

## SBSTTA 14 HIGHLIGHTS:

### THURSDAY, 20 MAY 2010

The contact group on biofuels and Working Group II met in the morning. Working Group I met throughout the day to continue discussions on biofuels. Plenary resumed in the evening to address draft recommendations on ways and means to improve SBSTTA effectiveness, and new and emerging issues.

#### CONTACT GROUP ON BIOFUELS

Delegates discussed without reaching agreement whether to request CBD to develop a “toolkit” and/or “tools.” On disseminating tools/toolkit to assist parties, business and other stakeholders to promote the positive and minimize the negative impacts of biofuel production and use, delegates discussed reference to impacts on agriculture and food security, with one developing country party suggesting “food security related to agricultural biodiversity.” Delegates agreed on referring to impacts “on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and related socioeconomic aspects, including food and land security and sustainability, which are related to these effects and impacts.”

One developing country insisted on: inserting alternative language requesting CBD to “compile, organise and disseminate information on tools” for voluntary use, as identified in the regional workshops; bracketing reference to the CBD “analyzing” information on tools/toolkit, preferring “organizing”; and favoring “taking into account the work of,” rather than “collaborate with,” relevant partner organization.

On requesting the CBD to contribute to the work of other organizations and processes, a group of developed countries proposed, and delegates agreed, to remove language limiting CBD input to instances “where this reduces duplication,” while agreeing on avoiding additional duplication. Language referring to decision IX/2 on biofuels was reinstated, with some developing countries expressing concern about singling out a specific decision and limiting future COP guidance. Noting that the decision refers to the precautionary approach, a group of developed countries, opposed by one developing country, suggested removing brackets around the precautionary approach.

Some developing countries, supported by one developed country, requested bracketing “policies,” suggesting instead that the CBD assist in “ongoing work” of relevant organizations. A group of developed countries preferred “policy options.” Both proposals were retained in brackets.

#### WORKING GROUP I

**BIOFUELS:** Biofuels Contact Group Co-Chair Rose reported on discussions on language requesting CBD to develop “tools” or a “toolkit” and contribute to work of other organizations,

and on lack of agreement on the list of contributing activities. Working Group Co-Chair Solhaug proposed transmitting bracketed text to plenary.

On submitting to CBD results of biodiversity assessments, IRAN, with BURKINA FASO, suggested adding “assessment of socioeconomic aspects,” with CANADA noting that such aspects relate to the production and use of biofuels rather than biodiversity. After informal consultations, parties agreed to submit assessments of impacts on biodiversity that could “affect socioeconomic conditions and food and energy security resulting from the production and use of biofuels.”

On developing and implementing policies that minimize negative impacts on biodiversity, SWITZERLAND, with SOUTH AFRICA, stressed impact assessments of biofuels “in their full lifecycle,” with CANADA adding “as compared to other fuel types.” NEW ZEALAND, with CANADA, opposed by ETHIOPIA, IRAN and SOUTH AFRICA, suggested deleting the paragraph. BRAZIL proposed using COP 9 agreed language urging parties to develop and apply sound policy frameworks for sustainable production and use of biofuels, acknowledging different national conditions and taking into account their full lifecycle as compared to other fuel types. The EU requested retaining language on impact assessments. IIFB, supported by IRAN, proposed adding reference to socioeconomic aspects. After informal consultations, parties agreed to develop and implement land and water-use policies that promote the positive and minimize or avoid negative impacts by assessing direct and indirect effects and impacts on biodiversity in the production and use of biofuels in their lifecycle and the impacts on biodiversity that affect socioeconomic conditions and impacts food and energy security resulting from the production and use of biofuels.

On inviting parties to take supportive measures and develop technologies to promote positive and minimize negative effects, BRAZIL, supported by COLOMBIA, suggested “acknowledging different national conditions.” The NETHERLANDS proposed listing wetlands, grasslands, primary forests and peatlands as areas of high biodiversity value, with CANADA cautioning against excessive detail. The NETHERLANDS proposed developing inventories also “to assess and identify areas and ecosystems and degraded lands that could be used in a sustainable way for the production of biofuels.” TUNISIA suggested undertaking, as appropriate, adequate biodiversity conservation measures. ARGENTINA enquired about the terms of reference for developing inventories and UGANDA about the meaning of “degraded land.”

On a bracketed paragraph on developing inventories of areas of high biodiversity, parties agreed to undertake as appropriate adequate biodiversity conservation measures and to assess areas and ecosystems that could be used in sustainable ways in biofuels production. Reference to “areas important to indigenous

and local communities” proposed by IIFB was also included. On encouraging parties to develop and implement land-use planning policies, BRAZIL suggested “acknowledging national conditions” and ETHIOPIA minimizing impacts on “areas of cultural, religious and heritage interest.” The NETHERLANDS favored including water in addition to land-use policies.

A paragraph on technical and financial support to developing countries remained bracketed, with IRAN proposing to “urge” rather than “invite” donor countries and organizations to provide for “impact assessment at the national level.” Delegates agreed to delete a paragraph encouraging the application of CBD voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment, and a general provision on supportive measures.

Supported by BRAZIL, the PHILIPPINES, CANADA and IRAN, Co-Chair Solhaug suggested deleting language on further developing the principles of the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels, while retaining language on CBD reporting back on collaboration activities to SBSTTA before COP 11.

SWITZERLAND proposed that the precautionary approach “be applied” to biofuels production, with CANADA and BRAZIL lamenting unbalanced language. IRAN proposed continuous monitoring and scientific assessments of socioeconomic and environmental aspects of biofuels production and periodic reporting of findings for decision-making. SWEDEN, supported by ZAMBIA, suggested involvement of indigenous and local communities and continuous monitoring of socioeconomic and environmental impacts on biodiversity and livelihoods. BRAZIL opposed reference to “ongoing” assessments and, with CANADA, “continuous” monitoring.

On further recognizing threats from IAS, SWEDEN suggested implementing the precautionary approach. NEW ZEALAND, with BELGIUM and SWEDEN, proposed referring to the CBD guiding principles on IAS. CANADA, with BRAZIL, proposed recognizing threats from crops used in biofuel production only after they become IAS. ECOROPA suggested using agreed language on preventing risks associated with crops that may become IAS. The paragraph was bracketed.

The UK and NEW ZEALAND, opposed by NORWAY, SOUTH AFRICA and IRAN, proposed deleting language urging parties in collaboration with indigenous and local communities to carry out assessments of biofuels operations, which was bracketed.

LIBERIA and the PHILIPPINES proposed compromise language requesting CBD to work towards convening an AHTEG on synthetic biology and other new biology used or intended to be used in the next generation of biofuels, to assess impacts on biodiversity and livelihoods, which was bracketed.

## WORKING GROUP II

**POST-2010 GOALS AND TARGETS:** Delegates considered a revised recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/WG.2/CRP.8/Rev.1) incorporating the outcomes of an informal group that met on Tuesday, 18 May, and Wednesday, 19 May, to discuss Annex II on SBSTTA views on the post-2010 mission, goals and targets.

Delegates agreed on: general recommendations as drafted; existing text on developing measures complementing or substituting existing indicators in cooperation with the scientific community; replacing bracketed text on areas of special interest with “noting the lack of agreed indicators for ecosystem services;” and a footnote on financial implications, with GERMANY requesting adding “subject to COP decision.”

Co-Chair Obermayer reiterated that Annex II is not a negotiated text, but an attempt to summarize discussions on mission, goals and targets. FRANCE underscored the need to emphasize connectivity in relation to targets on PAs and not just inland waters, and to intervene when species extinction is human-induced. CANADA proposed clarifying that the informal group did not carry out a detailed examination of technical rationales but that comments could be used to explain technical concepts used.

NORWAY proposed text emphasizing that targets should be short and understandable while being technical, and show contribution to human wellbeing, poverty eradication and sustainable development. JAPAN emphasized “selling targets to domestic constituencies” and proposed greater consistency among targets. SPAIN insisted on featuring communication efforts targeted to a “significant” range of groups. On the importance of “other means” in the PAs target, IUCN emphasized IUCN protected area governance types.

## PLENARY

**NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES:** On a draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/L.14), BELGIUM, supported by MEXICO and COLOMBIA, lamented that some issues were not eligible for consideration on procedural grounds. NEW ZEALAND, supported by CANADA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, proposed recognizing that ocean acidification, Arctic biodiversity, ocean noise and ground-level ozone met the procedural criteria for consideration as new and emerging issues set out by COP 9, but that ocean acidification and ocean noise were not really new issues. CHINA, opposed by MEXICO and ICELAND, proposed bracketing text on considering the impacts of ocean acidification on marine biodiversity. On the implementation of the programme of work on PAs and on marine and coastal biodiversity, BELGIUM and COLOMBIA requested deleting, and IRAN bracketing, reference to impacts of climate change on habitats and endemic species.

CHINA argued that ground-level ozone is outside the scope of the Convention. When CANADA noted that the Ozone Secretariat does not work on ground-level ozone, CHINA consented to bracketing relevant text. The PHILIPPINES, supported by MALAWI, proposed inviting submission of information on synthetic biology for consideration by SBSTTA, with ETHIOPIA, supported by AUSTRIA and GERMANY, proposing also geo-engineering. The PHILIPPINES requested applying the precautionary approach to ensure that there is no field release of synthetic life, cell or genome into the environment. NEW ZEALAND requested bracketing the entire text, and the UK the section on field release.

**SBSTTA EFFECTIVENESS:** On a draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/L.15), CHINA requested deleting, and GERMANY bracketing, references to synergies among the Rio Conventions. On urging resource mobilization, MEXICO, opposed by CANADA, proposed a footnote indicating that the final decision will be taken by COP. CHINA, opposed by SPAIN, requested retaining language on CBD keeping within its mandate. SPAIN suggested requesting SBSTTA to focus its work on technological and scientific aspects of the strategic plan and Multi-year Programme of Work.

To enable SBSTTA to identify priority actions unambiguously for the COP, MALAWI, supported by BRAZIL and SOUTH AFRICA, proposed requesting COP 10 to clarify SBSTTA mandate regarding the consideration of financial resources and guidance to the financial mechanism.

## IN THE BREEZEWAYS

Notwithstanding intense activity on post-2010 goals and targets, the penultimate day of SBSTTA 14 was punctuated by slow progress and frustration. Entrenched positions on biofuels, haunting delegates since SBSTTA 12, resulted in heavily bracketed text. The uncompromising spirit was compounded during the evening plenary, where haggling over new issues and financial questions sapped every ounce of stamina from many a delegate. When the interpreters left and plenary was suspended, audible sighs of relief were heard from weary participants, who hoped to restore lost energy to face a burdensome final day.

**ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:** The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of SBSTTA 14 will be available on Monday, 24 May 2010 online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/sbstta14/>