

WGRI 2 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 12 JULY 2007

On Thursday, WGRI 2 delegates met in plenary to consider draft recommendations on: the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO); inputs to the Strategic Plan; options and a draft strategy for resource mobilization; operations of the Convention; streamlining guidance to the GEF; and implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan. A Friends of the Chair group on actions by parties in developing, implementing and revising NBSAPs also convened throughout the day.

PLENARY

GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK: Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.2).

CANADA called for the full use of “authoritative and independent scientific sources” in GBO 3. The EU suggested: merging paragraphs on inviting the GEF and parties to provide funding for GBO 3, supported by MEXICO and opposed by the AFRICAN GROUP; referring to the full set of 2010 biodiversity indicators; and, with NORWAY, reviewing the final version of GBO 3 at SBSTTA 14. The AFRICAN GROUP, opposed by the EU, suggested “requesting” the GEF to provide financial support.

BRAZIL suggested taking into account progress made in and constraints to achieving the 2010 target. AUSTRALIA suggested the Executive Secretary provide an early draft of the GBO’s revised scope for comments by national focal points.

CANADA, supported by many, proposed an annex reflecting WGRI 2 discussions on GBO 3, while BRAZIL noted that the proposed annex does not account for all views expressed during discussions. Opposed by AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL suggested that “special attention” not be restricted to aquatic environments and invasive species, with the EU proposing, and delegates agreeing, to delete reference to “special.” On employing scenarios beyond 2010, BRAZIL, opposed by MEXICO, preferred urging parties to focus on work up to 2010. Delegates agreed to an EU proposal to employ scenarios “as appropriate.”

The revised draft recommendation will be presented on Friday.

INPUTS TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN: Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.3).

The EU noted that the draft recommendation has no added value and proposed additional text specifying, *inter alia*, that the revised Strategic Plan should include national outcome-oriented

and, if possible, quantitative targets, and that the revision should be based on GBO 3. AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND noted that the EU’s proposal goes beyond WGRI’s mandate, with AUSTRALIA suggesting incorporating the issues raised during WGRI 2 in the revised Strategic Plan at COP 9. The AFRICAN GROUP and others supported the EU proposal.

In the afternoon, delegates agreed to discard this draft recommendation and add a paragraph to the draft recommendation on the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.1), noting that WGRI 2 recommendations arising from the in-depth review of goals 2 and 3 provide important input to the Strategic Plan beyond 2010. MEXICO suggested allowing parties to provide further input to inform the discussion on the Strategic Plan at COP 9.

OPTIONS AND A DRAFT STRATEGY FOR

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: On the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.4), the AFRICAN GROUP, supported by BRAZIL, suggested inviting regional economic integration groups to provide comments on a resource mobilization strategy, with AUSTRALIA adding partner organizations and donors. The EU, BRAZIL and ARGENTINA supported, while AUSTRALIA opposed, holding informal consultations on the development of a strategy alongside intersessional CBD meetings before COP 9. ARGENTINA and AUSTRALIA suggested deleting the request to parties to participate in a data-collection effort on aid targeting CBD implementation conducted by the OECD, while the EU favored “encouraging” parties to do so.

The revised draft recommendation will be presented on Friday.

OPERATIONS OF THE CONVENTION: In the morning, Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.5). In the afternoon, discussions continued on the revised text (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.5/Rev.1).

Review and retirement of COP decisions: Supported by ARGENTINA, COLOMBIA and BRAZIL, but opposed by the EU, AUSTRALIA suggested removing reference to retiring “elements of decisions,” emphasizing only retiring decisions in their entirety. She proposed new text requesting the Executive Secretary to list, on the Convention’s website, decisions retired due to their completion and those that have been superseded by more recent decisions. The AFRICAN GROUP requested taking into account guiding principles and decisions that have not been implemented or reflected in later decisions.

Preferring triennial COP meetings after COP 10, BRAZIL proposed retiring decisions at the interval between COPs rather than only after eight years. The EU suggested that the issue be reviewed at COP 10, in conjunction with periodicity of the COP itself.

Admission of observers: On the annex outlining policy for admitting observers, delegates debated references to private sector participation. BURKINA FASO suggested that observers should be qualified in fields relating to all three objectives of the CBD. COLOMBIA and CHINA questioned the value of the annex and WGRI's mandate to revise the Rules of Procedure.

In the afternoon, debating the revised text, CHINA, supported by CHILE, ARGENTINA and ALGERIA, proposed that the Executive Secretary prepare the list of observers for the COP's consideration, with COLOMBIA requesting periodic reviews. CHILE suggested that observers be admitted unless at least one-third of the parties oppose. The EU suggested deleting the annex and requesting the Executive Secretary to compile a list of observers at previous meetings and publish it on the website. NIGERIA stressed that admission should be decided at the beginning of each meeting. NORWAY emphasized flexibility for indigenous participation in the Article 8(j) Working Group.

Chair Rezende de Castro deferred the issue to informal consultations that continued into the evening.

STREAMLINING GUIDANCE TO THE GEF: On the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.6), the EU, opposed by BRAZIL, ARGENTINA and ECUADOR, and supported by NORWAY and MEXICO, suggested that the Executive Secretary, rather than the Bureau, continue dialogue with the GEF CEO/Chairperson, while ALGERIA and MALAYSIA suggested that both maintain the dialogue.

The EU and ALGERIA requested that the Executive Secretary, rather than the COP President, transmit the four-year framework for programme priorities to the GEF Council. The AFRICAN GROUP opposed reference to submissions by observers on the framework, while CANADA proposed including national priorities identified in NBSAPs. TUNISIA suggested text on supporting the mid-term review of the RAF with broad participation of all parties, to better prepare the fifth replenishment.

Chair Rezende de Castro referred outstanding issues to informal consultations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS 2 AND 3 OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN: Delegates considered the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/CRP.1). AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and CANADA opposed listing mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, opposed by NIGERIA, ALGERIA and BRAZIL who urged maintaining references to, *inter alia*, South-South cooperation. MEXICO suggested bracketing the text pending the results of the Friends of the Chair group.

NEW ZEALAND, CHILE and MEXICO preferred deleting text on enhancing monitoring of financial resources, while CANADA opposed reference to development of effective monitoring indicators.

AUSTRALIA, NORWAY and others expressed concern with requesting the Executive Secretary to organize capacity-building workshops on a regular basis with resources from the mandatory Trust Fund, with CANADA proposing to reaffirm decision VIII/8 (implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan) on the need for regional and subregional meetings to discuss national experiences in implementing NBSAPs.

On developing a repository of NBSAPs, AUSTRALIA stressed the need to build upon existing databases rather than creating new ones. On instruments to support parties in developing, reviewing and implementing NBSAPs, the EU, opposed by the AFRICAN GROUP, suggested deleting reference

to the 2010 target. On allocating time during future CBD meetings to discuss NBSAPs, NEW ZEALAND urged caution in making this a standard component of all future CBD meetings.

AUSTRALIA, MEXICO and NIGERIA, opposed by the EU, questioned the relevance of "One UN" programmes in integrating biodiversity issues. NORWAY, with the EU and CANADA, suggested inviting UNDP and the FAO alongside UNEP to further examine ways and means to support national implementation of the Convention.

BRAZIL, supported by AUSTRALIA and ARGENTINA, proposed inviting parties and others to take into account in NBSAPs, and contribute to, initiatives aimed at assessing, *inter alia*: the economic benefits of biodiversity conservation; sustainable use; fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources; and costs of biodiversity loss. ARGENTINA and PALAU favored deleting "economic" from benefits, so as to refer to benefits in a broader sense, with KIRIBATI adding social and cultural benefits. AUSTRALIA and others, opposed by EL SALVADOR, COLOMBIA and NIGERIA, supported deleting reference to developing guidance on assessing the economic value of biodiversity.

MEXICO, supported by COLOMBIA, proposed requesting the Executive Secretary to prepare for COP 9 an updated document on the usefulness of the mechanisms for implementing the Convention. BRAZIL warned of the enormity of the task.

Discussions will continue on Friday.

FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR GROUP

Amb. Donald Cooper (Bahamas) facilitated Friends of the Chair discussions on actions by parties in developing, implementing and revising NBSAPs. Participants debated the establishment of national and subnational targets, agreeing to retain the general reference to their use in assessing progress towards the 2010 target but not specify their content. On references to indigenous and local communities, participants agreed to acknowledge that they are separate from stakeholders, and to take into account traditional knowledge. On mobilization of financial resources, participants agreed to consider existing and new funding sources and not to refer specifically to the financial mechanism.

On references to the ecosystem approach, some developed countries preferred describing it as the primary framework for implementation of the Convention to be applied universally, while some developing countries favored referring to it as a useful tool, to be applied where appropriate. The matter was referred to informal consultations.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As Chair Rezende de Castro swiftly steered discussions on the draft recommendations in plenary, in the basement, the Friends of the Chair group grappled with references to the ecosystem approach and financial resources, prompting some one-person delegations to hop up and down the stairs to keep up with negotiations in both sessions.

Earlier in the day, one regional group debated the question of whether to continue convening the WGRI after COP 9. Some delegates opined that the meeting's outcomes may not justify the considerable expense being diverted from limited resources, while others were adamant that the WGRI is needed as a counterweight to SBSTTA to enable the latter to be politics-free, and underscored that COP 9 will be better informed thanks to WGRI 2's discussions.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of WGRI 2 and SBSTTA 12 will be available on Monday, 16 July 2007, online <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wgri2/>