** MALAYSIA called for capacity building and proposed postponing full implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management (IMCAM) to 2015. INDIA called

for long-term capacity to implement IMCAM. THAILAND called for the findings of the AHTEG on IMCAM to be integrated with the island biodiversity work programme. NEW ZEALAND stressed States' flexibility in implementing IMCAM according to national circumstances.

### WORKING GROUP II

**ARTICLE 8(J):** Noting that genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) will be dealt with under the item on agricultural biodiversity, the Secretariat introduced the recommendations of the fourth Meeting of the Article 8(j) Working Group (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/7). Many delegates supported them in their current form. The EU, supported by many, called for full and effective indigenous participation in the work of the Convention, in particular the negotiations of an international ABS regime. BOLIVIA and the IIFB suggested applying the Article 8(j) Working Group indigenous participation procedures in the ABS Working Group. INDONESIA called for clear guidance on coordination between the Article 8(j) and ABS Working Groups, with the PHILIPPINES adding that the Article 8(j) Working Group should elaborate traditional knowledge elements of the ABS regime. MALAYSIA highlighted the need for clear provisions on benefit-sharing, and community involvement and consent in all ABS matters related to traditional knowledge. BRAZIL and SENEGAL said they recognize indigenous prior informed consent where indigenous resources are being used. The TSLEIL-WATUTH NATION said that indigenous peoples should determine the process for traditional knowledge protection.

CHINA, THAILAND and SENEGAL welcomed the establishment of a voluntary fund to enable indigenous participation in CBD negotiations. ARGENTINA, supported by CHILE and COLOMBIA, proposed narrowing down selection criteria for its beneficiaries, giving special priority to community participants from developing countries, and gender and regional balance. The EU opposed excluding applicants from communities in developed countries. The PHILIPPINES, KENYA and ZAMBIA supported indigenous participation in national delegations. India for the LIKE-MINDED MEGADIVERSE COUNTRIES asked the fifth meeting of the Article 8(j) Working Group be held prior to COP-9, with Ethiopia for AFRICA saying it should precede the ABS one. MEXICO asked for a mandate to conclude work on mechanisms for traditional knowledge protection and, with the EU, on the code of conduct, prior to COP-9.

AUSTRALIA requested clarifying that *sui generis* systems are not based on intellectual property rights. The IIFB highlighted indigenous systems for protection of traditional knowledge. THAILAND recommended use of registers, with MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA and ZAMBIA saying they should be voluntary and established with community consent. ECUADOR drew attention to the role of customary law and practices.

The IIFB WORKING GROUP ON INDICATORS, supported by many, suggested convening an international indigenous expert workshop on indicators. ETHIOPIA called for a more structured process for developing indicators, involving the IIFB Working Group.

**CEPA:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1/Add.2, 4/Rev.1, 14 and 28). Many highlighted the CEPA initiative as a key means for implementation, and CANADA and others considered CEPA central to achieving the 2010 target. PALAU noted that education measures are not adequately addressed in the shortlist of priority activities. Noting lack of funding, Indonesia for G-77/CHINA, supported by many, urged allocation of adequate budgetary resources to CEPA activities. The EU suggested that the Executive Secretary explore options for

funding priority activities. TUNISIA called for a special fund to assist with CEPA implementation. MALDIVES and DOMINICA highlighted long-term capacity-building measures.

The EU, supported by many, said CEPA implementation should be adapted to national priorities and built into existing institutions. Many stressed the need for cooperation with UNESCO, the IUCN Countdown to 2010 Initiative and the Ramsar Convention. KIRIBATI, VENEZUELA and TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO called for regional and sub-regional workshops. THAILAND suggested that the priority activities reflect the MA findings. CHINA said the Secretariat should provide communication material to parties. ARGENTINA called for mentioning NGOs' key role and INDONESIA for inviting participation of all sectors. BRAZIL called for using the media at the national and local level. AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND opposed time-bound and mandatory targets. The IIFB called for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Secretariat presented the second Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-2) (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/12) and documents on review of implementation, and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/4/Rev.1, 12, 15 and INF.8).

CUBA, KIRIBATI, COLOMBIA, INDIA and CHILE supported continuity of the Working Group on Review of Implementation. MEXICO said the review of implementation should be a standing item.

Many expressed concern on the limited number of national reports. CANADA suggested determining the analytical products of the review. COTE D'IVOIRE and SOUTH AFRICA stressed unsatisfactory progress towards achieving the Convention's objectives mainly due to lack of capacity. INDIA called upon developed countries to fulfill their funding and technology transfer obligations. The EU supported an in-depth review of the goals at COP-9. AUSTRALIA and ARGENTINA suggested guidance on implementation be party-driven. JORDAN and KIRIBATI called for regional and sub-regional meetings. NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND and ARGENTINA noted that developing a technical assistance programme is beyond the mandate of the Secretariat.

THAILAND, supported by KIRIBATI suggested using national reports to obtain funding and involve the private sector. CANADA and NORWAY asked to enhance technical support to parties. UGANDA, with many, stressed inadequate financial resources for NBSAPs implementation. CUBA identified priority issues, including national capacity development and strengthening of national policies. BRAZIL urged focus on assessment of obstacles.

**MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT:** The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/3). NORWAY reported on national actions to promote the MA results. The EU called for the Clearing-House Mechanism to disseminate the MA outputs. JAPAN cautioned against duplicating work in a future integrated assessment of biodiversity.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

Frustration among ABS veterans was palpable in the corridors, as discussion on indigenous participation and the certificate of origin/source/legal provenance took place behind tightly closed doors. Meanwhile, deep sea biodiversity took centre stage in WG-I deliberations, with delegates trying to determine the role of the CBD in light of the UN General Assembly's Working Group on marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. Participants were left wondering whether discussions under the protected areas work programme will clarify or further complicate the heart of the matter.