

INTERLAKEN CONFERENCE ON ANGR: WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2007

On Wednesday, negotiations took place on the draft Global Plan of Action, text on implementing and financing the Global Plan, and the Interlaken Declaration. The negotiations continued throughout the day and late into the night.

GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Delegates resumed their discussions on the draft Global Plan, focusing on remaining bracketed text in the section on strategic priorities for action (ITC-AnGR/07/3, Annex I).

Chair Bötsch invited delegates to continue their discussions on the phrase “non-trade distorting” (Strategic Priority 8) carried over from the previous day. He proposed replacing this language with text clarifying that support for *in situ* conservation programmes should proceed, “providing support for such measures is consistent with existing international agreements.” Delegates agreed to this proposal, and other references in the text to non-trade distorting incentives were also replaced by text referring to consistency with existing international agreements.

Regarding text on the roles and values of AnGR and the contribution of livestock keeping communities (Strategic Priority 18), the EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP (ERG), supported by COLOMBIA and the US, observed that “rights” in respect to these communities had not been defined, while AFRICA, the NEAR EAST region, and others proposed referring to the “needs and rights of livestock communities.” Chair Bötsch established a contact group to resolve the issue and in the evening COLOMBIA reported back to plenary, introducing a compromise text referencing livestock keepers’ rights “at the national level.” Delegates agreed to the revised text.

IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCING OF THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION

With most of the Global Plan’s section on strategic priorities agreed, Chair Bötsch asked participants to consider text on implementation and financing of the Global Plan (ITC-AnGR/07/3, Annex II).

CANADA, supported by the US, proposed keeping the entire text bracketed, expressing concern about duplication with the Interlaken Declaration and text under the Global Plan’s strategic priorities. However, the ERG, NEAR EAST region, LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, AFRICA and ASIA said this text should be incorporated as an integral, third section of the Global Plan, observing that a framework on implementation and financing should form an essential outcome of the conference. The issue was not resolved.

TEXTUAL DISCUSSIONS: Delegates discussed the draft text on implementation and financing (Annex II) paragraph-by-paragraph. On the introductory paragraph (paragraph 1), CANADA cautioned against duplicating text in the Interlaken Declaration. However, LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, the NEAR EAST and AFRICA supported the text, which was approved with only a minor amendment.

On a paragraph regarding strategic investments and incentives (paragraph 2), the NEAR EAST, supported by the ERG but opposed by the SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC, proposed reference to “maintenance of incentives.” NORTH AMERICA added to this proposal, “provided such incentives are consistent with relevant international agreements.” The section was not finalized.

On periodic assessments, (paragraph 5), NORTH AMERICA noted duplication with language in the Global Plan. The ERG responded that a degree of overlap was natural in related documents. NORTH AMERICA argued that language referring to “providing early warning systems” was inconsistent. He suggested changing “providing” to “develop” early warning systems. The section remained bracketed.

NORTH AMERICA proposed an additional paragraph requesting the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to develop a funding strategy for the implementation of the Global Plan. BRAZIL requested that the text be bracketed and revisited later.

The ERG proposed removing brackets from a paragraph on progress on implementation (paragraph 6). BRAZIL noted that the text should specify that these implementation reports are national. Delegates accepted the text with this addition.

Regarding a paragraph on the responsibility for implementing the Global Plan resting with national governments (paragraph 7), ASIA and the NEAR EAST preferred retaining a reference to “food security.” However, delegates later agreed to a proposal by NORTH AMERICA to delete the word “security.”

On encouraging international networks for AnGR (paragraph 8), NORTH AMERICA expressed concern at repetitive language. However, delegates agreed to retain the paragraph without modification.

Regarding the role of FAO in supporting country-driven efforts (paragraph 9), delegates agreed that a sub-group would work on draft language. Later in the day, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO reported back that compromise text had been developed. This text, which removed reference to FAO establishing “a portfolio of country and regional projects,” was adopted without amendment.

Participants also accepted text on transferring technologies related to the inventory, characterization, sustainable use and conservation

of AnGR (paragraph 10), technical assistance (paragraph 11), and technical guidelines, assistance and training programmes prepared by FAO (paragraph 12).

Regarding the provision of funding for AnGR (paragraph 13), NORTH AMERICA suggested moving a sentence on the provision of funds by national governments and other domestic sources of funds to Strategic Priority 23 (financing) in the Global Plan, which addresses funding. This proposal was not accepted.

Regarding text on new and additional funding and country efforts to provide financial support (paragraph 15), the ERG and LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN proposed deleting the paragraph, noting similarities to subsequent text (paragraph 18). However, ASIA expressed concern at differences between the two paragraphs and the issue was not finalized.

On promoting implementation of the Global Plan, financial assistance, technology transfer and capacity building (paragraph 18), the NEAR EAST and AFRICA supported the entire text, while the ERG, SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC and NORTH AMERICA supported various deletions, with SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC suggesting that the reference to financing was unnecessary. Chair Bötsch proposed compromise language that did not refer directly to financing. However, LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN sought inclusion of "new and additional resources," while agreeing that this could be removed if the concept was clearly reflected in a subsequent relevant paragraph. The issue was not finalized.

Delegates approved two paragraphs referring to FAO's role in contributing to implementation of the Global Plan (paragraphs 19 and 20).

Participants considered paragraphs on government measures to ensure "predictable and agreed resources" (paragraph 21) and on developed countries attaching due attention to the implementation of relevant activities (paragraph 22). NORTH AMERICA proposed text on the role of developing countries and countries with economies in transition and LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN suggested noting that the extent to which developing countries will effectively implement the Global Plan will depend on effective provision of funding, "in particular from developed countries." This text remained bracketed due to opposition to the reference from some developed countries.

On the final paragraph addressing voluntary contributions (paragraph 23) delegates agreed to remove reference to contributions being channeled into an FAO Trust Account, after NORTH AMERICA suggested that mechanisms for contributors should not be limited. After concluding that progress reports, criteria and indicators and early warning were adequately addressed in other parts of the Global Plan, delegates agreed to delete text referencing these.

INTERLAKEN DECLARATION

In the evening, Chair Bötsch invited comments on remaining bracketed text in the draft Interlaken Declaration (ITC-AnGR/07/3, Annex III).

On the interdependence of countries (paragraph 3), participants agreed to a proposal by LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN to amend a reference to "common and differentiated responsibilities" to refer instead to "common and individual."

On the sustainable use, development and conservation of AnGR (paragraph 4), a section on access and benefit sharing was debated at length. The impasse was broken by the SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC's suggestion to qualify the commitment to be "consistent with relevant international obligations and national laws."

Delegates also approved text addressing loss of AnGR and impacts on food security and rural development (paragraph 6), with minor textual changes.

The ERG, supported by the NEAR EAST, proposed new text for a paragraph reflecting the need to promote the development of knowledge, in particular through research. BRAZIL proposed an amendment to make the language consistent with CBD, and the text was approved.

On acknowledging the need to maintain AnGR because of the intrinsic value of biodiversity (paragraph 9), delegates agreed to all language with the exception of reference to "cultural" value, which remained bracketed. After further discussion, INDIA presented compromise text that referred to "cultural heritage," to which delegates agreed.

Delegates also adopted text on awareness that the demand for meat, milk and other animal products is increasing (paragraph 10).

Regarding text on local and indigenous communities (paragraph 11), delegates were divided over two alternate formulations. There was particular discussion over a reference to the impact of "ownership and management" of AnGR, with the ERG seeking to delete the reference to ownership, while other groups wanted it retained. Participants agreed to a formulation that retained reference to "ownership and management of the genetic resources of their livestock."

Participants also discussed and finally approved text on traditional knowledge and incentives. Delegates devoted considerable time to language on access to technologies (paragraph 14). Discussions focused on transferring or sharing technologies, including whether to include text on providing "concessional and preferential terms." Participants finally agreed on a shorter formulation proposed by PERU referring to facilitating technology for sustainable use, development and conservation of AnGR consistent with relevant international obligations and national laws.

Regarding text on new and additional financing (paragraph 14 *bis*) the ERG, supported by NORTH AMERICA, proposed deletion of "new." This was opposed by ASIA, AFRICA and the NEAR EAST. COLOMBIA noted the links with other areas of the text on finance and suggested discussion on these be deferred and considered as a package on Thursday.

GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION: INTRODUCTION

At 11:50 pm on Wednesday evening, Chair Bötsch asked delegates to turn their attention to the introduction to the Global Plan (ITC-AnGR/07/3, Annex I). Delegates discussed questions regarding the definition of AnGR contained in a footnote, with BRAZIL and some others expressing concerns over the definition. After considerable discussion, BRAZIL accepted the footnote, adding text requesting further work on definitions by FAO.

Delegates also discussed livestock keepers, with disagreements persisting over their rights and whether these existed in all countries. The issue will be taken up again on Thursday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates arriving in plenary on Wednesday morning were greeted with the cheery news that the room had been booked until 1:00 am that night in case negotiations became bogged down. "With a firm 6:00 pm deadline in place for ending on Friday, we cannot afford to leave things until the last minute," explained one of the organizers.

By the time tired delegates departed plenary at 1:00 am on Thursday morning, many appeared to agree with the tactic, in spite of their fatigue. "We have made good progress by pushing ourselves today," admitted one bleary-eyed observer. "However, it remains to be seen how the 'package deal' of outcomes will come together on Thursday," he cautioned.