



IGSP-3 HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2004

Delegates to IGSP-3 met in morning, afternoon and evening Working Group sessions to continue consideration of the IGSP compilation text. In the afternoon, delegates convened for a brief plenary session in order to review the state of negotiations.

PLENARY

Chair Ntagazwa opened the plenary, noting that the session was an opportunity to take stock of progress achieved in the negotiations.

Facilitator Eidheim said Working Group I was making good headway and noted that new text had been circulated on the introduction to the Plan. She said the co-facilitators had discussed areas of overlap and duplication in the Plan and noted that these areas would be addressed in each Working Group.

Facilitator Asadi said Working Group II still has to address the important issue of financing and observed that a large portion of the text on institutions had been agreed upon.

Stressing the importance of South-South capacity building and technology support, Klaus Toepfer, UNEP Executive Director, reported on the signing of a letter of intent with Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Non Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation. He underscored the importance of the "Bali Strategic Plan," noting that it reflects the dedication of developing countries to confront environment-related problems.

The G-77/CHINA said the provision of additional financing is the logical consequence of the IGSP process. The EU expressed concerns about duplication and overlaps between the two Working Groups and requested the Secretariat to provide a clean text of the entire Plan for consideration by regional groups.

Editor's note: Earth Negotiations Bulletin coverage of the Working Groups stopped at 8:30pm.

PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRATEGIC PLAN

WORKING GROUP I: In the morning discussions, the EU revisited the section on objectives, adding text on enabling the participation of women in environmental decision-making.

On the section on strategic considerations, many proposals for deletion were made to address the duplication of concepts in the sections on objectives and implementation. Delegates agreed to delete paragraphs on transparency and accountability, promotion of the role of women, and enabling collaboration and partnerships with relevant stakeholders. The US and G-77/CHINA, opposed by MEXICO, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and the EU, proposed deletion of a paragraph supporting the

creation of an enabling environment for the innovation and dissemination of technology. The EU and MEXICO, opposed by the US and G-77/CHINA, sought to retain a paragraph amended by CANADA and MEXICO, dealing with an integrated approach for the effective and efficient use of limited resources.

On a paragraph outlining the basic approach of the Plan, the US argued for language recognizing existing capacities within UNEP and national governments, while the EU, supported by CANADA and NORWAY, wanted to reference capacities within international institutions, national governments, civil society and the private sector as well. The US proposed deletion of a reference that countries should prioritize actions in implementing international conventions, and MEXICO called for the retention of its amendment which notes that countries should choose to prioritize their own programmes. Delegates debated at length the use of the term "coordination" and "cooperation," with the US preferring "cooperation" and many others preferring "coordination." There was agreement on a freestanding paragraph stating that IGSP-related activities should not duplicate those promoted by other organizations and programmes.

On a paragraph outlining institutional arrangements at the regional level in implementing and reviewing the Plan, delegates could not agree on whether a reference to implementation at the regional and subregional levels should be deleted or moved to the institutional section.

On the implementation section of the Plan, discussion focused on national level implementation. The majority of the Working Group favored the original version as outlined in the compilation text. Noting that many developing countries have already undertaken National Capacity Building Self-Assessments, MEXICO cautioned that additional requirements for developing countries would delay implementation. CANADA and the EU said the GEF/UNDP/UNEP National Capacity Building Self Assessments should be used in implementing the Plan. The G-77/CHINA stressed that cooperation between UNEP, UNDP, GEF and MEAs is essential in developing practical arrangements to convert country needs into strategic priorities and potential responses. Delegates adopted a paragraph on UNEP's collaboration with GEF, UNDP and specialized agencies with minor amendments.

On the section outlining the main areas of technology support and capacity building, the G-77/CHINA proposed and delegates agreed to rename the section "Indicative technology support and capacity building activities." The EU, supported by G-77/CHINA and NORWAY, favored annexing the list of thematic areas to the Plan, and retaining the list of cross-cutting issues in the text. The US stressed that if the list were to be retained at all, it could



not accept annexing cross-cutting areas where UNEP enjoys a comparative advantage, namely chemicals management and regional seas. NORWAY and MEXICO preferred not to give the two areas preference over other thematic areas.

On the subsection on South-South cooperation, delegates debated, but could not agree, to include a reference to the South Summit's Havana Programme of Action. The US, supported by CANADA, proposed its deletion, while the G-77/CHINA suggested recognizing just the South Summit instead.

On the subsection on information for decision-making: the role of science, monitoring and assessment, the US proposed that the phrase "transfer of technologies" be replaced with "support for technologies." The EU urged adding a new sentence requesting UNEP to support the participation of national governments in the Global Environment Outlook programme through collaboration with research centers and in data collection. The US voiced concern that the sentence singled out one specific UNEP process among a range of others. Delegates agreed that the paragraph on the establishment and operation of cleaner production centers should be moved to the subsection containing the indicative list of the main areas for technology support and capacity building.

Delegates then considered the subsection on regional level implementation. On a paragraph setting out modalities for a regional level approach, the EU, opposed by the US, proposed an amendment to include a reference to supporting and promoting the use of such modalities. Delegates considered adding cleaner production centers as one of the modalities, but could not reach consensus on this matter.

On a paragraph regarding the strengthening of regional forums, delegates discussed whether regional priorities could be annexed to the Plan. The G-77/CHINA and MEXICO insisted on text encouraging regional forums to identify regional priorities and for them to be included as part of the Plan. Opposing this, the US, supported by CANADA, said it would not be possible to have the regional priorities annexed to the Plan as they were negotiated independently from the IGSP process.

The Working Group continued to meet late into night, addressing the subsection on global level implementation and a new introductory text presented by the Facilitator.

WORKING GROUP II: In the morning, Facilitator Asadi introduced a new version of the section on institutional mechanism/coordination of the compilation text, which included his compromise formulations.

The G-77/CHINA suggested the use of the term "coordination mechanism" in the section's title. The US amendment on intellectual property rights was revisited, with the EU noting that such a reference was not appropriate in the context of the Plan.

On global follow-up arrangements, the G-77/CHINA, opposed by the US, proposed reinserting language on the provision of adequate budgetary allocations for the Plan's implementation, and the EU urged moving references to the allocation of resources to the financial mechanism section of the compilation text.

On the subsection dealing with secretariat level/UNEP organization, the G-77/CHINA made several editorial amendments to paragraphs dealing with the functions of the GC/GMEF, and the US questioned the notion of "sufficiently strengthening" UNEP's regional coordination divisions. The US also objected to language that UNEP's database on capacity building and technology support includes related activities of other agencies. Differing views were expressed on terminology regarding "technical" versus "technological" capacity, with the US stressing the importance of quality of staff rather than its quantity or resources. Noting the existing process to strengthen the science base of UNEP, the G-77/CHINA, opposed by the US and CANADA, proposed deleting a reference to strengthening UNEP's "scientific" capacity.

The US, supported by the EU and G-77/CHINA, proposed new text calling on UNEP to seek out and establish public-private partnerships in implementing capacity-building and technology support programmes. The US, opposed by the EU and G-77/CHINA, proposed reintroducing text urging each UNEP division to include identifiable line items for capacity building and technology support activities in their programmes of work. The EU, supported by the G-77/CHINA, said this issue was adequately addressed in an existing paragraph which calls for the clear identification of UNEP's capacity building and technology support portfolio in the biennial programme of work and budget.

On the financial mechanism/financial resources, discussion centered on differences between the three options outlined in the compilation text. The G-77/CHINA stressed its preference for an independent financial mechanism, which would make the Plan viable by obtaining additional resources for capacity building. The EU, supported by CANADA, emphasized the efficient use of existing resources and the need for a wider application of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions to the Environment Fund. The G-77/CHINA stressed its objections to the use of the voluntary indicative scale, noting that it was still in a pilot phase and did not enjoy consensus. The US expressed its inability to take on long-term financial commitments, apart from ensuring a minimum amount of funding for capacity building from the Environment Fund, but agreed on a reference to transparent and accountable financial "mechanisms." SWITZERLAND observed that the percentage approach favored by the US may hamper the current UNEP budgetary framework. A similar view was expressed by CANADA. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION suggested having a combination of financing options, and proposed adding a reference to an expanded strategic partnership with other UN agencies and mentioning private sources. The EU expressed an interest in having a package of different mechanisms, and supported by the US, highlighted the role of public-private partnerships. The G-77/CHINA insisted that partnerships are not a substitute for intergovernmental commitments.

In the evening, Facilitator Asadi produced a new text of this section, which provoked further discussion, in the course of which some delegates reverted to their previous positions. The US emphasized the voluntary nature of contributions and a target percentage of the Environment Fund to be devoted to capacity building. The G-77/CHINA, opposed by the US, ISREAL and the EU, suggested a possible general trust fund.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As negotiations entered their second day, several participants observed a "philosophical divide" regarding UNEP's role in UN system-wide activities. With the late introduction of new text, some delegates are noting the disparities different delegations have on visions for UNEP's robust role in the UN system. Within this debate, many delegates have observed a desire, on the one hand, to confine UNEP's scope to areas where it already has comparative advantage, and on the other hand, energetic attempts to use the Plan to expand UNEP's current turf, even if this means encroaching on the territory of other UN bodies and programmes. Despite the persistent feeling that the Plan will be completed at this meeting, it remains to be seen whether this issue might prolong final agreement on the "Bali Strategic Plan."

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

EARTH NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN SUMMARY OF IGSP-3: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* Summary of IGSP-3 will be available on Monday, 6 December at <http://www.iisd.ca/unepgc/uisp3/>