

## ITTA, 1994 RENEGOTIATION HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2006

The UN Conference on the Negotiation of the Successor Agreement to the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994 (ITTA, 1994), Fourth Part has managed to achieve consensus on all but one remaining issue. During the morning, Producer and Consumer Groups caucused in adjacent rooms, then met in an intense afternoon contact group session. Following a brief break, President Paranhos moved to a smaller meeting with key Producer and Consumer delegates in an attempt to break an impasse on the Administrative Account.

### AFTERNOON CONTACT GROUP

As an apparent result of closed meetings of Consumer members in the morning, a working group chair presented the President's text on five articles at an afternoon contact group session. Finalizing the article on Definitions, delegates did not express opposition to the proposal that "special vote" is one requiring at least 60% (as opposed to "two-thirds") of the votes of Producers and 60% of those of Consumers, cast by those present and voting.

Delegates approved the article on Membership by Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) by deleting the whole paragraph on the competence of the EC from this article.

The article on Distribution of Votes was also approved after delegates accepted the text which: grants ten votes, rather than either five or 15, to each Consumer; removes the suggested cap of 200 proposed to avoid the possibility of a blocking minority; and provides that the Council may, by special vote, adjust the minimum percentage required for a Special Vote by Consumer members if it deems necessary.

On Signature, Ratification, Acceptance and Approval, the contact group approved without change the text proposed by the EC for the third paragraph, which reads, in part, "the EC or any IGOs... shall deposit a declaration issued by the appropriate authority of such Organization specifying the nature and extent of its competence over matters governed by this Agreement..." Similar language was deleted from the article on Membership in the Organization, and delegates accepted this arrangement without discussion.

The article on the Administrative Account was reopened during the afternoon contact group session. At stake is the issue of the proportion of the assessed contributions to the Administrative Account allocated to basic administrative costs such as salaries and benefits, versus that allocated to operational costs such as communication and outreach, expert meetings, and publication of studies.

It appeared that some delegates were dissatisfied with the compromise text that most had accepted on Wednesday, 25 January, calling for a reinsertion of a 30% cap on the proportion of the Administrative Account budget used for core operational costs. President Paranhos queried whether parties really wanted to reintroduce such a proposal this late in the process, but several delegates supported doing so.

Delegates from a large group of members said that the proposed cap of 30% of the Administrative Account was the outer limit of their mandate for compromise, and stated that the

limit was not subject to compromise. Other delegates questioned the reopening of the text and asked if delegates were really prepared to compromise. Another group of delegates pointed out that there was already a compromise on relative levels of assessed contributions from Consumer and Producer members, and that the cap was necessary to retain this fragile compromise. Some delegates, however, did not accept this reasoning and reminded the group that there had also been some compromise from their previous position of setting proportions of assessed contributions at 90% for Consumer members and 10% for Producer members.

After some intense discussion on these points, President Paranhos asked delegates to form a small contact group to resolve the impasse. He noted that there was little time left to finalize text to present it to plenary on Friday, 27 January. After much discussion on the proposal, a compromise 27.5% cap was proposed. The remaining group of members with objections to that text consulted privately, but was unable to join a consensus on that change. It was suggested that the wording might be changed to state that operational costs should not exceed 30% of the administrative "costs," rather than "Account." This was not accepted.

The Chair closed discussion pending a morning plenary on Friday, 27 January. The contact group accepted the Secretariat's suggestion that the proposed sub-paragraph remain unchanged, in bold, in the text to be distributed at plenary. The Chair requested, but was unable to get, full consensus on whether the only remaining question for plenary to address would be whether to accept that text as written or not.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

Exhausted delegates went back to work early Thursday, 26 January 2006, convening in closed Consumer and Producer caucuses. The latter ended early with most delegates quite relaxed and ready to move on. A number of Producer delegates noted that, for a change, recent delays have been the result of Consumers being unable to achieve group cohesion on particular issues in a timely fashion. Remaining problematic areas center around the lack of consensus within usually more cohesive groups. Remarkably, however, little or no mention of conflicts with the US were heard.

It appears that there was general disagreement over whether late-night discussions on the budget on Wednesday, 25 January, had in fact resulted in an closed text, and when a previously deleted concept was reintroduced, arguments erupted about how this may have violated a fragile agreement.

Some delegates pointed out, however, that there never was an ironclad agreement on Paranhos' text, only a tentative acceptance of the text as a possible basis for final agreement. Notably, numerous participants appear to be resigned to a lack of full consensus on the final Agreement, as was the case for the ITTA, 1994. The implications of this now, however, may be more far-reaching for the ITTA, 2006.

**ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:** The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the ITTA, 1994 Renegotiations will be available on Monday, 30 January 2006 online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/itta4/>

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 VOLUME 95, No. 5, MONDAY, 7 JUNE 2004

### SUMMARY REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGIES - RENEWABLES 2004: 1-4 JUNE 2004

The International Conference for Renewable Energies (*renewables 2004*) took place from 1-4 June 2004, in Bonn, Germany.

Approximately 3600 participants from 154 countries attended the Conference, including several Heads of State, 121 Ministers and representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the scientific community and the private sector.

The *renewables 2004* programme consisted of nine Plenary Sessions, including a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue and a Ministerial Segment. The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue addressed: the value of, and opportunities for, renewable energy - policy frameworks and regulatory certainty; and promoting renewable energy - finance and capacity for the future. Other Plenary Sessions addressed best-practice examples and success stories.

The Ministerial Segment included three Ministerial Roundtables that considered policies for renewable energy market development, financing options, and strengthening capacities, research and policy



Members of major groups and delegations in the main plenary room.

developing countries, and the mobilization of financial resources for new and renewable sources of energy. However, it was only following the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) that renewable energy issues began to feature more promi-

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**Dr. Heinrich Schneider**  
 Conference Secretariat  
 International Conference for  
 Renewable Energies, Bonn 2004

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