



## RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

### ▶ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### CSD-15 CONCLUDES WITHOUT ADOPTING NEGOTIATED TEXT

The fifteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) convened from 30 April-11 May 2007, at UN headquarters in New York, US. Building on the outcome of CSD-14 (a "Review Year"), CSD-15 focused on identifying policies and options to expedite the implementation of commitments in the areas of energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change. Delegates convened for interactive discussions, heard regional perspectives and input from representatives of UN agencies and other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), Major Groups and others, and listened to statements from ministers and senior officials during a high-level segment. A Partnerships Fair, Learning Center and numerous side events were also held throughout the two-week session. Delegates also attempted to negotiate a document to identify policy options to further the thematic issues under discussion. Notwithstanding numerous formal and informal meetings, closed "Friends of the Chair" sessions and extensive discussions, as the scheduled close of the meeting approached there remained numerous unresolved issues in the energy for sustainable development and climate change sections of the document. Chair Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiah (Qatar) presented a compromise document on Friday evening on a "take it or leave it" basis, but after regional consultations, the EU and Switzerland rejected it on the basis that it did not address the challenges in the thematic areas, meet world expectations or add value. The meeting closed at 8:45 pm with no adopted outcome document. The Chair announced that, in lieu of a negotiated outcome, a "Chair's Summary" of CSD-15 would be issued the following week. At the close of CSD-15, the first meeting of CSD-16 convened to elect its Chair and Bureau. Francis Nhema, Minister of Environment and Tourism of Zimbabwe, was elected as CSD-16 Chair by a narrow margin on a secret ballot (<http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csd15/>).



José Antonio Ocampo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and Chair Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiah (Qatar), at CSD-15.

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### RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

#### THE WETLANDS FOR THE FUTURE FUND: A PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE FIRST TEN YEARS

(Ramsar, 2007) This report evaluates the performance and effectiveness of the Wetlands for the Future Fund, which was created in 1996 and is operated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention), the US Department of State and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Fund was created to build capacity for conservation and wise use of wetlands in Latin America and the Caribbean, and has involved 225 projects ([http://www.ramsar.org/wff/wff\\_review\\_2006.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/wff/wff_review_2006.pdf)).

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### GUEST ARTICLE

#### Climate Policy and Higher Education: Strengthening University Contributions in Vulnerable Countries

*By Mary Jo Larson, Ph.D., Consulting Practice in Leadership, Peace Building and Sustainable Development, Senior Fellow, University for Peace*

#### Abstract

The concerns and priorities of vulnerable coastal and small island States are clearly acknowledged in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, multilateral agreements such as the Mauritius Strategy, regional policy frameworks, national policy instruments and related plans.

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## GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

However, there is growing frustration that international climate change "rhetoric" is not leading to concrete action at national and community levels. In February 2007, the University for Peace organized the Climate Change and Vulnerability Conference,<sup>1</sup> which addressed opportunities for action at the national and community levels, including through the role of higher education.

Universities are "knowledge hubs" with influence at the policy and community levels. Higher education and other technical professionals are strategically positioned between policy makers and community leaders. With access to both, they are potential mediators for the transformation of society's infrastructures.

How do universities contribute to the implementation of adaptation policies? Many programs now infuse climate-related topics or activities into existing courses. This raises general awareness and is the easiest approach. In some cases, new interdisciplinary courses and programs have been developed, but this integration requires greater commitments of time and resources. More cooperation is needed along with new efforts to address other challenges. Departments and degree programs within them remain insular. Chairs and professors may not have the interest or capabilities to foster leadership, innovative thinking, and local adaptation. Resistance may be related to quality assurance, which affects accreditation, or to a lack of institutional support or funding predictability. In developing nations, the lack of resources is a major barrier, and these nations request that curricula and other resources be available online.

The contributions and impact of higher education could be strengthened through a number of actions. Centers of Excellence play an important role in integrating efforts among educational, training and research institutions. Funding for scholarships, particularly for students of developing countries, is critical, along with flexible study options, such as modular courses, for technical professionals. Curricula should be grounded in local realities and should seek to promote thinking and leadership, rather than information about the certain and the fixed. Sectors should be integrated through interdisciplinary courses. The private sector, including energy, water, insurance, and tourism industries, should be involved. Overall, adjustments to the dynamically changing situation involved with climate change should be made.

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## ▶ CHEMICALS AND WASTES



Thierno Lô, Minister for the Environment and Protection of Nature, Senegal, and POPs COP-3 President

### POPs COP-3 ADOPTS 22 DECISIONS

The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-3) to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) convened from 30 April-4 May 2007, in Dakar, Senegal. Participants considered several reports on activities within the Convention's mandate and adopted 22 decisions on, *inter alia*: a revised process for the review of entries in the register of specific exemptions; DDT; measures to reduce or eliminate releases from wastes; guidelines on the standardized toolkit for identification and quantification of releases; guidelines on best available techniques (BAT) and draft guidance on best environmental practices (BEP); regional centers; listing chemicals in Annexes A, B or C

of the Convention; reporting; effectiveness evaluation; national implementation plans; budget; financial resources; technical assistance; synergies; and non-compliance. Delegates also agreed that COP-4 will take place from 4-8 May 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland (<http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/pops/cop3/>).

### BASEL CONVENTION REQUESTS COMMENTS

The Secretariat of the Basel Convention has posted a request for comments from Parties and others on: experience with technical guidelines on environmentally sound management; difficulties with national classification and control procedures for the import of wastes contained in Annex IX; and implementation of decision VII/2 on hazardous waste minimization (<http://www.basel.int/convention/rfc/rfcCOP8.html>).

### SAICM QSP EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETS

The second meeting of the Quick Start Programme (QSP) Executive Board convened in Geneva, Switzerland, from 23-24 April 2007. The meeting addressed, *inter alia*, the QSP Trust Fund and further development of operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the QSP ([http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsp/EB2\\_qsp.htm](http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsp/EB2_qsp.htm)).

## ▶ BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

### ASCOBANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETS; WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY HIGHLIGHTS CLIMATE CHANGE

The 14th Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) met in San Sebastián, Spain, from 19-21 April 2007. It was the first meeting since the Secretariats of ASCOBANS and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) were merged for a two-year trial period. The Committee considered activities of the Parties and the Secretariat and discussed issues including: information on impacts of fishing effort, pollution, noise and disturbance; the implementation of mitigation measures and outreach activities; and recently available information on population sizes, structure and distribution. On 20 April, CMS/ASCOBANS Executive Secretary Robert Hepworth launched the Spanish version of the Year of the Dolphin 2007 leaflet. With regard to the Year of the Dolphin, CMS, in cooperation with UNESCO and other partners, launched a multilingual booklet entitled *All about dolphins*. It is a toolkit for primary school children and their teachers ([http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/04\\_Apr/asc\\_ac14.htm](http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/04_Apr/asc_ac14.htm); [http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/05\\_May/iberian\\_launch.htm](http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/05_May/iberian_launch.htm); <http://www.yod2007.org/en/Press/Publications/index.html>).

On 12-13 May 2007, a series of events took place around the world to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day, focusing on the impacts of climate change on migratory birds. World Migratory Bird Day is organized by the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and CMS (<http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org>).

**WMBD 2007**



*Migratory birds in a changing climate!*  
Image courtesy of WMBD

### CITES PREPARES FOR COP-14

In preparation for the upcoming 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-14, 3-15 June 2007, The Hague, the Netherlands), the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has recently posted all proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II to be discussed during the meeting (<http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/14/prop/index.shtml>).

### CBD ADVISORY GROUP ON ARTICLE 8(j) CONCLUDES

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Advisory Group for the Programme of Work on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions met from 30 April to 3 May 2007, in Montreal, Canada. The Group included 20

*Continued on page 3*

**GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)**

Long-term capacity building is needed at all levels: policy, technical and community. The challenge for higher education is to cultivate the commitment and flexibility to work more closely with partner education, training and research institutions. Ultimately, there is no sustainable development without dynamic, multi-level cooperation.

Read the Full Article at:  
<http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle26.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 Editor, [lynn@iisd.org](mailto:lynn@iisd.org), for further information.

<sup>1</sup> For conference details, contact Mary Jo Larson at [maryjolanson@mac.com](mailto:maryjolanson@mac.com) or visit <http://www.upeace.org/climate>, <http://www.allianceforupeace.nl/> or, in the near future, <http://www.myucsis.com/>.

**▶ BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE**

*Continued from page 2*

participants from indigenous and local communities from all over the world. The purpose of the meeting of the Advisory Group was to provide guidance to the Secretariat on matters related to the preparations for the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j), to be held in October 2007. The Group reviewed working drafts of the reports to be considered at that meeting on: the status and trends of, and threats to, traditional knowledge; vulnerabilities of indigenous and local communities to climate change and other threats such as desertification and pollution; and voluntarily isolated communities. With regard to climate change, participants noted with alarm that indigenous and local communities in regions such as the Arctic, in small islands and at high altitudes are experiencing accelerated climate change and have become what many described as "the miner's canary of climate change." Tim Hodges of Canada, one of the Co-Chairs of the Con-

vention's Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing, briefed the Advisory Group on the ongoing negotiations of an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=ACPOW8J-02>; <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/speech/2007/sp-2007-04-30-8j-en.pdf>; <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-05-07-8j-en.pdf>).

**22 May 2007**

**International Day for Biological Diversity**



**Biodiversity and Climate Change**

Banner courtesy of the CBD Secretariat - <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtml>

**▶ WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS**

**RAMSAR REPORTS NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES**

The Ramsar Secretariat has reported national implementation activities in Cameroon, Ghana and Madagascar. Cameroon has announced the creation of the 'National Ramsar Committee on Wetlands' within the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection. This Committee will develop, *inter alia*, bi-yearly reports on the accomplishment of its missions, an annual report on the state of wetlands in the country, and measures to reinforce national wetlands policies ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.cameroon\\_nrc\\_2007.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.cameroon_nrc_2007.htm)).

Ghana has completed the drafting of its national wetlands conservation strategy and action plan, to be implemented from 2007-2016. The strategy takes on six broad issues (including poverty reduction, the Millennium Development Goals, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), irrigation and health). The document also provides an inventory of Ghana's wetlands, their values and threats to these wetlands ([http://www.ramsar.org/swiss/sga\\_ghana\\_actionplan.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/swiss/sga_ghana_actionplan.htm)).

Madagascar celebrated World Migratory Bird Day by placing Lake Bedo and its surrounding marshes on the List of Wetlands of International Importance and dedicating the site as a WWF Gift to the Earth. The Zones humides de Bedo in Toliary Province near the western coast hosts at least 34 waterbird species, including the endangered Madagascar teal, Madagascar heron, vulnerable Madagascar plover, and migratory waterbirds like the greater flamingo and lesser flamingo. It also hosts the endangered Madagascar big-headed turtle and many fish species, some of which breed there ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.madagascar\\_bedo.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.madagascar_bedo.htm)).

**IMO AND THE EC DISCUSS ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES; SHIP WRECK REMOVAL CONFERENCE OPENS**

To promote this year's World Maritime Day (27 September 2007), which is focusing on the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) response to current environmental challenges, IMO Secretary-General Efthimos E. Mitropoulos met with Stavros Dimas, European Commissioner for Environment, on 27 April 2007 in Brussels, Belgium. They discussed ongoing initiatives aimed at strengthening IMO's global standards to protect the marine and atmospheric environments from shipping operations and agreed on a common approach, within the timetable agreed by IMO, to the issues of gas emissions and the recycling of ships ([http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=1472&doc\\_id=7982](http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=7982)).

The IMO is organizing a diplomatic conference from 14-18 May 2007, at the UN Office in Nairobi, Kenya, that is expected to approve a draft Wreck Removal Convention, which was prepared by the IMO Legal Committee. The convention would make shipowners financially liable and require them to take out insurance or provide other financial security

to cover the costs of wreck removal. It would also provide States with a right of direct action against insurers. In addition, the draft convention includes provisions on: the report of and location of wrecks; determination of hazards when a wreck is beyond territorial waters; rights and obligations to remove hazardous ships and wrecks; financial liability; and settlement of disputes ([http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=261&doc\\_id=691](http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic_id=261&doc_id=691)).

**FISH STOCKS CONSULTATIONS CONCLUDE**

Organized by the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the sixth round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN



Vaclav Mikulka is the new Director of the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea

Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA or Agreement) convened from 23-24 April 2007, at UN headquarters in New York, US. Participants considered implementation of the UNFSA, progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the Review Conference of the Agreement, and preparatory steps for the resumption of the Review Conference. A side event on recommended criteria for reviewing the performance of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) made progress towards drafting a list of suggested criteria for RFMO review (<http://www.iisd.ca/oceans/faisc/>).



Photo courtesy of the Wreck Removal Convention

GUEST ARTICLE

**Enhancing Academic Institutions and Organizations Involved in Biosafety Education and Training**

*By Erie Tamale, CBD Secretariat*

**Abstract**

Short-term *ad hoc* courses and workshops alone are not sufficient to train the cadre of biosafety professionals and specialists required for the effective implementation of the Protocol. Therefore, the Convention on Biological Diversity has undertaken activities to identify ways and means of promoting long-term formal education and training in biosafety.

Most recently, more than 60 representatives from 56 universities and other institutions involved in biosafety education and training met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 16-18 April 2007, to find ways and means of enhancing long-term formal education and training in biosafety. The meeting was organized by the CBD Secretariat and the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) with financial support from the Governments of Switzerland and Denmark. It was hosted by the Government of Malaysia, through the University of Malaya.

Participants shared information on existing biosafety education and training programmes and collaborative initiatives and reviewed progress in implementing recommendations made at the first meeting, in October 2004. They adopted a revised common format for the Compendium of Academically-Accredited Courses and the Biosafety Training Needs Assessment Matrix, both of which will be made available through the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH).

The meeting's principal output was an agreement to develop regional and sub-regional networks of academic institutions involved in biosafety education and training to foster collaboration and exchange of information among them, and to pool resources to develop and deliver biosafety academic programmes. As an initial step, each region will embark on collecting information on existing programmes and the key stakeholders involved, and make the information available through the BCH. A number of recommendations were also made regarding key issues, guiding principles, strategies and mechanisms that should be considered in the development and delivery of biosafety academic programmes.

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► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

**TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL SELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The forty-second session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-42, 7-12 May 2007, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) selected Emmanuel Ze Meka (Cameroon) as the new Executive Director of the International



Emmanuel Ze Meka (Cameroon) was selected to serve as ITTO Executive Director

Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). The heated debate over the selection dominated the Council session and divided Consumer and Producer countries. At the eleventh hour, the front-running Consumer-backed Swiss candidate withdrew from the race, allowing for a consensus decision to support the Producer-backed Cameroonian candidate. Delegates also discussed issues concerning operational, project and policy work, including: forest law enforcement in the context of sustainable timber production and trade; CITES listing proposals; ITTO guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests; civil society/private sector partnerships for sustainable forest management; and developments in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) regarding forests. The Council was presented with a report on an initiative linking deforestation and climate change, designed to expand the scope of the organization's activities to attract funding related to the UNFCCC, but this initiative and others were overshadowed by the Executive Director selection process. The Council also committed US \$5.3 million for new projects and activities for the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources (<http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/itc42/>).

**UNFF-7 ADOPTS INSTRUMENT ON FORESTS AND MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK**

The seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF-7, 16-27 April 2007, New York, US) negotiated a non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) for sustainable forest management for all types of forests and a Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the period 2007-2015. The two-week session focused on the Chair's composite NLBI draft text, forwarded from the *ad hoc* expert group meeting in December 2006, and a suggested draft text on the MYPOW. The final day of negotiations extended into the night, with both documents adopted by 6:00 am on Saturday, 28 April. Delegates also adopted the draft resolution to which the NLBI will be annexed, for consideration by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Advance unedited versions of the three documents are available on the UNFF Secretariat's website (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/>; <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/unff/unff7/>).

**UNCCD CONTRIBUTES TO SOUTH PACIFIC MEETING IDENTIFYING IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS**

The Government of Samoa, in cooperation with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Secretariat and with funding from Venezuela, hosted a meeting on "Implementation of the UNCCD in the South Pacific Island Nations: Demonstrations on Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands and Drought Mitigation" (16-17 April 2007, Apia, Samoa). Participating countries discussed proposed project activities for a Venezuelan fund. Issues related to project framework, project implementing modalities, project duration, potential activities, funding scheme, co-funding, monitoring and evaluation were also discussed and adopted. The project framework covers land degradation rehabilitation, drought mitigation, alternative energy, runoff harvesting and drinking water storage, and cash crop cultivation on eroding sites. The projects are to take place between April 2007 and March 2009 (IISD Sources).

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

**IPCC EMPHASIZES POTENTIAL TO MITIGATE GLOBAL EMISSIONS**

The ninth session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group III (WGIII) met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 30 April-4 May 2007, followed by the 26th session of the IPCC on 4 May. The meeting resulted in the acceptance of WGIII's contribution to the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, titled "Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change," including approval of the Summary for Policy Makers (SPM) and acceptance of the underlying report and technical summary. The key findings of the SPM emphasize that greenhouse gas emis-



IPCC delegates at work

sions have increased by 70% since 1970 and that, with current policies, their growth is projected to continue over the next few decades. The SPM identifies substantial economic potential to mitigate global emissions in the short, medium and long term, and points to mitigation opportunities in several sectors (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ipwg3/>).

GUEST ARTICLE (*cont.*)

As a follow-up to the meeting, different regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean) plan to organize regional consultative meetings to discuss, *inter alia*, options for developing biosafety academic programmes and institutional arrangements for collaboration. These include modalities for the exchange of faculty and the sharing of academic materials, technical information and other resources. The CBD Secretariat was requested to send a notification to all Cartagena Protocol National Focal Points inviting them to initiate discussions with relevant authorities in their countries (e.g. Ministries of Education), to help facilitate the establishment of biosafety academic programmes at the national and regional level. Governments were invited to complete and return to the Secretariat the Biosafety Training Needs Assessment Matrix. They were also invited to work closely with relevant academic institutions to develop appropriate biosafety programmes and provide those institutions with funding and other support.

Read the Full Article at:  
<http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle26b.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 Editor, [lynn@iisd.org](mailto:lynn@iisd.org), for further information.

## ▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

**UNFCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES PREPARE FOR BALI**

The 26th sessions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Bodies (SB-26) are taking place from 7-18 May 2007 in Bonn, Germany, with delegates negotiating draft decisions that will be on the agenda at the next UNFCCC Conference of Parties and Kyoto Protocol Meeting of Parties in Bali, Indonesia, in December. In addition, the third session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG) will run from 14-18 May. Also, the third workshop under the UNFCCC "Dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation of the Convention" (UNFCCC Dialogue) is scheduled for 16-17 May. A workshop on the Russian Federation proposal relating to voluntary commitments under the Kyoto Protocol has also been held, along with numerous workshops and other events on issues ranging from the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report to climate change mitigation and adaptation (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/sb26/>).



Delegates during the third session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG)

**OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASES DOCUMENTS, MULTILATERAL FUND IMPLEMENTS ONLINE REPORTING**

In advance of the upcoming Dialogue on key future challenges faced by the Montreal Protocol, to be held 2-3 June 2007, the Ozone Secretariat has released comments from the EU and European Community on challenges to be faced by Parties in protecting the ozone layer over the next decade. The issues of concern highlighted include the production and consumption of hydrochlorofluorocarbons in developing countries, increased use of methyl bromide for quarantine and preshipment uses, and illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances. In advance of the upcoming Open-Ended Working Group meeting, to be held 4-7 June 2007, the Secretariat has also released a brochure celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Montreal Protocol and the Report of the Executive Committee on the progress made in reducing emissions of controlled substances from process-agent uses ([http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting\\_Documents/dkfc/1dkfc/DKFC-1-INF1.pdf](http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/dkfc/1dkfc/DKFC-1-INF1.pdf); [http://ozone.unep.org/Publications/20th\\_anniversary\\_info\\_kit-E.shtml](http://ozone.unep.org/Publications/20th_anniversary_info_kit-E.shtml); [http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting\\_Documents/oewg/27oewg/OEWG-27-4E.pdf](http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/oewg/27oewg/OEWG-27-4E.pdf)).

In response to an Executive Committee decision, the Multilateral Fund Secretariat has made available a web-based data entry system and an accompanying Practical Manual for Reporting, for use by national ozone units in developing countries reporting Country Program implementation data ([http://www.multilateralfund.org/forms\\_for\\_reporting\\_progress\\_o.htm](http://www.multilateralfund.org/forms_for_reporting_progress_o.htm)).

## ▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE DEBATE CONTINUES**

In a document to the Co-Chairs of the General Assembly informal consultations on the UN's environmental activities, dated 20 April 2007, the EU has outlined a proposal for the next steps to be taken regarding international environmental governance (IEG). The EU advocates upgrading the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) into a specialized agency, a UN Environment Organization (UNEO). In addition, the EU argued that the establishment of a UNEO should be accompanied by a broader strategy for strengthening IEG, noting that a number of processes are open to pursue IEG reform, including the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the General Assembly informal consultations on the UN's environmental activities, the UN System-wide Coherence follow-up, and the French-led Group of Friends of the UNEO (<http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/environment/20April2007.pdf>). The latter group, the Group of Friends of the UNEO, held its first meeting in Agadir, Morocco, from

12-13 April 2007. Participants discussed various ways wherein the process of setting up the UNEO could be taken forward, outlining its mandates and institutional aspects. The group was formed at the Paris Conference for Global Ecological Governance, held from 2-3 February 2007, and is, according to IISD sources, supported by 52 countries. The second meeting will be hosted by Costa Rica at the end of 2007 (<http://www.reformtheun.org/index.php?module=uploads&func=download&fileid=2277>; <http://www.reformtheun.org/index.php?module=uploads&func=download&fileid=2323>).

**UNEP, UNDP AND WORLD BANK TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION ON ENERGY ACCESS**

At a Ministerial luncheon during the Commission on Sustainable Development at UN Headquarters, New York, US, on 10 May 2007, representatives from UNEP, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank expressed their commitment to strengthen cooperation on energy access, with a view to supporting poverty reduction and sustainable development. The coop-

eration will build on existing partnerships such as the UNEP/UNDP Poverty Environment Facility and the collaboration between UNDP and the World Bank on strategies for reducing poverty (<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2007/may/energy-poverty-20070510.en.jsessionid=axRLfj6AuKg>; <http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csd15/enbots/>).

**UNDG LAUNCHES NEWSLETTER ON UN REFORM PILOTS**

The UN Development Group (UNDG) has released the first issue of "Formula One," a monthly newsletter that aims to provide updates from the eight "One UN" pilot countries – Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam. Four months into the implementation of the "One UN" initiative, UNDG reports that the pilot countries' approaches to translating the vision for greater coherence will differ from country to country, noting that space is needed for experimentation to explore each pilot's own solutions at country level ([http://www.undg.org/docs/7151/Formula\\_One\\_Vol1\\_Iss1.pdf](http://www.undg.org/docs/7151/Formula_One_Vol1_Iss1.pdf)).

## RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

**A CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE UN HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE**

(Center of Concern et al., April 2007) This position paper, co-authored by Center of Concern, International Trade Union Confederation, UBUNTU and World Federalist Movement, expresses concern that UN system-wide coherence could further harm the world's poor and under-represented communities. The paper also cautions against reform proposals that target the UN but overlook other players engaged in development work, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions ([http://www.un-ngls.org/site/IMG/pdf/UN\\_Coh\\_Panel\\_response-final.pdf](http://www.un-ngls.org/site/IMG/pdf/UN_Coh_Panel_response-final.pdf)).

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: PERSPECTIVES ON THE CURRENT DEBATE**

(Center for UN Reform, April 2007) This book aims to increase the understanding of the current system of global environmental governance, its strengths and weaknesses, and the options and opportunities to achieve reform. The book also seeks to document the institutional deficiencies of global environmental governance that hamper global efforts to effectively address climate change (<http://www.centerforunreform.org/node/251>).

**SUSTAINABLE BIOENERGY: A FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION MAKERS**

(UN-Energy, 2007) This paper was sponsored by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and draws on support from the Worldwatch Institute. It was released during CSD-15, and concludes that bioenergy should continue to be discussed at the national and international levels and offers a framework for action (<http://esa.un.org/un-energy/pdf/susdev.Biofuels.FAO.pdf>).

**EUROPEAN UNION POLICY BRIEF ON BIOENERGY**

(GMF, April 2007) This policy brief, commissioned by the German Marshall Fund (GMF) and authored by R. Andreas Kraemer and Stephanie Schlegel, summarizes the development and status quo of the EU bioenergy policy framework and links it to the current debate on sustainability of bioenergy ([http://www.ecologic.de/download/briefe/2007/european\\_union\\_policy\\_on\\_bioenergy.pdf](http://www.ecologic.de/download/briefe/2007/european_union_policy_on_bioenergy.pdf)).

## ► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**UNEP TREE-PLANTING CAMPAIGN NEARS GOAL**

The UNEP's Billion Tree Campaign, which seeks to plant at least one billion trees worldwide during 2007, has recorded pledges of 962,060,125 trees as of 14 May 2007, with 13,635,782 trees already having been planted (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/>). On 8 May 2007, staff of the World Agroforestry Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, made a contribution to the campaign by planting 2,500 seedlings in the Karura forest. In addition, during a visit to Nairobi on 26 April 2007, Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, announced China's pledge to plant 1.5 million trees this year (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/CampaignNews/index.asp>).



L-R: Anna Tibajuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT; Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the Chinese National Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC); and Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, help plant a *Pyrus pyrifolia* tree (Photo courtesy of Bernard Wahihia - UNEP)

## ► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

**AGREEMENT CLOSE ON MEA OBSERVER STATUS AT WTO**

The special session of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) met on 2 May 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland, to continue negotiations on the Doha mandate. Members made progress on the question of multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) Secretariats' observer status at the WTO, while consensus was still elusive on the relationship between WTO rules and trade restrictive rules in MEAs and on tariff reductions for environmental goods and services (paragraph 31(i) and (ii) of the Doha Declaration). Members are reportedly closer to an agreement on the issue of the observer status of MEA Secretariats at the WTO, fol-

lowing a set of indicative questions proposed by the US and further developed by Canada and New Zealand. With respect to the CTE special session, the co-sponsors agreed that UNEP and seven MEA Secretariats that presently have *ad hoc* observer status should be granted observer status for the remainder of the Doha negotiations, noting that this does not imply permanent observer status at the WTO. The secretariats concerned are: the Basel Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the CITES Convention, the Montreal Protocol, the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (source ICTSD Bridges, 9 May 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-05-09/story2.htm>).

## ► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- The Ramsar Standing Committee unanimously selected Anada Tiéga (Niger) as the **new Ramsar Secretary General**, to succeed Peter Bridgewater in August 2007. Tiéga served as Regional Coordinator for Africa for the Ramsar Convention for nearly six years ([http://www.ramsar.org/wm/w.n.secgen\\_anada\\_e.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/wm/w.n.secgen_anada_e.htm)).



Anada Tiéga

## ► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **26TH SESSIONS OF THE UNFCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND KYOTO PROTOCOL AD HOC WORKING GROUP:** 7-18 May 2007. Bonn, Germany. <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/sb26/>
- **WORKSHOP TO REDUCE MERCURY USE AND RELEASE IN PRODUCTS FOR THE ASIA PACIFIC:** 17-19 May 2007. Bangkok, Thailand. <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/AP%20Hg%20products%20worksheet%2016Mar07%20.pdf>
- **2007 INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY:** 22 May 2007. <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtml>
- **COP-1 OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CASPIAN SEA:** 23-25 May 2007. Baku, Azerbaijan. [http://www.unep.ch/roe/Caspian\\_cop1.htm](http://www.unep.ch/roe/Caspian_cop1.htm)
- **59TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION:** 28-31 May 2007. Anchorage, Alaska. <http://www.iwcoffice.org>
- **SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER:** 28-31 May 2007. Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo. <http://www.iisd.ca/africa/water/amcow/>