



MEA Enforcement and Compliance Meeting Bulletin

A summary report of the second High-Level Meeting on Envisioning the Next Steps for Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/YMB/UNEPMEA2/](http://www.iisd.ca/YMB/UNEPMEA2/)
VOLUME 121, No. 2, MONDAY, 5 JUNE 2006



SUMMARY REPORT OF THE SECOND HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON COMPLIANCE WITH AND ENFORCEMENT OF MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS: 31 MAY-2 JUNE 2006

The second High-Level Meeting on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) met in Geneva, Switzerland, from 31 May – 2 June 2006. Approximately 30 experts gathered at this meeting organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with the objective of envisioning the next steps for MEA compliance and enforcement. This meeting built on the process initiated at the first High-Level Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in January 2006. It gathered representatives from MEA Secretariats, the Chairs of MEA compliance committees, government representatives and representatives of academia to discuss, in their personal capacities, the technical aspects of compliance and enforcement and to search for potential legal, structural and institutional innovations that could enhance implementation of MEAs. Participants discussed presentations on the three pillars that emerged from the Colombo Process – institutional structures, interlinkages, and instruments to improve implementation. Based on two and a half days of deliberations, the meeting developed a Chair’s Summary, which UNEP will use to develop an action plan on compliance with and enforcement of MEAs.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNEP MEA COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

The last few decades have seen a rapid increase in the number of MEAs addressing concerns ranging from climate change, desertification and biodiversity to hazardous wastes and chemicals. The adoption of these instruments is only the beginning of a process; full implementation of their provisions is vital to ensure their effectiveness. There is wide concern within international diplomatic circles that MEAs are neither fully complied with nor enforced, or are inadequately implemented, and that these shortcomings are one of the leading causes for the continued degradation of the environment.

Recognizing this situation, UN agencies and bodies have undertaken activities to explore the issues and constraints involved with MEA compliance and enforcement. For example, UNEP has developed texts such as the “Guidelines on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral

Environmental Agreements” and the “Manual on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements.” A High-Level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building adopted, in Bali, Indonesia, on 4 December 2004, the “Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.”

UNEP has undertaken related actions based on decision 23/1 of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which requested the UNEP Executive Director to continue to focus on activities to improve the coordination among, synergy between and effectiveness of MEAs, taking into account the autonomous decision making authority of the Conferences of the Parties (COP) to such agreements and the need to promote the environmental dimension of sustainable development among other relevant UN organizations; and to intensify efforts to support implementation by Parties to MEAs of their obligations under such agreements, upon request.

UNEP convened the High-Level Brainstorming Workshop for Multilateral Environment Agreements on Mainstreaming Environment beyond MDG-7 from 13-14 July 2005, in Nairobi, Kenya. This meeting focused on mainstreaming environmental issues beyond Millennium Development Goal 7 (MDG-7: ensure environmental sustainability) from an MEA perspective and on providing input to the MDG process. The Chair’s Conclusions that resulted from this meeting included calls for:

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of UNEP MEA Compliance and Enforcement Activities	1
Report of the Meeting	2
Opening Session	2
Institutional Structures	4
Interlinkages	6
Instruments to Improve Implementation	8
Meeting Summary and Draft Chair’s Summary . . .	10
Closure of the Meeting and Launch of the UNEP Manual	12
Upcoming Meetings	12

The *MEA Enforcement and Compliance Meeting Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Renata Rubian and Sabrina Shaw. The Editor is Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. <lynn@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James “Kimo” Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by UNEP. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.

the UN Secretary-General to include language on the environment in his speech to the World Summit 2005; follow-up meetings on the economic aspects of ecosystem services and on moving the process forward following the World Summit 2005; and establishing a UNEP website for MEAs to share their experiences and best practices in contributing to MDG implementation.

Subsequently, UNEP convened the High-Level Brainstorming Workshop on “Creating Pro-Poor Markets for Ecosystem Services” from 10-12 October 2005, at the London School of Economics (LSE) and Senate House, in London, UK. The workshop assessed the desirability and feasibility of the creation of pro-poor markets for ecosystem services in the framework of MEAs, and identified the process and institutional mechanisms required to create such markets. The agreed Chair’s Summary included calls for a series of next steps for UNEP to, among other things: establish an advisory mechanism initially targeted at MEAs on creating market-based instruments for ecosystem services; identify and develop pilot projects on the use of market-based instruments for ecosystem services to advance MEA objectives; and create awareness through research and communication on the links and potential between MEAs, ecosystem services and market-based mechanisms.

The first High-Level Meeting on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 21-22 January 2006. Approximately 30 experts gathered to discuss presentations on the myths and truths about MEA implementation, systemic challenges facing MEA implementation, the roles of MEA Secretariats and compliance regimes in facilitating MEA implementation, and next steps. The meeting developed a Chair’s Summary to assist in the process of developing UNEP’s action plan on compliance with and enforcement of MEAs. This Summary also provided the basis for deliberations on a strategy for action at the second meeting.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

The second High-Level Meeting on Envisioning the Next Steps for Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements opened on Wednesday morning, 31 May 2006. Following introductory remarks, participants spent two and a half days discussing how to take forward UNEP’s strategy to improve implementation and provide MEAs with the tools to assist in implementation.

The discussion was based on three clusters: institutional structures, interlinkages, and instruments to improve implementation. Throughout the meeting, participants spoke in their personal capacities. The Chair and UNEP organizers developed a draft Chair’s Summary of the meeting, which participants discussed on Friday morning, 2 June. Based on their comments, the Chair’s Summary was revised and



Philippe Roch, Chair of the meeting, and former Secretary of State and Director of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests, and Landscape

submitted to the participants prior to their departure. Following a period during which participants can offer further comments, the Summary will be made available on the website of UNEP’s Division of Environmental Conventions (DEC). UNEP will use the summary for guidance when it develops an action plan to address MEA implementation issues. The following report reviews the meeting’s deliberations and summarizes the draft Chair’s Summary.

OPENING SESSION

Bakary Kante, Director, UNEP’s DEC, opened the meeting and welcomed participants on behalf of UNEP, expressing appreciation for the work carried out in Colombo and noting his expectation that there would be new momentum in Geneva. He noted that MEA compliance and enforcement is a common concern to all and, therefore, there is a strong interest to find a common solution. He recalled that the CBD 2010 target on biodiversity loss is a practical example of a convention trying to find creative ways to streamline implementation. He reiterated the commitment of UNEP to the Colombo Process and to continue to develop supporting mechanisms to facilitate MEA implementation. He highlighted that there is no more time for “business as usual” and noted the responsibility of this meeting to add value to the process. He said that constraints to MEA implementation and compliance have already been identified and it is now time to put forward an action plan to facilitate governmental action.



Bakary Kante, Director of UNEP-DEC

Philippe Roch, Chair of the meeting and former State Secretary and Director of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests, and Landscape, welcomed participants and introduced the meeting’s agenda. He noted positive developments in international environmental law, as illustrated by the proliferation of MEAs. He emphasized that much had been achieved by MEAs to increase ratifications, develop reporting mechanisms, and build capacity. Despite these efforts, he said, environmental degradation continues to be widespread. The proliferation of MEAs, he underlined, has increased the complexity of national implementation for civil servants and ministries, with countries feeling the continuous mismatch between the goals of environmental conservation and economic development.

Roch said that there is no poverty alleviation without a sound environment in the medium to long-term, and that it is vital to find practical solutions to improve the trust between MEAs to improve environmental governance. Recalling that the Chair’s Summary from Colombo contained a list of issues based on three

pillars – institutional structures, interlinkages, and instruments to improve overall MEA implementation – he said discussions should be geared towards these cluster areas.

Lal Kurukulasuriya, Rapporteur of the meeting and Director General, Centre for Environmental Research, Training and Education (CERTI), said the primary focus at the Colombo meeting had been to identify causes of ineffective MEA implementation to find ways to chart a course to strengthen MEA compliance and enforcement. He noted that, despite the proliferation of MEAs and international consensus on the need to address environmental problems, the environment continues to



Lal Kurukulasuriya, Rapporteur of the meeting

deteriorate. He noted that several causes had been identified by experts in Colombo and preliminary ideas were shared to move forward to structure an action plan involving UNEP and the Convention Secretariats to strengthen MEA compliance. He stressed that this interdependence and interaction between MEAs must be borne in mind when developing a strategy to strengthen MEA compliance. He said that there is a wide range of socio-economic and institutional issues, which, together with the lack of financial resources, constitutes the basis for ineffective compliance. Accordingly, he said the Colombo meeting had identified deficits that were considered to be the principle causes of the lack of implementation at the national level. He said it would be necessary to innovatively use existing human, technical and financial resources to enhance effective MEA implementation.

DISCUSSION: The Chair invited participants to give some initial reactions. Several questions were put forward on the outcome of the meeting to advance the Colombo Process. In order for this meeting to add value, several participants proposed that, in developing recommendations, it should be kept in mind who can do what and what is appropriate to do. Another participant said the value added of this meeting would be the delivery of a practical set of steps and actions that could guide parties in MEA implementation, including through energizing existing structures.

A participant asked about coherence of this meeting with the UN processes and the balance of geographical representation at the meeting. The Chair responded that the purpose of the Colombo Process was for UNEP to gain insight from technical and detailed discussions among a group of experts and governmental representatives to devise a strategy for UNEP to assist in MEA implementation. On the process, one participant said the driving force of any UN negotiation is consensus, which, by definition, results in outcomes based on the “lowest common denominator.” In terms of substance, it was thus pointed out that this group faced a serious challenge.

One participant said the regimes themselves are not adequate for the task, and even if they were properly implemented it would not be sufficient. Several participants also noted that, although there is a need to reinforce the benefits that come with ratification of MEAs, there is also a need to identify the requirements following ratification such as the transformation of international obligations into national and local commitments.

In noting the effectiveness of the private sector in marketing messages, one participant highlighted the importance of “marketing” the products of MEAs in terms of improving public outreach, which could stimulate political will for implementation. In this regard, the example was cited of the UNDP’s special office for promoting MDGs.

On the process, several participants referred to the need to be clear at the outset as to the roadmap of the Colombo Process. In brainstorming on the broad contours of the process to understand its limitations, it could be useful to determine, for example, how far MEA Secretariats could be held responsible for enforcement of MEA instruments. In this respect, several participants said it is necessary to be mindful of other ongoing processes, short and long-term actions that need to be taken, and the roles of MEA Secretariats, Parties and other stakeholders. Given that each MEA is *sui generis*, it is thus necessary to ensure that these sensitivities are taken into account in devising a strategy for UNEP.

One participant suggested inserting reference to sustainable development to highlight the need to address the persistent disconnection between environmental protection, economic development and poverty reduction. One participant noted that financial and technical support had not been properly addressed in the Colombo Process outcome and underlined that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the main provider of financial support to MEAs. In this regard, another participant stressed the need to sustain the interest of Parties in MEAs, as an alternative to maintaining the level of financial support from donor countries, illustrating that only thirteen countries have consistently provided financial contributions to UNEP.

Several interventions focused on reasons why MEAs are not fully implemented. A participant stressed that the deficit of MEA implementation resulted from the complexities arising from real environmental problems and the integration of environment and economic development. He pointed out that sectoralization, whereby MEAs are restricted to their own niche, is a potential problem to implementation, stressing the need for MEAs to reach out to a broader set of stakeholders, including the private sector, academia and the health sector to find good models for interaction. Several participants pointed out that MEA effectiveness relates to whether existing MEAs are adequate instruments to address their mandate or whether they should be revised. In this regard, one participant put forward two assumptions: full MEA implementation leading to reduced environmental degradation would imply compliance and effectiveness; and full MEA implementation not leading to a significant protection of the environment would imply compliance and ineffectiveness. This participant stressed the importance of this meeting in clarifying which dimension to address.

Several participants called for clarity on the issues being discussed and the terms used, particularly given the tendency for confusion in the use of the terms enforcement, compliance and implementation, and proposed putting aside the effectiveness issue, as any treaty negotiation is a result of compromise between Parties. It was noted that each MEA has a process to strengthen its instruments either through the COP, committees or working groups.

The difficulty in divorcing the issues of implementation and effectiveness was noted by several participants. One participant noted that the apparent deficit in implementation did not answer why biodiversity loss is still happening, as the problem may be in the design and nature of certain regimes, which are not adequate to deal with the proposed issues. Another participant, agreeing that compliance and effectiveness are two distinct issues, said there is no need to exclude effectiveness from the agenda as the meeting also seeks to advise UNEP on future actions, such as verification systems to monitor compliance.

On the constraints to MEA implementation, one participant differentiated between “paper legislation” and “legislation application,” stressing the absence of adequate legal systems in many countries as a further constraint. This expert noted the need to look at compliance and enforcement from “the end and the front of the pipe,” without neglecting individual behaviors, attitudes and existing cultures. This participant also said the perception that environmental legislation is “declaratory” rather than “operational” is pervasive in many countries, leading to a lack of incentives and resources required for implementation. One participant recalled that enforcement is undertaken at the national level, indicating that there is no point to have an agreement if there are no means to measure its effectiveness on the ground.

Noting that the ministries of environment in many countries are weak compared to other ministries, one participant stressed the importance of improving visibility and the political weight of MEAs and UNEP. It was suggested that this could be achieved through building synergies between conventions and setting clear priorities and indicators for the work of MEAs and UNEP. In this respect, the participant said management techniques of the private sector could be helpful. One participant doubted that there was a high level of compliance with MEAs and said it was necessary to differentiate between compliance at the national and international levels. The Chair emphasized the importance of building the bridge between compliance and effectiveness. One participant said it was crucial to examine the issue of effectiveness during MEA negotiations. Another participant wondered whether effectiveness should be the focus at this meeting. If MEA objectives are not reached, this participant asked whether it is due to lack of implementation or lack of effectiveness. Citing examples of the lack of implementing legislation for CITES and the Biosafety Protocol, this participant also questioned that a high level of MEA compliance was being achieved. Noting the importance of concentrating on enforcement and implementation to give credibility to the process, another participant highlighted that 30% of Basel Convention Parties submitted reports, which was considered high.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

The first substantive session of the High-Level Meeting considered the institutional structures related to MEA implementation at the international and national levels. Dan Ogolla, Legal Advisor, Convention on Biological Diversity,



Dan Ogolla, Convention on Biological Diversity

addressed two major issues: policy development and mainstreaming MEA issues. He noted that national biodiversity strategy action plans (NBSAPs) are tools to ensure that various interested parties are involved in the framework of the convention. He added that MEAs should be mainstreamed at different levels and sectors, with cross-sectoral mechanisms among

counselors, ministries, the private sector and civil society creating a potential for cooperation. He stressed that a critical notion for effective implementation relates to viewing biodiversity as a local issue; hence, the need to create an institutional framework for enabling participation of indigenous and local communities, with accountability mechanisms between government authorities and civil society. Ogolla recalled that many instruments at the regional level can serve as a model for facilitating MEA implementation and interlinkages with other sectors, illustrating that the action plans in the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) provide a framework that allow governments to exchange information and best practices, while proposing solutions to common problems. He recommended that there is a need to identify existing mechanisms at these levels. He recalled that the CBD Secretariat was required to work with Parties on their National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plans. He suggested that MEA focal points could be brought together at the regional level to exchange information and experience and build cooperation between MEAs.

Iwona Rummel-Bulska, Chief, Law Branch, Division of Policy Development and Law, UNEP, gave a presentation focusing on the institutional structures related to cooperation between MEAs, noting that MEAs are addressing the need for cooperation between them, but said that initiatives could be enhanced. She stressed the importance of harmonizing reporting and minimizing special reporting to reduce the burden on Parties, particularly developing countries. She said UNEP was well placed to develop a framework and funding to ensure coordination of a decentralized system, rather than trying to establish



Iwona Rummel-Bulska, Principal Legal Officer and Chief Environmental Law Branch, Division of Policy Development and Law, UNEP

an unsustainable centralized approach. She noted that UNEP could be a facilitator, bridging formal and informal networks and catalyzing partnerships and existing networks, such as the UN Environment Management Group (EMG). She noted that UNEP also has a role to play to support a proactive role by MEA Secretariats and to promote a culture of compliance by relevant stakeholders. She emphasized the added value of UNEP in increasing leverage of MEAs within national development strategies, the importance of enhancing technical assistance, and the need to define clear roles. She recommended leaving specific MEA issues to each MEA Secretariat, not only to avoid organizational conflicts but to promote a more efficient system.

The Chair highlighted the importance of moving forward by increasing clarity on who can usefully do what with respect to improving implementation, compliance and enforcement of MEAs. He enquired as to the role of MEA Secretariats in coordinating work with national authorities to develop various instruments. He asked whether there was a role for MEAs to provide input at the national level to address these issues, such as bringing together MEA focal points.

Recalling his experience as a Senegalese negotiator, Bakary Kante said there had been an evolution in the process with respect to stakeholder engagement. While it may be important to bring all key players together, he said sufficient funding was vital to ensure a participatory process.

DISCUSSION: Several participants raised the importance of cooperation at the regional level to implement MEAs. Several participants noted that MEAs had already recognized the importance of regional activities in light of the financial constraints at the national level. One participant noted the cost implications of increasing activities, such as bringing together MEA focal points at the regional level. Other participants called for rethinking regional approaches to transboundary ecosystem issues as a more effective institutional response. It was stressed that the opportunities presented by regional structures need to be operationalized. Noting UNEP's experience with the regional seas program, one participant stressed the practicality of regional frameworks. Another delegate suggested that UNEP could build on regional activities to make progress towards global goals and move away from the "lowest common denominator" approach. One participant noted the success of initiatives by the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) targeted to regional realities. Another participant said it would be interesting to look at the effectiveness of regional norms, while not losing sight of global initiatives.

Participants offered various examples of MEA cooperation. One participant noted the cooperation undertaken by CITES on shared resources in the Caspian Sea with the Bioresources Commission



Willem Wijnstekers, Secretary General of CITES

and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). While the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG), composed of the five biodiversity MEAs, could potentially stimulate national level responses, the participant said that commitment to this process could be strengthened. Other CITES efforts involving other conventions include implementing the CBD principle of sustainable use, and supporting customs officers dealing with the trade aspects of the different conventions through the Green Customs Initiative. This participant noted that MEA Secretariats are working together with the UNEP Environment and Trade Unit on technology transfer issues to contribute to negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) on environmental goods and services.

Another participant said the Basel Convention envisaged regional centers to undertake practical implementation and on



Donata Rugarabamu, Basel Convention, PIC and POPs

the ground training, noting that the Basel Convention thus far has established 13 centers and has put in place the Basel Convention Operational Network (BCON) regional initiative. Noting that the COP is the supreme body that mandates MEA Secretariat activities, one participant stressed that Parties provide MEA mandates, with a role for UNEP to advance cooperation to fill in any gaps. Several participants referred to the

potential role of UNEP in assisting countries to develop a cost-benefit analysis prior to ratifying MEAs.

While some participants viewed a common compliance committee for MEAs as an interesting idea, others noted that it was difficult to envisage in practice. Several participants raised the issue of stakeholder involvement in MEA compliance committees. One said civil society should be involved in MEA compliance committees and should be allowed to submit non-compliance complaints; the current situation is that civil society is excluded from these bodies. Another participant suggested that UNEP could survey the way in which different countries integrate civil society participation to discern models of public participation, as there is a lack of awareness of domestic processes. This participant suggested that UNEP convene finance and environment ministers to dialogue on these issues.

One participant gave the example of India, where consultative groups had been developed to increase expertise in clusters, such as between the Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Basel Convention to develop synergies and to reach out at the local level. Emphasizing the importance of public participation in compliance mechanisms and opportunities to submit complaints, another participant noted that the Aarhus Convention deals with the rights of civil society and that its compliance committee had received 16 complaints

from the public during its operations over almost three years. This participant noted the lack of reports, particularly from developing countries.

Given that public participation can trigger external pressure, one participant said procedural safeguards are necessary to ensure equitable representation. This participant further noted that, although critical, external pressure should not overwhelm the functioning of compliance committees. One participant noted the importance of political will to revitalize the Biodiversity Liaison Group, as there are many practical issues it could usefully debate.

On reporting, one speaker noted the information from the Basel Convention's questionnaire to Parties on implementation and reporting in which 15% of parties had either not reported regularly or had never reported. This speaker also noted that it is not possible to assess to what extent national legislation fully implements all of the obligations set forth in the Convention. Thus, further work is necessary to better establish how to energize and maximize the effectiveness of MEAs.

One participant noted the difficulty of developing a single MEA compliance regime, as countries are reluctant to accept *ex-post* obligations since most obligations are negotiated and accepted by countries at the time of ratification. Yet, the participant added that the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution had adopted a regime that is universal to its eight protocols and its long usage may have influenced Parties to rely on a common system. Another participant noted that enforcement is a step further than compliance, indicating that developing countries lack the institutional capacity for enforcement. This participant cautioned against establishing an enforcement committee in addition to a compliance committee, noting this would imply further negotiations and acceptance of penalties. This participant also noted the need to build on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building to ensure compliance.

One participant highlighted the experience of the compliance committees in Sri Lanka, indicating the difficulties generated due to lack of national expertise, overburdening experts. With respect to compliance, several participants noted that the main purpose is not to punish those parties who could not meet MEA objectives, but to provide concrete actions to assist those countries to implement commitments.

Several participants referred to the importance of the Green Customs Initiative to develop the understanding of customs officials concerning MEA measures that apply at national borders. One participant said that, to stop illegal trade and build the capacity of customs officials, it is necessary to enhance cooperative initiatives. The same participant noted that the lesson learned was that it is necessary to involve ministries of finance to encourage enforcement through customs authorities, citing the example of coordination between the Montreal Protocol, Basel Convention, CITES, PIC, POPs, the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons, Interpol, the World Customs Organization and UNEP.

With reference to the negotiations in the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), one participant noted that scientific data is paramount to obtaining verifiable reporting.

Focusing on ways to improve compliance with MEAs and the way in which MEA secretariats could trigger compliance, one participant noted that the Basel Convention Secretariat has a clear mandate to review reports, but it does not have access to GEF funding. This participant noted that Parties have to put in place implementing legislation based on expert advice to draft appropriate implementing legislation and noted that signature as opposed to ratification is considered sufficient to trigger funding. Several participants reiterated that initiatives must be backed by financial resources.

The Chair closed the session by recalling key concepts from the discussions. He said it was vital to provide guidance to enhance implementation through regional and global initiatives. He noted that peer review has a useful role to play in advancing implementation, as well as stakeholder involvement and participation. It is vital to enhance the implementation of MEAs through communicating the benefits of MEAs for poverty alleviation and economic development.

INTERLINKAGES

The second substantive session considered the interlinkages between MEAs to facilitate their implementation. Bradnee

Chambers, Senior Programme Officer, United Nations University- Institute of Advanced Studies, noted that interlinkages are defined by the UNEP Global Environment Outlook (GEO) as interactions between and amongst pressures and their impacts on ecosystem services and human well-being. He referred to the interlinkages approach, which deals with responses that examine and capitalize on synergies,

minimize conflicts, and seek to understand and manage trade-offs. Chambers addressed the need for, benefits of and key issues related to these interlinkages to put forth a way forward. On the need to develop interlinkages, he said it is a result of the complexity of ecosystems as highly interdependent and intertwined, the evolution of policy making processes vis-à-vis the compartmentalization approach and fragmentation, leading to a greater need for integration. He highlighted a number of benefits from interlinkages: MEAs can learn from each other, leading to institutional adaptive learning between organizations; improved compliance and meeting treaty objectives; cost-effectiveness, procedural and management burden-relief; strengthened implementation through identification of synergies; greater opportunities for financing such as access to GEF; strengthened international law; consistency and codification leading to the evolution of customary law; reduced uncertainty between MEAs, for instance the case of the Biosafety Protocol and the WTO; and prioritization and mainstreaming of MEAs with national development strategies. Chambers noted that key issues within this field include finding ways to enforce “grey



Brandnee Chambers, United Nations University, Institute of Advanced Studies

areas” between conventions; embedded institutional barriers and political patriotism; spatial-temporal scale issues such as time of responses and impacts; multiple-dimensions of interlinkages such as ecosystem services, direct and indirect drivers of ecosystem change; ecosystem services that enhance well-being; and policy responses and bio-geographical regions. On the way forward, he indicated the need to establish a structural base, with a well-mandated and politically empowered EMG to address coordination issues; a Working Group under the International Law Commission or the creation of an MEA Law Commission; a political base through decisions in political fora to give interlinkages the authorization they need and deserve; a civil society base, as business and industry are not adequately aware and MEAs are not a priority for scientists and NGOs; a knowledge base through the development of national guidelines for the effective implementation of interlinkages, tools such as databases, impact assessment, decision frameworks and indicators.

Nicholas Robinson, Pace University School of Law, presented some practical measures to build confidence, develop interlinkages between environmental protection, economic development and poverty reduction, and create incentives to work on MDGs across MEAs. He said there is not a common understanding of the shared legal basis between MEAs, which has resulted in their fragmentation. Noting UNEP’s role to examine ways in which individual MEAs are part of an integrated whole, he suggested exploring regional initiatives and increasing awareness of the scientific commonalities across MEAs. He cited the example of the UN Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods database, which is a cost effective, efficient autonomous network of knowledge used by commercial arbitrators. He said a similar tool is necessary for the biological concerns of the Earth. Robinson outlined several thematic and methodological ways of enhancing collaboration. He said alternative and new biofuels, such as ethanol, could be a thematic basis for functional collaboration between MEAs. He said the methodological tools for holistic decision making include environmental management systems and environmental impact assessment; for example, MEAs could be involved in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) five-year environmental action plans. He noted that the development of megacities requires environmental management systems to bring MEA objectives into effect.



Nicholas Robinson, Pace University School of Law

DISCUSSION: During the ensuing discussion, participants noted that issues of synergies and interlinkages between MEAs are complex and evolving, as illustrated by the recommendations from the Colombo meeting. Some suggested treating interlinkages as a cross-cutting issue.

In understanding the importance of interlinkages, several participants said regional and national experiences of MEA implementation are still lacking and could usefully be explored. A participant highlighted: the case of the ASEAN enforcement network on CITES as a good model upon which to base cooperation; the WTO Director General’s speech to the European Commission Green Week in May 2006 urging WTO member countries to lend their support to MEAs; and institutional cooperation activities, such as the CITES Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with FAO on marine species issues and with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) model, which focuses on technical committees fostering integration, was also mentioned as a potential prototype to facilitate MEA implementation.

UNEP was called upon by several participants to catalyze successful experiences and sensitize stakeholders involved in the process to energize MEA interlinkages. There was reference to the role played by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the overall development strategy of countries, and it was recommended that UNEP strengthen its cooperation with other UN agencies, particularly the UN Development Program (UNDP), to advance work on MEA and MDG-related issues.

The biodiversity-related conventions were commended for their efforts to promote joint implementation of cross-cutting issues and to identify synergies, lessening the administrative burden on Parties. Several participants noted the importance of MEA collaboration with financial institutions, which could play an important role in implementation and access to alternative financial resources. Economic valuation was highlighted as a critical aspect of MEA implementation, and successful initiatives carried out by financial institutions as facilitators of interlinkages were raised, such as by the Asian Development Bank and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. It was noted that these organizations have both played an active role in the region, critical for developing new initiatives for the environment and regionalizing issues contained in *Agenda 21* and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. One participant gave the example of the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development, which, with support from the Government of Japan, is working with various ministries of countries in the region to examine cross-cutting issues and interlinkages, facilitate financing and enhance representation.

Noting the need to examine success stories emanating from public-private partnerships, a participant illustrated the synergies between multinationals to implement the Montreal Protocol and the Kyoto Protocol, by changing the specifications of supply chain equipment to promote energy efficiency, rural health and poverty reduction. Another participant said it is important to encourage a culture of compliance and stressed the need to give compliance committees the mandate required to function adequately, highlighting the development of synergies on compliance in the London Dumping Convention, as well as in the Basel Convention regional centers, which are a useful model, particularly for developing countries.

Noting the need to explore common links between conventions, several participants recommended exchanges and cooperation among legal officers of conventions to build a common understanding and confidence among MEAs by sorting out core legal and institutional issues. Various formal and informal mechanisms of interlinkages were recalled, which could allow for cross-fertilization among MEA Secretariats. For instance, it was noted that most of the members of the Basel Convention Mechanism for Promoting Implementation and Compliance participate in other conventions' committees.

A participant spoke on the latest developments in the Draft Convention on the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, known as the Ship Recycling Convention, currently being negotiated under the aegis of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee, and expected to be completed for consideration and adoption in the 2008-2009 biennium. This participant indicated the lack of clarity in how regulatory functions would operate, particularly in regard to compliance. The participant noted that the development of science and a knowledge base could contribute to minimizing uncertainty.

Emphasizing that coordination should take place throughout the life cycle of an MEA, allowing cross-fertilization of ideas among MEAs and synergies at regional and national levels, several participants suggested encouraging Parties to undertake mechanisms to promote synergies at the national level. Noting the importance of perception and the role of UNEP in governance with respect to MEAs, several participants said UNEP has a leadership role to play in developing the interlinkages between MEAs, for example in order to enter into discussions with the WTO.

INSTRUMENTS TO IMPROVE IMPLEMENTATION

The third substantive session of the High-Level Meeting considered instruments to improve implementation of MEAs. Patrick Szell, former head of the International Environmental Law Division, UK Department of Environment, recalled the definition of implementation provided by the UNEP Guidelines on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs in paragraph 9(b) as referring to all relevant law, regulations, policies and other measures and initiatives that contracting parties adopt and/or take to meet their obligations under an MEA and its amendments, if any. He noted that most conclusions provided from the Colombo meeting clearly have a national character, and highlighted three key issues on verification of national reporting, review of MEA effectiveness, and plans for systematic implementation and enforcement of MEAs. He stressed that national



Patrick Szell, former head of the International Environmental Law Division, UK Department of Environment

observance of MEAs needs to be addressed at five distinct and interrelated stages: pre-negotiation, negotiation, post-negotiation, implementation, and post-implementation. The rationale, he said, is to ease the burden of implementation on individual states at an earlier stage in the process of an MEA life cycle. Szell said the pre-negotiation stage should be centered on public formal and informal consultations with various stakeholders, combined with a cost-benefit analysis of potential scenarios, which will influence a choice to ratify an MEA. At the negotiation stage, he said countries should: assess whether they will be able to fulfill their obligations under a specific MEA; identify the national actors responsible for coordinating implementation and monitoring of the actual treaty at the central government or local governments; and identify civil society institutes that need to be involved to fulfill obligations, types of activities to be conducted, language used in the treaty text to avoid interpretation problems, timelines and follow up actions that may be required, and legislation needs and administrative actions. On the post-negotiation stage, he mentioned the need to: explain the case for ratification and its consequences to ministries, parliament, NGOs and civil society; identify obstacles; focus on capacity building and financial assistance; and start timely communication with the MEA Secretariat to obtain necessary support and technical assistance.

Szell noted that, at the implementation stage, countries should: start developing the required measures to implement an MEA, so a party is able to comply fully with its obligations from the moment the instrument enters into force; review each obligation to determine the action required to give it effect; maximize the prospect of implementation, which could be done through the development of indicators; designate the agency responsible for implementation; take early action to reduce pressure during stages after ratification; develop provisions to avoid intergovernmental or interagency conflicts; develop provisions for administrative management, including payment of obligations and duties to the treaty; scrutinize enforcement and existing machinery to assess existing capacity for compliance; and evaluate the need to develop new mechanisms. Szell indicated that the ultimate goal of this stage is to conduct public consultation and education, engaging the public to maximize the prospects of full observance of the new legislation and obligations. On the post-implementation stage, Szell indicated that this phase is often overlooked in national implementation. He mentioned that reporting is a key activity in this stage, with timing being defined by the treaty or by the COP, which can provide specific instructions.

Marceil Yeater, Chief, Legal Affairs and Trade Policy Unit, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), made a presentation on ways to enhance instruments to improve implementation, noting that national reporting is developed to facilitate accurate, complete and timely reports to MEAs with the aim of verifying the truthfulness and quality of reporting. While integral, she said verification is resource intensive and will be assisted by the availability of electronic tools to help analyze data. She noted that, even after 30 years, there were CITES Parties who were still exploring their obligations under the Convention. She also noted

the need to put in place computerized information management, which could help reporting. If there is no information base, she said reporting could become unduly burdensome.

On performance assessment, Yeater said CITES was struggling to shift from output oriented to outcome planning to discern real impact. While it had been suggested that biodiversity continued to be lost, she said CITES claimed that no species had become extinct as a result of international trade, even though many species were reducing in number quickly. As such, she noted the need to develop practical and valid indicators and programs to deal with the effects of CITES, such as the CBD 2010 target, MDGs, sustainable use, and compliance and enforcement measures. Nevertheless, she noted that there were problems associated with simplistic approaches to indicators, such as putting species on Appendix I. She said that, while it has been possible for the Montreal Protocol, for example, to develop indicators to show that the ozone hole is getting smaller and POPs has built in from the outset how to measure effectiveness, it is as difficult as it is critical to set a baseline. Yeater said UNEP has a role to play in compiling MEA assessments, while not necessarily a mandate to conduct its own assessment of MEAs, which is a job for the COP in the existing governance structure. She recalled the balance between enforcement – what is done after a violation has occurred – and the need to have the incentives in place to promote compliance and prevent non-compliance.

Mukul Sanwal, Coordinator, Compliance Programme, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), said the UNFCCC has a strong compliance system that takes final decisions that cannot be appealed. He said the enforcement and facilitative branches were designed to work together and, paralleling this development, there are detailed guidelines for national reporting, assessment of reports and country visits. Sanwal noted that any disagreement in the assessment would go to the compliance committee for a final decision. He also noted that what differentiates the evolution of the climate change compliance regime from other MEAs is that there is a provision for “finger pointing” for the first time, moving towards a WTO-type of arrangement that is rule based and affects the rights and obligations of Parties, but is framed within a different philosophy in which compliance is promoted as opposed to punishing non-compliance. Sanwal noted the need to redefine MEA implementation with the focus shifting from procedural obligations of reporting to substantive obligations. He emphasized that, while markets could create problems, they are also at the heart of solutions. He stressed that this is a new area that UNEP could explore to link compliance solutions with more



Mukul Sanwal, Coordinator, Compliance Programme, UNFCCC

substantive market-based solutions, such as compliance systems that would enhance predictability, minimize risks and facilitate investment flows. He used the Clean Development Mechanism in the Kyoto Protocol as an example. Sanwal indicated that performance assessment should be left to MEAs as it depends on the specific context of and obligations under MEAs and can not be generalized. He suggested that UNEP examine MEA implementation at the regional level, and gave an example to illustrate the role of ASEAN in Nepal in facilitating technical capacity and information exchange regarding existing national legislation and models available for implementation. Given the lack of capacity in LDCs to deal with MEA implementation, Sanwal suggested that UNEP concentrate on assistance to these countries.

DISCUSSION: One participant said the current rule of decision making by consensus in certain MEAs is actually working against their implementation since countries tend to accept the “lowest common denominator,” or the least binding propositions during the negotiations. This participant suggested that a way out would be to work through a majority system.

Several participants noted that MEA Secretariats often encourage countries to become parties given that the sheer number of parties to a given convention is frequently a measure of the convention’s success. It was suggested that MEA Secretariats could assist countries in assessing their national capacity, including required national legislation, to fulfill a treaty’s obligations. A participant recommended that UNEP should develop a model of impact assessment to be carried out by countries before ratification takes place and ensure reporting in a manner that would enable verification.

Several participants said adequate domestic legislation should not be a requirement for ratification, as ratification could generate the external pressure necessary to initiate the development of such legislation. Other participants added that it is important to build a political commitment to MEAs, even prior to assessing capacity for compliance, with one participant citing the examples of the Montreal Protocol and Basel Convention, where no framework had been in place to facilitate implementation and compliance prior to ratification. Noting the disconnection between MEA mandates and stakeholders’ immediate needs, several participants recommended the development of a communication strategy to reach out to stakeholders on the importance of MEAs. Engaging stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities, throughout the life cycle of an MEA was considered a pre-condition for successful implementation, and participants called upon UNEP to consider this issue closer. In this regard, it was suggested that UNEP could convene a meeting of various countries that are undertaking efforts to coordinate implementation to understand the additional value that business, communities and governments could obtain, and how national coordination is taking place.

Regarding MEA compliance, some participants reiterated the importance for developing countries of common but differentiated responsibilities with concrete financial and technical actions to be taken to enable developing countries to implement their obligations. Several participants stressed that, instead of punitive

measures to discourage non-compliance, there is a need to provide incentives to encourage and assist in the implementation of MEAs. One speaker said performance assessments of MEAs according to base line indicators are a worthwhile idea to consider whether MEAs are meeting their objectives and contributing to their environmental objectives. One participant noted that compliance is not the only measurement of whether a treaty is effective, and disagreed that MEAs should develop baselines, suggesting using a science assessment model as a way forward.

Another participant emphasized cost-benefit analysis as a crucial step and recommended that UNEP develop an inventory of ongoing initiatives and best-practices, from countries, business and international organizations, which would provide concrete lessons for future actions at different stages. The inventory could also provide for policy options, illustrating how non-compliance issues are handled by each MEA, whether there is a punitive action, and which type of actions are often undertaken by compliance committees.

The Chair thanked participants for the discussion and noted the breadth and richness of the suggestions for concrete action. He said the intention was to give participants a first draft of the Chair's Summary for their preliminary comments on Friday morning.

MEETING SUMMARY AND DRAFT CHAIR'S SUMMARY

During the final substantive session of the meeting, participants provided their comments on a draft Chair's Summary of the meeting, which was initially circulated on Friday morning, 2 June.

DISCUSSION: Participants made a first round of suggestions on how to enhance the draft Chair's Summary, including the need to:

- improve the tone of the recommendations to set a positive context, while stimulating action and not detracting from the urgency of the need to address environmental degradation and enhance MEA implementation;
- include reference to the positive developments in international law and the trend towards setting up compliance mechanisms in MEAs;
- recommend that UNEP take a leading role in bringing about change and promoting cooperation to stimulate MEA implementation with an established timeframe;
- highlight concrete actions through, for example, a substantive check list that could go forward to the UNEP Governing Council;
- emphasize the importance of providing sufficient financing to assist implementation;
- promote the importance of MEA compliance to the global environment;
- increase the knowledge base and the culture of compliance with MEAs to halt and reverse the trends of environmental degradation;
- ensure UNEP's role in preparing travaux préparatoires during the negotiation of MEAs;
- note that this meeting was taking place after the publication of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment report, which stated that 60 percent of ecosystem services are degraded and to convey this message in a hard hitting way;
- develop a communication strategy including with the assistance of stakeholder groups;
- accentuate references to sustainable development and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in the Summary;
- develop a comprehensive strategy to counter environmental crime, including stakeholder engagement;
- enhance stakeholder involvement in MEA implementation and highlight the lack of broad engagement of civil society as a cause of non-implementation;
- mainstream environmental issues in key sectors, plans and programs;
- increase political will to implement MEAs, particularly in developing countries, where MEA objectives compete with other pressing socio-economic priorities and constraints and promote linkages between socio-economic development and environmental management to convince the leadership that these issues should be dealt with in tandem;
- draw from regional experiences, organizations and commissions, such as ASEAN, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and others;
- emphasize the importance of involving compliance committees in various MEAs and bringing the compliance committees together to facilitate synergies;
- set base lines to assess MEA performance based on an holistic approach;
- note that Parties are part of the solution, not necessarily part of the problem;
- acknowledge the degree of success in meeting the reporting requirements of MEAs, while noting the cause for concern with implementation more generally;
- distinguish between the political will required to ratify an MEA and the political will required to implement obligations. Lack of political will creates a lack of capacity, which is as much an issue in developed countries as in developing ones.
- acknowledge the role of COPs in working to assess MEA implementation;
- sensitize as well as empower and engage stakeholders to capture the notion of education and awareness;
- show economic value and link to socio-economic realities, taking into account common but differentiated responsibilities with realistic indicators;
- use new technologies and partnerships to further MEA objectives, for example to prevent waste from being generated in the first place;
- emphasize implementation legislation as the starting point of effective implementation, particularly for developing countries;
- develop timelines to address implementation to introduce greater rigor and discipline to addressing concerns.
- note that while future instruments could emphasize economic instruments, the reality is that command and control policy tools are required by many existing MEAs.

- clarify key definitions as follows: compliance means the fulfillment by the contracting parties of their obligations under an MEA and any amendments to it; implementation refers to, *inter alia*, all relevant laws, regulations, policies and other measures and initiatives that contracting parties adopt and/or take to meet their obligations under an MEA and its amendments, if any; enforcement is defined as the range of procedures and actions employed by a state, its competent authorities and agencies to ensure that organizations or persons potentially failing to comply with environmental laws or regulations implementing MEAs can be brought or returned into compliance and/or published through civil, administrative or criminal action.

Based on the morning's discussions and participants' comments, the draft was revised and distributed to participants prior to their departure from the meeting. Bakary Kante said participants would have the chance to review the draft and offer further comments prior to finalizing it. He said UNEP would use the text as a starting point for the elaboration of an action plan on compliance with and enforcement of MEAs, which he anticipated would be presented to the UNEP Governing Council in 2007.

DRAFT CHAIR'S SUMMARY: The draft Chair's Summary, as distributed on Friday afternoon, 2 June, notes that the High-Level Meeting addressed key challenges to effective implementation, compliance with and enforcement of MEAs based on the outcome of the first meeting in Colombo and elaborated possible options for concrete action involving all stakeholders in this regard. The draft Chair's Summary then notes that the Chair's Summaries of the first and second High-Level Meetings constitute the outcome of this informal brainstorming process (referred to as the "Colombo Process"), engaging representatives of several key MEA Secretariats and national and international environmental experts.

The draft Chair's Summary then includes reference to the following issues, noting that participants were generally of the view that:

- While significant progress has been made towards securing compliance with and enforcement of MEAs at international and national levels, there are numerous shortcomings that should be addressed.
- While many factors and problems converge to create a situation that is not always conducive to realizing the full potential of MEAs, principal among these is the lack of adequate financial, technical, material and human resource capabilities.
- UNEP together with MEA Secretariats should identify the causes of non-compliance and ineffective implementation of MEAs and develop and implement a programme of work to promote more effective implementation, compliance with and enforcement of MEAs, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.
- the shortcomings that contribute to non-compliance and/or ineffective implementation of MEAs include: inadequate resources to implement MEAs; equity considerations in international legal regimes; governance and operational institutional deficiencies including engagement of all

stakeholders; insufficient cooperation among MEA Secretariats and between UNEP and the secretariats; and inadequate integration of MEA implementation processes with those designed to alleviate poverty, and promote economic development and social advancement.

The draft Chair's Summary then outlined the following possible actions as identified by participants, which should be taken with appropriate timelines, including:

- UNEP, Convention Secretariats and other relevant organizations should continue to strengthen mutual cooperation and enhance efforts to provide guidance and support to States on ways and means of removing obstacles to effective implementation of MEAs.
- Strengthen partnerships and cooperation between UNEP and the Convention Secretariats, including through the various compliance committees.
- Actively promote regional cooperation to strengthen trust and confidence among countries at the regional level.
- Strengthening partnerships with relevant regional political and financial institutions and the UN Regional Commissions.
- Empower, engage and sensitize all stakeholders to strengthen a sense of ownership in the international legal regimes, which in turn could translate into a greater commitment towards and participation in their effective implementation.
- UNEP should encourage and facilitate a dialogue with and among MEA Secretariats, while respecting the autonomous character of the MEA Secretariats, to promote the use of synergies and interlinkages among MEAs.
- Mainstream implementation of MEAs with national strategies, policies, plans and programmes for poverty alleviation and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development.
- A plan of action should address issues that impact on MEA implementation at the pre-negotiation, negotiation, participation, implementation and post-implementation phases.
- UNEP should provide further guidance for use in national procedures for environmental impact assessment to mainstream MEA obligations.
- The need for UNEP and the MEA Secretariats to strengthen cooperation with donors and international financial institutions to provide financial and technical support to assist developing countries to implement MEAs.
- Prioritize assistance to ensure MEA implementation through national legislation.
- Develop the knowledge base on international criminal activities related to MEAs.
- UNEP should ensure that detailed travaux preparatoires are undertaken during the negotiation of MEAs.

Finally, the draft Chair's Summary notes that participants were of the view that the above issues may constitute key problem areas to be addressed in promoting the effectiveness of MEAs. It notes that the participants urge the UNEP Executive Director to provide leadership within the framework of UNEP's mandate, in close partnership with the Convention Secretariats, to develop and implement a cost-effective and sustained plan of work to address these issues to enhance implementation, compliance and

enforcement of MEAs. The draft Chair's Summary concludes by suggesting the initiation of an institutionalized process for achieving these goals with the approval of the UNEP Governing Council.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING AND LAUNCH OF THE UNEP MANUAL

Following the discussion of the draft Chair's Summary on Friday morning, 2 June, Chair Roch concluded the meeting by thanking the experts for their attendance and contributions. Bakary Kante reiterated that the Chair's Summary would identify the guidance of the meeting and how UNEP can follow up on the issue. He expressed his hope that further meetings would be held before the end of 2006 to continue moving the process forward, and anticipated that governments would be integrated into the process. He said UNEP is a catalyst and will keep its mandate, and that it wants to build strong partnerships and work together to find "win-win" solutions. Kante expressed his appreciation for the work of Chair Philippe Roch and the participants' constructive contributions.

Kante announced that UNEP would formally launch the *UNEP Manual on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs*, which was intended to be used by a wide audience: treaty negotiators, political officials, lawyers, police, customs officers, researchers, and legal drafters in governmental, non-governmental, academic, and professional institutions. He then invited participants to join in the UNEP festivities to commemorate World Environment Day and the reception hosted by the Swiss Federal Council, the State Council of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the Executive Council of the City of Geneva. The meeting closed at 12:15 pm.



L-R: Elizabeth Maruma-Mrema, UNEP-DEC, and Marceil Yeater, CITES, ready to start public awareness activities using the UNEP Manual on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs

UPCOMING MEETINGS

TWENTY-SIXTH OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL: This meeting will be held in Montreal, Canada, from 3-6 July 2006. For more information, contact: Ozone Secretariat; tel: +254-20-762-3850/51; fax: +254-20-762-4691/92/93; e-mail: ozoneinfo@unep.org; internet: http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/oewg/26oewg/index.asp

THIRD GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

ASSEMBLY: This meeting will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 29-30 August 2006. As the principal governing body of the GEF, the Assembly will chart the forthcoming years' agenda and work programme. For more information, contact: GEF Secretariat; tel: +1-202-473-0508; fax: +1-202-522-3240/3245; e-mail: assembly@thegef.org; internet: http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Assembly/3rd_Assembly/3rd_assembly.html

FIFTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CRIC-5): CRIC-5 will convene from 4-13 October 2006 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It will review the implementation of the Convention and its institutional arrangements and consider necessary adjustments to the elaboration process and implementation of action programmes, among other agenda items. For more information contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

THIRD CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION (PIC COP-3): PIC COP-3 will be held from 9-13 October 2006, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Rotterdam Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8296; fax: +41-22-917-8082; e-mail: pic@unep.ch; internet: <http://www.pic.int>

EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL: This meeting will be held in New Delhi, India, from 30 October - 3 November 2006. For more information, contact: Ozone Secretariat; tel: +254-20-762-3850/51; fax: +254-20-762-4691/92/93; e-mail: ozoneinfo@unep.org; internet: <http://ozone.unep.org>

SECOND MEETING OF THE PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (POPRC): The Second Meeting of the Stockholm Convention POPs Review Committee (POPRC) is scheduled to be held from 6-10 November 2006, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8191; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://www.pops.int>

TWELFTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC AND SECOND MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: UNFCCC COP 12 and Kyoto Protocol COP/MOP 2 will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 6-17 November 2006. These meetings will also coincide with the 25th meetings of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: <http://www.unfccc.int>

EIGHTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE BASEL CONVENTION: Basel COP-8 is scheduled to take place from 27 November to 1 December 2006, in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: Basel Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8218; fax: +41-22-797-3454; e-mail: sbc@unep.ch; internet: <http://www.basel.int>