

WGRI 4 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 7 MAY 2012

The fourth meeting of the *ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation (WGRI 4) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) opened today at the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, Canada.

Participants discussed: the review of progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and progress in providing support to parties in the context of the Strategic Plan and Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and resource mobilization.

In closing the meeting, Kazuaki Hosino (Japan), Chair of the meeting, announced the establishment of two informal contact groups. He invited representatives of India and Belgium to chair the contact group on resource mobilization. He noted that details of the contact group on the Strategic Plan would be announced in the morning.

OPENING PLENARY

In the morning, on behalf of Ryu Matsumoto, President of the Conference of the Parties (COP), Kazuaki Hosino (Japan) highlighted the importance of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He also stressed that countries should develop national biodiversity targets in line with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and mainstream biodiversity into society.

New CBD Executive Secretary Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias noted that this meeting and the twelve tabled draft recommendations represent the first opportunity for parties to review progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He highlighted challenges in implementing the Convention, including mismatch between commitments and implementation, and proposed more focused negotiations at the next COP. He suggested focusing on a streamlined number of decisions that should consider: integrating cross-cutting issues; reducing the complexity of the CBD portfolio; revising National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs); strategic resource mobilization; efficient monitoring of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; support for least developed countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS); community-based approaches to conservation and sustainable use to complement work on protected areas; and timely ratification of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

Carlos Blasco Villa, on behalf of Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, highlighted the interlinkages between sustainable development and the implementation of the Convention.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Delegates adopted the agenda and organization of work (UNEP/CBD/UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/1 and Add.1/Rev.1) without amendments. They then, elected Snežana Prokic (Serbia) as rapporteur.

On behalf of COP President, Kazuaki Hosino (Japan) noted that document UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/4 on the Message to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) contained separate technical and political messages and differed from an earlier version.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020 AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

In the morning, the Secretariat introduced documents on review of progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and review of progress in providing support to parties in the context of the Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/2 and UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/3).

Many countries recognized exemplary contributions through the Japan Biodiversity Fund. JAPAN urged all countries to continue efforts for implementing their NBSAPs and national targets, noting his country's support for capacity building in developing countries. CANADA urged that the draft recommendations more closely follow CBD COP 10 Decision X/2 on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

SOUTH AFRICA noted that ambitious targets are important but should not hinder progress, emphasizing the importance of addressing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss. The EU, on behalf of its 27 member states, expressed support for developing a comprehensive approach to ongoing initiatives aimed at achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, rather than proposing new ones. SWITZERLAND, supported by UGANDA, proposed text requesting parties participate in a peer review process of the status of implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to be defined before 2015. BRAZIL noted that implementation requires more effective commitments from developed countries and stressed the need for enhanced technical and scientific cooperation. NORWAY, with YEMEN, stressed partnership and cooperation at all levels to meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. GUATEMALA and VENEZUELA underscored that national strategies should take a bottom-up approach and prioritize benefits to local communities. ZAMBIA called for jointly addressing the implementation of the Strategic Plan and resource mobilization. PAPUA NEW GUINEA, on behalf of several SIDS, highlighted that the island biodiversity programme of

work can contribute to the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. REPUBLIC OF KOREA recognized the importance of integrating the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into national strategies to strengthen the legal basis for their implementation.

Many countries noted their lack of progress in updating NBSAPs, citing lack of financing and capacity. TAJIKISTAN, among other countries, noted it is in the process of revising its NBSAP thanks to Secretariat support. LEBANON suggested providing additional support and capacity to countries who have not updated their NBSAPs. BOTSWANA noted that support is especially needed on various thematic issues, including the Nagoya Protocol and the study on The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB). Georgia, on behalf of the COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS), called for more capacity-building activities. BURKINA FASO expressed concern regarding the slow process of allocating funds for implementing the Strategic Plan.

On the Clearing-House Mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan (CHM), JORDAN, supported by SUDAN, called for establishing focal points to facilitate information exchange. MEXICO stressed the need to disseminate information to appropriate scales and, echoed by PERU, said the CHM should consist of a website as well as a network of experts for decision-making. Namibia, for the AFRICAN GROUP urged strengthening the CHM as a priority. NIGER underscored the lack of practical support for strengthening CHMs. MOROCCO called for text to promote implementing the Strategic Plan in support of the CHM, while INDIA supported establishing a work programme on the CHM. UKRAINE suggested referencing the development of national targets as opposed to the setting of national targets. BURUNDI asked the Secretariat to help increase the visibility of national CHMs.

INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY (IIFB) expressed concern about the lack of mainstreaming of community-based natural resource management and sustainable use in NBSAPs. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) urged parties to facilitate outcomes that could promote the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and use NBSAPs as policy instruments.

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL, on behalf of several groups, stressed the importance of transboundary collaboration on the development of NBSAPs.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

STRATEGY FOR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION AND A PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF FINANCING NEEDS AND GAPS: In the afternoon, the Secretariat introduced documents on the implementation of the Strategy for Resource Mobilization and progress in assessing financing needs and gaps (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/6, INF/8, INF/9, INF/15).

Maria Schultz, Sweden, reported on findings from a seminar on Scaling up Biodiversity Finance, convened by the governments of Sweden, Ecuador, Norway, India and Japan. SENEGAL, MEXICO and the EU said they were pleased with the seminar on biodiversity finance.

SOUTH AFRICA, supported by MEXICO, SWITZERLAND and SENEGAL, called for an online finance portal to be established with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), adding that capacity building and technology transfer are crucial to the success of such a portal. SWITZERLAND additionally noted the need to pursue private and domestic resources in addition to international funds. The EU acknowledged the difficulty of establishing clear baselines but underscored their importance for establishing targets and identifying resource gaps. The EU said human and technical resources should be balanced alongside financial resources in the Strategic Plan. BRAZIL, supported by

GUATEMALA, said that while flexible financing is important it should not be a substitute for existing commitments under the Convention.

SENEGAL and SOUTH AFRICA said that adequate finance is critical for implementation of the convention, and ECUADOR pointed to the need for “fresh and additional resources.”

MEXICO called on the Executive Secretary to support balanced participation in decisions on resource mobilization through adequate training and funding, and underscored the need for flexible rules to identify objectives and implement strategic plans.

The EU said the preliminary reporting framework is sufficient to commence reporting on resource mobilization and urged countries to exchange experiences and mechanisms for meeting the wide range of national priorities and needs.

CANADA noted that resources may have to be leveraged in a more “creative” manner. PERU stressed the importance of the private sector in resource mobilization as well as engaging countries at the local level. NORWAY urged implementing a simple reporting format. TIMOR LESTE requested that the Secretariat establish a mandatory allocation of financial resources to implement the Strategic Plan. CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL, on behalf of several groups, called for an agreement on reliable and predictable funding at COP 11. IUCN encouraged parties to adopt a broad view with regards to the use and mobilization of resources, noting that this includes financial, human and natural resources.

THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM: REVIEW OF GEF-5 AND NEEDS FOR GEF-6: The Secretariat introduced the agenda item on the review of the fifth replenishment of the GEF (GEF-5) and the assessment of needs for GEF-6 (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/7). Gilles Kleitz, France, provided an overview of the first draft of the GEF-6 needs assessment, noting that a final draft will be presented to COP 11. He said that a team of five experts had prepared the report, drawing on information from regional and subregional consultations and questionnaires circulated to parties. He noted that preliminary results indicated that between US\$ 17 billion and US\$ 41 billion will be needed from GEF-6, including GEF-leveraged funds, to implement the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. SAUDI ARABIA noted that financial needs are crucial and stressed that the GEF must strengthen capacity in developing countries. The EU welcomed the focus on implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets but noted that the cost estimates should not be included in the recommendations. CANADA noted that more analysis is required to put forward a programme for GEF-6. AUSTRALIA emphasized the funding disparity between GEF-5 and GEF-6.

IN THE CORRIDORS

After six days of long negotiations, many of the participants of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) reconvened today for WGRI. Many delegates expected smooth sailing this week, with the exception of some rough patches on resource mobilization and funding. The day started with statements calling for funding and capacity building for reviewing NBSAPs and ended with a review of the GEF-6 needs assessment report. While developing countries called for bigger investments, developed countries viewed innovative and alternative financial mechanisms as an untapped source. Such innovative mechanisms could be a potential solution for meeting increased biodiversity conservation needs, especially in light of the disparity between the GEF-5 and GEF-6 funding requests—“a disparity many donor countries do not appear to be too happy about.”