



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

WORLD BANK EXAMINES CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT, APPROVES ADAPTATION PROJECT



L-R: Steen Lau Jorgensen, Director, Social Development, World Bank; Warren Evans, Director, Environment Department, World Bank; and Kristyn Schrader, World Bank, discuss the World Bank report "Managing Climate Risk: Integrating Adaptation into World Bank Group Operations"

The World Bank presented a report on "Managing Climate Risk: Integrating Adaptation into World Bank Group Operations" during the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly (29-30 August 2006, Cape Town, South Africa). The report affirms that, by enhancing climate risk management, development institutions and their partner countries will be able to better address the growing risks from climate change and, at the same time, make current development investments more resilient to climate variability and extreme

weather events. The report suggests that adaptation to climate change should be addressed through a climate risk management approach and summarizes the World Bank's strategy to climate-proof its operations, which includes: integrating climate risk management at the outset in project design through an early climate risk screening tool; integrating climate risk management development strategies and country and sector dialogues; and enhancing the scope of funding for adaptation (<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/GLOBALENVIRONMENTFACILITYGEFOPERATIONS/Resources/Publications-Presentations/GEFAdaptationAug06.pdf>).

On 7 September 2006, the World Bank approved a 2.1 million GEF grant to support efforts by Dominica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines to implement pilot adaptation investments to address the impacts of climate change on their natural resource base, focused on biodiversity and land degradation along coastal and near-coastal areas. Reducing these impacts will primarily result in protection of biodiversity and prevention of land degradation but will also contribute to climate-resilient sustainable development (<http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=64283627&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P090731>).

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: LESSONS FROM MAURITIUS, CHINA AND BRAZIL

(UNU, 2006) This report reviews three renewable energy developments that have taken place in developing countries without significant foreign investment: bagasse cogeneration in Mauritius, ethanol in Brazil and solar hot water in China. It suggests that renewable energy planning should be approached strategically by developing countries, with specific technological strategies grounded in national industrial capacity and energy resources (<http://www.ias.unu.edu/binaries2/Renewables2006.pdf>).

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GUEST ARTICLE

Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Tourism Development at World Heritage Sites

By Art Pedersen, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Salamai Ali Tabbasum, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and Makiko Yashiro, UNEP

Abstract

Eight hundred and twelve properties worldwide are listed as World Heritage Sites, with 628 cultural, 160 natural and 24 mixed properties in 137 countries.

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GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

Many of the cultural sites often contain rich ecosystems within their boundaries and are adjacent to nature reserves, requiring careful management and full attention to the protection of natural habitats and biodiversity within and around the sites. Thus, there is a critical need to manage World Heritage sites by highlighting both cultural and natural values and their inter-relationships, and promoting coordination among different stakeholders involved in their management.

Sustainable tourism is an effective means of addressing this need, allowing the World Heritage sites to maintain access for visitors while retaining their cultural and natural values. The importance of sustainable tourism is highlighted under not only the World Heritage Convention, but also in biodiversity-related conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). However, many of the sites face various challenges when promoting sustainable tourism initiatives, such as:

1. Site Management

Few World Heritage sites have tourism/public use plans that provide baseline data or a global vision on how tourism will be developed and managed. There is a critical need to carry out site analysis and develop a public use plan for each site.

2. Role of Communities

Challenges exist when generating economic benefits for communities as an alternative income source to help mitigate threats to the sites. In particular, generating support for tourism enterprises owned and operated by local communities is needed to contribute to sustaining their livelihoods.

3. Connection with Tourism Industry

Engaging the tourism industry in efforts related to site protection and local community development has proven to be a challenge. To promote further tourism industry involvement, effective systems that bring capital to local communities should be established, and key international organizations, such as the UN, should take an active role when approaching the private sector to encourage their involvement.

4. Awareness Raising and Information Dissemination

Building awareness of World Heritage and its related policies and activities is critical, especially among visitors and the tourism industry. This knowledge would help when mitigating problems and generating support for conservation efforts. Sharing information between sites is effective when promoting collaboration among neighboring sites.

Continued on Page 3

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

GEF LOOKS AT URBAN TRANSPORT TO REDUCE GHG EMISSIONS

Two presentations by the GEF during the GEF Assembly highlighted its interest on urban transport as a means to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in developing countries. In the first case, Monique Barbut, GEF's CEO, said the GEF will support efforts by the South African government to improve its urban transport infrastructure leading up to the 2010 Football World Cup through pilot projects aimed at developing sustainable transport alternatives that deliver GHG reductions above and beyond those currently planned.

The GEF also presented a report on experience gained in funding urban transport projects, highlighting the development of modern public transport systems in Jakarta, Indonesia, Mexico City and the Philippines, along with a determination to cut GHG emissions in the fast

growing cities of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The GEF estimates that for every dollar of the around US\$2 million invested in urban transport, there will be a two dollar return in health and wider environmental benefits (<http://gefweb.org/SustainableTransport.html>; <http://gefweb.org/WorldCupSustainableTransport.html>).



Photo courtesy of the Global Environment Facility.

► WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

RAMSAR ANNOUNCES ACCESSION OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE AND GRANTS AWARDS

The Ramsar Secretariat has announced that Sao Tome and Principe has become the 153rd Contracting Party to the Convention on Wetlands. The treaty will enter into force for this Party on 21 December 2006, four months after the instrument of accession was received by the Director-General of UNESCO, the depositary for the Ramsar Convention. Ilots Tinhosas has been named as Sao Tome and Principe's obligatory first Wetland of International Importance. The site supports an important community of seabirds and serves as a breeding site for more than 300,000 migratory waterbirds (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.saotome_joins.htm).

The Ramsar Secretariat has also announced that Herizo Tiana Andrianandrasana and Osiman Mabhachi are the two winners of the first Ramsar Crane Bank Awards to promote the wise use concept of wetlands in the African region. Andrianandrasana is a water and forest engineer from Madagascar and Mabhachi is an agricultural engineer from Zimbabwe. With the support of the prize, they will travel to Uganda where they will have a two week-tour of duty. The tour aims

to inspire the recipients from the successful experience of Uganda in establishing the proper institutional and technical support for wetlands management (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.cranebank_award2006.htm).

UNEP REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMME ISSUES REPORT ON PACIFIC ISLAND MANGROVES

The Regional Seas Programme of UNEP, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, along with over a dozen additional agencies and organizations from the Pacific Islands region, have compiled a report entitled "Pacific Island Mangroves in a Changing Climate and Rising Seas." The study assesses the vulnerability of the 16 Pacific Island countries and territories that have native mangroves and finds that overall up to 13 percent of the mangrove area may be lost. The report contains a series of recommendations to coastal planners, including: reduce pollution from land-based sources; restore lost or degraded mangroves wetlands; and set back coastal infrastructure and development (http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/Publications/Reports/Final_RSRS_179_mangrove.pdf).



Pacific Island Mangroves in a Changing Climate and Rising Seas. Photo courtesy of UNEP

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

Coherence and collaboration among the World Heritage Convention and other biodiversity-related conventions, programmes and organizations is also critical for the successful conservation of cultural and natural heritage sites, and for biodiversity protection. Efforts have been made at the international level, such as the establishment of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions and the establishment of a number of Memoranda of Cooperation and Understanding and joint work programmes and plans among different conventions. These collaborative efforts should be further promoted, accompanied by concerted efforts at the national level and backing from all government ministries and other stakeholders involved in tourism, environment, culture, economic development and other related fields.

For further information visit:
<http://whc.unesco.org/>



Photo courtesy Art Pedersen and Salamati Tabbasum, UNESCO

Read the Full Article at:
<http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle12.htm>

Editor's note:
MEA Bulletin invites articles from practitioners, MEAs and academics on issues that are of interest across the MEA community. Please contact the Research Editor, lynn@iisd.org, for further information.

¹ The author was previously with the United Nations University (UNU), before joining the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in February 2006. This paper was prepared based on issues discussed during the training programme on "Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites in South Asia," organized by UNESCO, UNU and the University of Peradeniya and other regional organizations in Sri Lanka, 24-30 April 2005 (see <http://geic.hq.unu.edu/> for information about the workshop), as well as the work undertaken by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Sustainable Tourism Programme (see <http://whc.unesco.org/> for information about the programme).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UN COHERENCE PANEL HOLDS FINAL MEETING

The High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian affairs and the environment met in Oslo, Norway, for its concluding session starting on 31 August 2006. According to IISD sources, discussions focused on: aid delivery efficiency; UN coordination at the country level based on the principles of "one team, one leader, one programme and one budget;" and the need for an overall UN development coordinator. With regard to environmental governance, participants reportedly also touched upon the need for coordination among multilateral environmental agreements and the possibility of clustering related conventions, such as chemicals and biodiversity. In addition, some observers expressed concern over the Panel's focus on the operative, rather than the normative, functions of the UN. The Panel's report is expected to be released in late October or early November 2006, which is later than originally scheduled (IISD sources).

UNEP TACKLES ILLEGAL ODS TRADE IN ASIA AND PACIFIC

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (UNEP ROAP) and the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) of UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, together with the World Customs Organisation's Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific (RILO A/P) and the Basel Convention Regional Centres, have launched a project to control illegal trade in ozone depleting substances (ODS) and dangerous waste in the Asia and Pacific region. The "Project Sky Hole Patching" was called for by the 11th World Customs

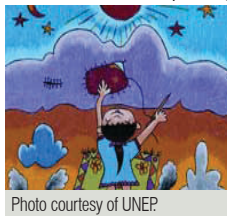


Photo courtesy of UNEP

Organization Asia Pacific Regional Conference of Heads of Customs Administrations held in Beijing on 3-6 April 2006, and its plan of action was adopted during the 4th Joint Southeast Asia and Pacific/South Asia Customs-ODS Officers Cooperation Workshop held in Bangkok in May 2006. The project encompasses two phases, the first devoted to ODS and the second to hazardous waste. UNEP ROAP and CAP, and RILO A/P will facilitate the operation for the region (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=487&ArticleID=5344&l=en>).

ECOSOC COMMITTEE CONSIDERS UNEP WORKPLAN

During its fourteenth meeting (14 August-8 September 2006), the ECOSOC Committee on Programme and Coordination discussed the 2008-2009 Programme of Work for UNEP. The programme details UNEP's overall orientation for 2008-2009 and expected accomplishments for its sub-programmes: environmental assessment and warning; policy development and law; policy implementation; technology, industry and economics; regional cooperation and representation; environmental conventions; and communication and public information (A/61/6 (Prog.11), <http://www.un.org/ga/cpc/46/programme46.html>, <http://www.un.org/ga/cpc/46/index.html>). According to IISD sources, discussions in the Committee focused on: increasing the emphasis on further implementing the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity building; gender mainstreaming into all sub-programmes; clarifying the intergovernmental nature of UNEP and the independent status of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and the need for further cooperation between UNEP and MEAs; the importance of enhancing States' capacity to develop environmental legal frameworks; and prioritizing attention on multilateral processes for technology, industry and economics.

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CMS OFFERS PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF LEBANESE OIL SPILL

The Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) and in consultation with the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), the CMS Partners and members of the CMS Scientific Council, has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the potential impact of the Lebanese oil spill. The preliminary assessment identifies green and loggerhead turtles and their nesting beaches in Lebanon and Syria as potentially at risk. CMS has offered the affected countries access to its network of experts on marine turtles and has offered

to contribute to future coordination efforts on the spill and to any post-conflict environmental assessment (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2006/August/nw081706_oil_spill.htm; http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2006/August/oil_spill_aug06.pdf).

CBD SECRETARIAT SELECTS THEME FOR INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY

"Biodiversity and Climate Change" will be the theme of the 2007 International Biodiversity Day, to be celebrated on 22 May, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has announced. This theme was selected to complement the designation of 2007 as the International Polar Year and coincide with UNEP's World Environment Day theme of Climate Change (<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtml>).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: A REFORM AGENDA

(IISD, 2006) This book, authored by Adil Najam, Mihaela Papa and Nadaa Taiyab, discusses the history of the debate on and the key challenges to global environmental governance, and proposes elements of a reform agenda, including: leadership, knowledge, coherence, performance and mainstreaming (<http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2006/geg.pdf>).

PROMOTING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES IN THE URBAN TRANSPORT SECTOR

(World Bank, 2006) This paper reviews the World Bank Group's experience in implementing urban transport projects under GEF Operational Program 11 on sustainable transport, and identifies opportunities for improving their effectiveness. It underlines the value of projects implementing Bus rapid transit (BRT) systems, which articulate busways, restrict the number of stations, reduce dwelling time, and design efficient route structures, as cost-effective modes of public transport that improve scale economies and limit greenhouse gas emissions. It suggests focusing on strategies for dealing with heavy-polluting transportation modes such as freight transport and high-density intercity transport, as well as new market-based and information-based mechanisms (http://gefweb.org/Documents/WB_Sustainable_Transport_report.pdf).

GENDER, POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES 2006

(African Development Bank, 2006) The seventh in this series, this volume focuses on comparative cross-country data and national indicators on gender, poverty and environment for 53 countries, and indicators of this region's progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (http://www.afdb.org/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/ADB_ADMIN_PG/DOCUMENTS/STATISTICS/GENER%202006_WEB.PDF).

THE LATIN AMERICAN FORESTRY SECTOR OUTLOOK STUDY

(FAO, 2006) This report provides an outlook for the forestry sector in Latin America and the Caribbean, analyzing the driving forces both within and outside the sector to describe a future scenario based on decisions made today (<http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/forestry2/index.jsp?siteid=1301&sitetreeid=2404&langid=1&geoid=0>).

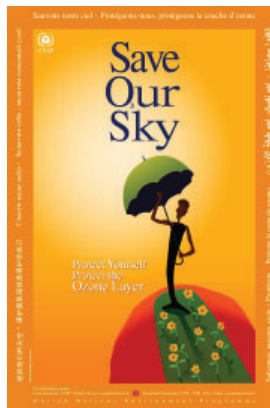
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► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASES WORKSHOP REPORT AND INFORMATION FOR UPCOMING MEETING

The Ozone Secretariat has released its report of the Ozone Secretariat Workshop, held in July 2006, on the special report developed by the Montreal Protocol's Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (http://ozone.unep.org/teap/Reports/TEAP_Reports/Workshop2-2E.pdf). The workshop focused on practical measures relating to ozone depletion and arising from the report, and the cost effectiveness of such measures. The Secretariat also released an information note for participants to the 18th Meeting of the Parties to be held 30 October – 3 November in New Delhi, India (http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/mop/18mop/Information_Note.pdf). The note contains, *inter alia*, information on registration and financial assistance.

The Ozone Secretariat is also preparing to celebrate the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer on 16 September 2006. The theme for this year's event is "Protect the Ozone Layer: Save Life on Earth." To mark the occasion, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted the findings of the recently released report of the Scientific Assessment Panel, which highlighted that the Montreal Protocol appears to be working to reduce ozone depleting substances' abundance, but cautioned that countries need to continue to work to implement the agreement to ensure recovery of the ozone layer (<http://ozone.unep.org/Events/ozoneday-2006.asp>, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sghsm10620.doc.htm>).



Public Awareness Poster for International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer. Image courtesy of UNEP.

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

UNFF-7 BUREAU CONSIDERS NEXT SESSION'S AGENDA

The Bureau for the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) met in New York at UN Headquarters, with members considering preparations for the *ad hoc* expert group meeting on the non-legally binding instrument (11-15 December 2006, New York, US) and the substantive topics for the Forum's seventh session (16-27 April 2007, New York, US). During its 24-25 August 2006 meeting, the Bureau discussed issues related to the multi-year programme of work, interagency

UNFCCC CONVENES DEFORESTATION WORKSHOP AND RECEIVES FIRST KYOTO REPORTS

The Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has organized a workshop on reducing GHG emissions from deforestation in developing countries. The workshop, which took place from 30 August to 1 September 2006, was hosted by the Italian government and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. The event was part of a two-year process on deforestation that was launched at the December 2005 meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. Kishan Kumarsingh, the Chair of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, chaired the workshop. Deforestation is responsible for more than one-fifth of global GHG emissions, and has recently been the subject of increasing interest and discussion by Parties to the UNFCCC (http://unfccc.int/methods_and_science/lulucf/items/3745.php, http://unfccc.int/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/items/3768.php).

Hungary, Japan and New Zealand have become the first countries to submit their "initial reports under the Kyoto Protocol," according to the UNFCCC Secretariat. These reports are required before 1 January 2007 from all "Annex B" Parties (countries that have made a commitment under the Protocol to reduce emissions). The initial reports are an important step for countries to use the Protocol's flexible market mechanisms, as they will lead to the establishment of Parties' "assigned amount units" of emissions, which are tradable under the Kyoto Protocol (http://unfccc.int/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/items/3770.php).

In other news on the Protocol, the Supervisory Committee of the Joint Implementation mechanism has issued its first annual report, which includes recommendations for decisions to be taken at the second Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol taking place in Nairobi in November 2006. These recommendations include proposed draft decisions on the Committee's rules of procedure and a "project design document" (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2006/cmp2/eng/05.pdf>).

collaboration, regional aspects and scheduling of future Bureau meetings. The Bureau also welcomed the Country-Led Initiative (CLI) being organized by the government of Indonesia, to be held in February 2007 in Bali, Indonesia. This CLI is intended to discuss possible concepts and elements to be included in the new multi-year programme of work of the UN Forum on Forests. The next Bureau meeting is scheduled for 12 October 2006 (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/n-julaug06.html>).

Continued on Page 5.

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

POVERTY, HEALTH, AND ECOSYSTEMS: EXPERIENCE FROM ASIA

(IUCN, Asian Development Bank, 2006) This book, edited by Paul Steele, Gonzalo Oviedo, and David McCauley, presents case studies focused on the links between poverty, health and ecosystems in poor and often resource-dependent households across Asia. Case studies illustrate the links between livelihoods and ecosystems, highlighting pressures on some agricultural systems, effects of ecosystem pollution on health, as well as the complex linkages between gender, poverty and environment (<http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Poverty-Health-Ecosystems/prelims.pdf>).

THE FARMERS' RIGHTS PROJECT: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM PHASE I: REALISING FARMERS' RIGHTS UNDER THE ITPGRFA

(Fridtjof Nansen Institute, June 2006) This paper presents the findings from phase I of the Farmers' Rights Project, an international project set up to facilitate a common understanding and develop a basis for proposals to the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) on specific measures to be taken. It suggests steps that can be taken at the national level and by the ITPGRFA to realize farmers' rights (http://www.alphagalileo.org/nontextfiles/FR_core_findings.PDF; <http://www.fni.no/farmers/main.html>).

AFRICA'S LAKES: ATLAS OF OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

(UNEP, 2006) This Atlas compares and contrasts satellite images of the past few decades with contemporary ones. Through a combination of these images and narrative based on scientific evidence, the publication illustrates how humans have altered their surroundings and continue to make observable and measurable changes to Africa's lakes and their environment (<http://na.unep.net/AfricaLakes/>).

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S DAMS AND DEVELOPMENT E-PAPER: A RESERVOIR OF KNOWLEDGE

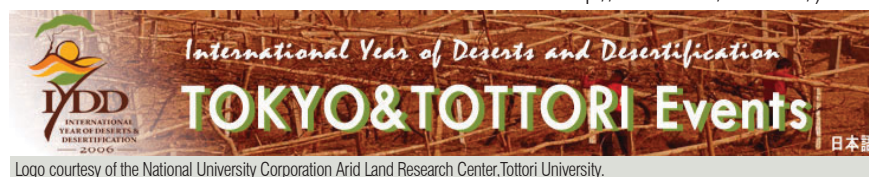
(ADB, August 2006) This e-paper provides web links to international policies, frameworks, principles, strategies, and case studies on dams. It seeks to generate discussion on the future of dam projects by making available to project planners and decisionmakers materials on emerging issues and recent trends (<http://www.adb.org/Water/Articles/dams.asp>).

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

UNCCD CONTRIBUTES TO SYMPOSIUM ON LINKAGES BETWEEN DRYLAND SCIENCE AND PRACTICE

The symposium "Living with Deserts II: Linkages between Dryland Science and On-the-Ground Practice," which convened in Tokyo and Tottori, Japan, from 25-28 August 2006, supported activities for the International Year of Deserts and Desertification. The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations University (UNU) and Tottori University Arid Land Research Center were the symposium's principal sponsors. Supporters included the Science Council of Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan.

Hama Arba Diallo, UNCCD Executive Secretary, gave the opening address. Keynote speeches were also given by Mahmoud Mohamed Bachir El-Solh (Director General, ICARDA (Syria), Youba Sokona (Executive Secretary, OSS (Tunisia) and Hans van Ginkel (Rector, UNU). The symposium was the second in a series, following an international conference held in May 2004. The event offered an opportunity for international researchers to exchange views on dryland science. Participants reviewed research and outcomes produced to date and discussed future directions. Specialists discussed how research can help those who live in the desert achieve better lives in the future (<http://www.alrc.tottori-u.ac.jp/iydd/>; a webcast has been archived at <http://c3.unu.edu/unuvideo/>).



Logo courtesy of the National University Corporation Arid Land Research Center, Tottori University.

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

BASEL CONVENTION SECRETARIAT INVESTIGATES ILLEGAL WASTE TRANSPORT

The Basel Convention Secretariat is investigating, at the request of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, whether toxic material dumped in the Côte d'Ivoire last month by a Panamanian-registered ship is linked to illegal exports from Europe, since European Union law implementing the Basel Convention prohibits all exports of hazardous wastes from EU members to developing countries. The toxic material was dumped from the Probo Koala, a Greek-owned vessel that was chartered by a Netherlands-based company, during the night of 19 August 2006 on to about ten open-air sites in the city of Abidjan. To date, three children have reportedly died and up to 5000 people affected after inhaling fumes from the dumped substances. Greenpeace said the waste comprised 400 tons of oil refining waste, rich in organic matter and poisonous elements. The Basel Secretariat is also trying to assess where the legal responsibility for the disaster lies and if eventually the Convention's trust fund could be tapped to support clean-up operations (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=487&ArticleID=5347&I=en>, http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.aspx?cu_no=2&item_no=106997&version=1&template_id=39&parent_id=21).

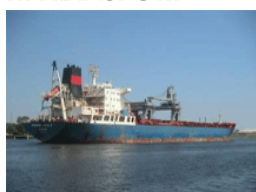


Photo courtesy of UNEP

The Secretariat has also posted draft notification and movement documents which, according to decision OEWG-V/13, Germany was requested, in consultation with the Small Intersessional Working Group, to prepare.

The draft revised versions of the forms for the notification document and the movement document include instructions on how to use the forms and take into account comments from Parties and others. Comments containing suggestions for changes were received from Canada and Japan (<http://www.basel.int/techmatters/harmonization/germany-forms-280806.doc>). The Secretariat has announced that the German-developed PROSOLwaste, an international information tool for supporting implementation of the Basel Convention, has gone on-line. This query-response system for waste management helps countries, cities and companies around the world with answers to technical, financial or organizational questions (<http://www.prosolwaste.com>).

In preparation for COP-8, the Secretariat has also recently released two new documents: a proposed decision on the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Basel Convention to 2010 (<http://www.basel.int/meetings/cop/cop8/docs/02e.doc>) and a proposed decision on transmission of information (<http://www.basel.int/meetings/cop/cop8/docs/04e.doc>).

ROTTERDAM CONVENTION SECRETARIAT PLANS SUBREGIONAL MEETINGS

The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat has announced three upcoming subregional consultations on the Convention. The first one will be held in Rabat, Morocco, for the subregion including Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia from 18-21 September. The Near East subregion (Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan, Turkey and Yemen) will gather in Syria from 6-9 November. Another African subregion (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Tanzania and Uganda) will convene in Nairobi, Kenya, from 20-24 November (<http://www.pic.int/en/ViewPage.asp?id=405>).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DSD ORGANIZES EXPERT MEETING ON INSTITUTIONALIZING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) organized, with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an Expert Meeting on Institutionalizing Sustainable Development. This meeting, which took place from 31 August – 1 September 2006 in Stockholm, Sweden, was the first meeting DSD has jointly organized with the OECD. More than 100 participants from developed and developing countries discussed governance aspects of sustainable development and advancing the implementation of national sustainable development strategies (NSDS). The meeting was divided into four main sessions that addressed governance approaches for national sustainable development strategies, approaches to reviewing and monitoring strategies, strategy development and implementation in developing countries,

and plans for follow-up. In regard to follow-up, OECD, UN and European Commission (EC) representatives presented expected actions by their organizations. The OECD is proposing further work on sustainable development governance aspects and the adoption of a sustainable development perspective in its ongoing peer reviews; the EC is undertaking NSDS peer reviews in Member countries, starting with the Netherlands; and the UN is improving its NSDS reporting system and promoting shared learning experiences on NSDS through country sessions, starting with the Republic of Korea. The workshop also considered ways to advance the institutionalization of sustainable development at the sub-national, national and international levels, and proposed the following options: organize a follow-up workshop to be held in a developing country in Asia in March 2007;



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update, harmonize and annotate OECD's and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs' (UNDESA) respective Guiding Principles for national sustainable development strategies; the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) could review the possibility of developing guidelines for developing countries for increasing linkages between national sustainable development strategies, poverty reduction strategies, and plans for achieving the Millennium Development Goals; the UN, OECD and EC could develop a common framework for conducting peer reviews of national sustainable development strategies and compare the outcomes of currently planned peer reviews; and major international organizations (OECD, UN, World Bank, IMF) could set up an informal dialogue on treatment of sustainable development and related governance issues within their organizations (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/workshopSweden/index.htm>).

► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- The IISD RS team has received with great sadness news about the **death of Mario Ramos, Senior Biodiversity Specialist and Acting Team Leader for Biodiversity in the Global Environment Facility**. As Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility, has indicated, Ramos joined the GEF at its inception and was greatly responsible for carving out the initial GEF biodiversity strategy that shaped what would become the largest biodiversity portfolio globally. He promoted the effectiveness of the Convention on Biological Diversity, served as a champion for poor communities, indigenous peoples, and those affected by development, and will also be remembered for his kindness, generosity and concern for his friends and colleagues.
- A number of changes have been reported for the **UNFF Secretariat**. After two years of service with the UNFF Secretariat, Peter Csoka will resume his duties as Director-General of the State Forest Service of Hungary. Njeri Kariuki will leave her post of programme officer and join the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Sudan. Mita Sen has joined the UNFF Secretariat. She previously worked on Partnerships for Sustainable Development with the Division for Sustainable Development (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/n-julaug06.html>).



Mario Ramos

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **ASCOBANS MOP-5:** 18-22 September 2006. Egmond aan Zee, The Netherlands. <http://www.ascobans.org/index0401.html>
- **2006 ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND THE WORLD BANK GROUP:** 19-20 September 2006. Singapore. <http://www.singapore2006.org/>
- **HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND THEIR RELEVANCE IN THE ARCTIC:** 21-22 September 2006. Arendal, Norway. <http://www.grida.no/newsroom.cfm?pressReleaseItemID=1011>
- **FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE MOU CONCERNING CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE SAIGA ANTELOPE (SAIGA TATARICA TATARICA):** 25-26 September 2006. Almaty, Kazakhstan. http://www.cms.int/species/saiga/1st_saiga_range_states_meeting.htm
- **THIRD MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE ON THE FINALIZATION OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF LEAD ACID BATTERIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA, COLOMBIA, VENEZUELA AND THE CARIBBEAN ISLAND STATES:** 27-28 September 2006. Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. <http://www.basel.int>
- **31ST MEETING OF THE CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES STANDING COMMITTEE:** 28-29 September 2006. Bonn, Germany. http://www.cms.int/bodies/StC/31st_stc_meeting/31st_stc_documents.htm
- **REGIONAL AWARENESS RAISING WORKSHOP ON THE GUIDELINES ON BAT AND BEP FOR CEE AND WEST ASIA:** 2-4 October 2006. Brno, Czech Republic. <http://www.pops.int>