

SBSTTA 14 HIGHLIGHTS:

WEDNESDAY, 19 MAY 2010

Plenary resumed in the morning to address ways and means to improve SBSTTA's effectiveness, and new and emerging issues. Working Group I met in the morning and afternoon, and Working Group II in the afternoon. The contact group on biofuels met at lunchtime and in the evening.

PLENARY

CBD Executive Secretary Djoghlaif and Benjamin Skolnik, Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE), signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Djoghlaif thanked AZE for support on the CBD Strategic Plan.

SBSTTA EFFECTIVENESS: The Secretariat introduced UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/19 on ways and means to improve SBSTTA effectiveness and a non-paper on SBSTTA and financial matters. On SBSTTA's effectiveness, SPAIN requested bracketing text on SBSTTA keeping the status of biodiversity under constant review and submitting to the COP key messages on the status, trends and threats to biodiversity and its services. With CANADA, SPAIN also preferred bracketing a reference to IPBES, while IRAN and CHINA favored deleting it.

Nepal, for the ASIA PACIFIC REGION, suggested online consultations for SBSTTA Bureau members and focal points and, with Tunisia, for the AFRICAN REGION, recommended convening pre-SBSTTA regional meetings. ETHIOPIA proposed intersessional meetings of regional focal points before SBSTTA meetings. The PHILIPPINES proposed reflecting the three CBD objectives with reference to training workshops. The AFRICAN REGION suggested a SBSTTA meeting segment among eminent scientists, and facilitating online discussion among regional groups on well-defined themes.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, opposed by the PHILIPPINES, requested deleting or bracketing text inviting SBSTTA focal points to submit reports on the scientific and technical issues arising from the Strategic Plan implementation. Mexico, for GRULAC, suggested: disseminating key messages from SBSTTA; convening two SBSTTA meetings in every intersessional period; inviting parties to participate in peer-reviewing SBSTTA documents; shorter SBSTTA recommendations; and including executive summaries in information documents. CANADA, on behalf of SWITZERLAND, NORWAY and JAPAN, questioned the need for a multi-year plan of action for SBSTTA coinciding with the duration of the CBD Strategic Plan. IRAN suggested more cautious language on promoting synergies and collaboration for the implementation of SBSTTA's multi-year plan of action to be submitted to COP 11. CHINA stressed that language on the cooperation with other conventions be approved by COP rather than SBSTTA. NEW ZEALAND proposed: keeping within the CBD mandate; reducing the number of agenda items and recommendations; and streamlining the text of draft

CBD decisions. AUSTRALIA proposed considering at COP 10 language on convening two expert meetings, with CHINA and IRAN requesting clarification on their terms of reference.

NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES: The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/18. GRULAC supported by INDIA, proposed adding ocean acidification into the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity, and, with CHINA, ocean noise into the programme of work on PAS. BELGIUM and CANADA proposed adding ocean noise under the work on marine and coastal biodiversity.

On ground-level ozone, BELGIUM proposed requesting assistance from the Ozone Secretariat, with CHINA and INDIA arguing that CBD is not the most appropriate framework. CANADA proposed addressing ground-level ozone in implementing existing programmes of work. IRAN proposed looking at impacts of climate change on habitats and endemic species.

Several delegates agreed that no new or emerging issues should be added as new agenda items. AUSTRALIA favored reducing the number of agenda items. The PHILIPPINES, supported by ETC GROUP and opposed by MEXICO, proposed synthetic biology impacts on biodiversity as an item to be considered across all programmes of work.

WORKING GROUP I

DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS: UNCCD emphasized the importance of mutually reinforcing measures on desertification and land degradation, biodiversity, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

On a draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/WG.1/CRP.6), BELGIUM recommended CBD carry out activities in collaboration not only with UNCCD but also UNFCCC, with COLOMBIA and SOUTH AFRICA raising concerns about unresolved issues on the joint work programme. BELGIUM supported, and COLOMBIA bracketed, a request to the Executive Secretary to consult with parties on joint activities between the Rio Conventions before COP 10.

Delegates discussed whether to define the scope of collaboration using CBD or UNCCD terminology. BELGIUM, opposed by SOUTH AFRICA, preferred to "explore" rather than "develop and implement" joint actions to integrate biodiversity concerns in disaster reduction. NORWAY stressed the crucial role of civil society in sustainably managing dry and sub-humid lands. CANADA objected to references to indigenous peoples throughout the document.

AUSTRALIA and Turkmenistan, on behalf of CEE, preferred "noting," rather than "welcoming" CBD good practice guidance on pastoralism. COLOMBIA queried the meaning of marginalized groups, with the Secretariat suggesting reference to national circumstances. NEW ZEALAND opposed language on institutional changes facilitating marginalized groups' engagement. SUDAN proposed a reference to desertification.

On consulting with neighboring countries to develop and execute collaborative drought management strategies and action plans, COLOMBIA proposed adding "as appropriate." On developing and implementing guidelines for integrated planning between dry and sub-humid lands and wetlands, SPAIN suggested replacing "guidelines" with "guides on best practices."

NEW ZEALAND questioned references to economic development and people living in dry and sub-humid lands, expressing concern about extending the CBD mandate. SOUTH AFRICA requested retaining references to "people including indigenous and local communities." Delegates debated how to refer to possible integration with the proposed joint work programme among Rio Conventions, deciding to bracket relevant references. The Secretariat proposed introducing language from the recommendation on climate change concerning proposed joint activities between the Rio Conventions.

IAS: On a draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/WG.1/CRP.8 and Corr.1), CANADA, NEW ZEALAND and COLOMBIA opposed language on the AHTEG producing suggestions on international standards, while FRANCE, SWEDEN, NORWAY and BELGIUM stressed their importance. BRAZIL suggested referring to "voluntary international standards." CANADA proposed, supported by SWEDEN, NORWAY, FRANCE and SPAIN, "providing practical guidance for the development of international standards." NEW ZEALAND requested bracketing this.

On requesting compilation of information reconciling the need for biodiversity and ecosystems' adaptation to climate change, HUNGARY proposed adding reference to "other environmental pressures." GERMANY, supported by MEXICO, proposed encouraging parties to consider ways to increase the interoperability of existing information resources in use in conducting risk and/or impact assessments and developing early warning systems.

AGRICULTURE: AUSTRALIA suggested that the Executive Secretary and FAO "consider," rather than "pay particular attention to," a list of items in the second phase of their joint work plan. In the list of items, delegates agreed to refer to on-farm, *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation of agricultural biodiversity. JAPAN and CANADA requested bracketing a new item on patents and other intellectual property rights. On inter-linkages between CBD and CGRFA work on biofuels, CANADA proposed including "socioeconomic and food security aspects" to remove brackets around a separate reference to food security.

After informal consultations, SWEDEN offered language on promoting the integration of conservation, restoration and sustainable management in agricultural areas with high biodiversity value such as, but not limited to, high nature value farmland. AUSTRALIA preferred "important" to "high," and referring to areas "that are identified as contributing to the achievement of global and national PA targets." Three options were bracketed.

On inviting parties to incorporate, as appropriate, the programme of work into their national biodiversity strategy and action plans, ARGENTINA, opposed by BELGIUM, suggested deleting reference to relevant sectoral policies. ZAMBIA, with PORTUGAL and UGANDA, opposed by CANADA, BELGIUM and NEW ZEALAND, proposed deleting "as appropriate." Delegates eventually removed all brackets, adding "relevant elements of" the programme of work.

On strengthening collaboration with the ITPGR Secretariat, delegates eventually agreed to delete a list of specific activities. Delegates also deleted reference to benefit-sharing in the context of collaboration between CBD and ITPGR focal points, and agreed on text inviting parties to consider strengthened harmony in implementing the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity and other programmes of work at the national and, where appropriate, regional level.

On rice-paddies, BELGIUM offered compromise language with broader references to valuing ecosystems, inviting FAO in consultation with CBD to undertake further studies on the valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services provided

by agricultural ecosystems. IIFB requested consultation also with indigenous and local communities. ARGENTINA suggested deleting "valuation" and making reference to relevant international obligations. The PHILIPPINES cautioned against subjecting the Convention to other international agreements. Delegates eventually agreed on consistency and harmony with CBD and other relevant international obligations.

WORKING GROUP II

GSPC: Ole Hendrickson (Canada) reported on the drafting group: bracketing "preserving" or "protecting" and agreeing on "respecting or maintaining" 70 percent of the genetic diversity of crops including their wild relatives; and on indigenous knowledge innovations, agreeing on practices associated with plant resources maintained or increased as appropriate to support customary use, sustainable livelihoods, local food security and health care.

POST-2010 GOALS AND TARGETS: Delegates continued discussing a draft recommendation on goals and targets, agreeing on text supporting the effort of the IIFB Working Group on Indicators. On inviting the scientific community to develop measures complementing or substituting existing indicators, BELGIUM added "taking into account indicators developed under other MEAs" and CANADA "sector-based processes."

Delegates agreed on adding a footnote indicating that the financial implications of establishing an AHTEG would be reviewed by the COP. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for the full participation of developing countries. SPAIN underscored the need for the AHTEG to contribute to SBSTTA.

On suggesting additional indicators, MALAWI suggested "where needed." The UK proposed a "small number," and developed when "necessary to constitute a coherent framework." SPAIN, opposed by BELGIUM, MALAWI and CHINA, proposed new language, which remained bracketed, on areas of special interests like the economics of biodiversity and ecosystem services and ecosystem services' contribution to human well-being including food security and local livelihoods. KENYA proposed new text on strengthening linkages between indicators. Delegates agreed on inviting GEO-BON "working through organizations including UNEP-WCMC and IUCN."

CONTACT GROUP ON BIOFUELS

At lunchtime, delegates discussed revised text requesting the CBD to contribute to the work of other organizations and assist in developing frameworks to promote positive and minimize negative impacts of biofuels, including a list of areas of contribution, without reaching agreement. Disagreement continued on reference to biomass for energy production and use, rather than biofuels.

In the evening, delegates discussed requesting the Executive Secretary to compile, analyze and disseminate information and develop a toolkit for voluntary use. Opposed by several participants, one developing country objected to "toolkit." Delegates also discussed, without reaching agreement, whether to include reference to impacts on agriculture and food security.

IN THE BREEZEWAYS

While negotiations on biofuels seemed to go nowhere in the contact group, the *vexata questio* of SBSTTA and financing continued to be discussed in the breezeways. Some considered the Secretariat's non-paper a useful basis, as it concluded that "there is no explicit legal reason why SBSTTA cannot make recommendations to the COP in relation to scientific and technical matters that refer to the need for financial resources and/or the need for the financial mechanism to provide financial resources." This apparently sparked efforts between certain developing and developed countries to find possible "template" language to avoid present and future stand-offs on the matter. The "template" is expected to be tabled in plenary on Friday.