



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

MONTREAL PROTOCOL PARTIES TAKE DECISIONS, CONSIDER CLIMATE BENEFITS OF OZONE PROTECTION



The Dais during the opening ceremony. L-R: Gilbert Bankobeza, Ozone Secretariat; Judy Beaumont, Co-Chair, South Africa; Marco González, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat; H.E. Abdullah bin Mubarak bin Aaboud al-Midhadi, Minister for Environment, Qatar; Mikkel Sørensen, Co-Chair, Denmark; and Paul Horwitz, Deputy Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat.

The eighth Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 20th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (COP8/MOP20) took place in Doha, Qatar, from 16-20 November 2008. At this first “paperless” meeting, parties adopted a Doha Declaration and 29 decisions, including on: ratification; compliance; destruction of ozone depleting substances (ODS); essential- and critical-use exemptions; process agents; and financial and administrative matters. The decision on the replenishment of the Multilateral Fund for the triennium 2009-2011, agreeing to replenish the fund with US\$490 million, resolved a debate about the resources necessary to support the acceleration of the phase-out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons. On the question of the destruction of ODS, delegates agreed to request: the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund to commence pilot projects; the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel to undertake a cost-benefit analysis taking into consideration both climate and ozone benefits; and the Secretariat to explore funding opportunities. In a side event at COP8/MOP20, officials from the US, the Netherlands and Australia announced that they were offering their militaries’ assistance in the collection and storage of banks of ODS (<http://www.iisd.ca/ozone/mop20/>).

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GUEST ARTICLE I

A Transatlantic Perspective on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Issues

By Sirini Withana, Policy Analyst, Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP), London/Brussels

Abstract

The EU and the US are two of the world’s largest and most influential economies, and collectively contribute well over a third of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Continued on page 3

GUEST ARTICLE II

The International Year of Sanitation 2008: What Has it Accomplished?

By David Trouba, Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

Abstract

2008 was a breakout year for sanitation. Under the banner of the International Year of Sanitation (IYS), toilets and hygiene for the environment, human development and health gained importance on the international political agenda.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION: WHAT DO WE DO?

(OECD, November 2008) The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published this booklet reviewing the economics behind climate change mitigation options. It summarizes recent OECD analyses, including on the role of technological innovation and the impacts of policies to address carbon leakage. It also explains why using the current economic crises as excuse to postpone decisions is short-sighted (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/31/55/41751042.pdf>).



OIL SPILL IN THE KERCH STRAIT

(UNEP, November 2008) Subtitled "Ukraine Post-Disaster Needs Assessment," this report, which was drafted by UNEP and the European Commission, reviews their efforts to help Ukraine complete its recovery from the oil spill that occurred in the Kerch Strait in November 2007, when a severe storm caused the Volgoneft-139 to release over 1,300 tons of fuel oil into the sea. The resulting physical damage to the sea and land led to property losses, contamination of the marine and coastal flora and fauna, as well as high clean-up costs and significant revenue losses for local industries. The report provides recommendations to improve oil spill preparedness and response in Ukraine. Recommendations are particularly targeted at strengthening strategic policy, contingency planning, information management, environmental monitoring and assessment, and waste management (http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/ukraine_pdna.pdf).



CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

UNFCCC ORGANIZES MEETINGS AND RELEASES DOCUMENTS BEFORE COP14

The Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) convened meetings in Poznań, Poland, and released technical papers just before the 2008 Climate Change Conference, which is convening in Poznań, Poland, from 1-12 December 2008. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Executive Board met from 26-28 November, in Poznań, where they considered matters including: accreditation of Designated Operational Entities (DOEs); baseline methodologies and monitoring and verification plans; issues relating to CDM afforestation and reforestation projects and small-scale CDM project activities; matters relating to the registration of CDM project activities; the issuance of Certified Emission Reductions and the CDM registry; and management plan and resources for the CDM Executive Board (<http://cdm.unfccc.int/EB/044/index.html>).

The Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee also held its 13th meeting from 27-28 November, in Poznań. Under the work plan, matters discussed included: accreditation of independent entities; matters relating to determination reports regarding project design documents; and management plan and resources for the work on joint implementation. Members also discussed collaboration of the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee with other organizations, as well as means to provide guidance to independent entities and project developers regarding determinations, amongst other issues (http://ji.unfccc.int/Sup_Committee/Meetings/013/index.html).

The UNFCCC Secretariat has also released three technical papers for parties on finance: Investment and financial flows to address climate change: An update; Identifying, analyzing and assessing existing and potential new financing resources and relevant vehicles to support the development, deployment, diffusion and transfer of environmentally sound technologies Interim report by the Chair of the Expert Group on Technology Transfer; and Funding adaptation in developing countries: extending the share of proceeds used to assist in meeting the costs of adaptation; and options related to assigned amount units of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/3594.php?rec=j&preref=600004974#beg; http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/3594).

http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/3594.php?rec=j&preref=600004898#beg; http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/3594.php?rec=j&preref=600004949#beg).

The UNFCCC Secretariat also has released the final issue of the UNFCCC newsletter for 2008. The publication focuses on the Climate Change Conference in Poznań, Poland, and contains: an article on investment and financial flows to address climate change; sections on mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology; summaries of UNFCCC key statements; a guest column; and other news (<http://news.unfccc.int/web/nllp.asp?o=kjmodgoj&s=hv8zre2f7h6scial>).

In related news, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has released the reports from recent meetings of its Methodology Panel, Afforestation and Reforestation (A/R) Working Group, and Small Scale Working Group (SSC WG). The 35th meeting of the CDM Methodologies Panel convened from 3-7 November 2008, in Bonn, Germany. The Panel made recommendations to the CDM Executive Board on proposed methodologies for approval, but was unable to discuss or conclude consideration of some cases because of outstanding issues relating to specific cases. The report from the CDM Afforestation and Reforestation Working Group's 22nd meeting, which met from 10-12 November 2008, at the same venue, addresses the consideration of, *inter alia*: proposed new A/R methodologies; requests for clarification of the application of approved baseline and monitoring methodologies; new draft small-scale methodologies for A/R CDM project activities; the significance of greenhouse gas emissions from selected sources related to A/R CDM project activities; and the application of the definition of the project boundary in A/R CDM project activities. The report of the 18th meeting of the SSC WG, which convened from 10-12 November 2008, at the same venue, outlines the SSC WG's consideration of the requests received, including five requests to create new small-scale methodologies, eight requests for revisions to approved small-scale methodologies and 16 requests for clarification of approved small-scale methodologies (<http://cdm.unfccc.int/about/archive.html>).



The Poznań Climate Change Conference is convening from 1-12 December 2008

GUEST ARTICLE I (cont.)

As a new administration prepares to take office in Washington, political attention is now focused on the UN-sponsored multilateral negotiations for a post-2012 international climate change regime. Observers are hopeful that the political change in the US will give new momentum to these talks.

Regardless of developments at the international level, considerable domestic efforts are needed to stabilise the atmospheric concentration of GHG emissions. Policy makers in both the EU and US are developing new instruments to address this common challenge. However, there is often a failure to properly understand what the other party is doing, and to exchange information, learning, and best practices across the Atlantic.

In this context, the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) carried out a joint project to facilitate debate and the exchange of experience between civil society representatives in the EU and the US on the most salient issues on the political agenda. The 'Transatlantic Platform for Action on the Global

Environment' (T-PAGE) dialogue on Climate Change and Energy examined EU and US public policies on climate change and sustainable energy systems, with a view to identifying similarities and differences in opinion and approach. The main conclusions of this dialogue were recently published in a report entitled 'Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Policies in Europe and the United States.'

The T-PAGE Climate Change and Energy dialogue culminated in a major conference in Washington, DC, US, in April 2008, at which participants reached a broad consensus on two key issues. Firstly, it was agreed that GHG emissions from the transport sector should be dealt with as a priority through a mix of complementary policy measures, addressing both the supply and demand side of transport. On the second issue of biofuels, participants recognised that, while reducing the carbon intensity of fuels is in principle desirable, the current rush to biofuels is based on insufficient impact assessments and risks taking over too much land for the production of suboptimal fuel crops. It was recommended that further investment in first generation biofuels be put on hold

until broader transport strategies have been established and there is greater certainty regarding the optimum level of biomass that can be developed without damaging essential food production and conservation goals.

In the context of ongoing international deliberations at the UN level, both the EU and the US are struggling to address common domestic challenges. There is significant potential to learn from shared experiences in addressing climate change and sustainable energy issues, and thus avoid reinventing the wheel and replicating past mistakes. By increasing understanding and awareness of public policies on both sides of the Atlantic, and sharing experiences and best practice, policy makers will be able to develop more effective and efficient domestic policy responses to address these common challenges.

Link to the full article: <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle59a.html>

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, for further information.

► **CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE**



Logos courtesy of the UN

IPCC TASK GROUP CONVENES

The IPCC Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA) took place at

the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, from 19-21 November 2008. The TGICA facilitates the wide availability of climate change-related data and scenarios to enable research and sharing of information across the three IPCC working groups. At the meeting, TGICA members addressed the process of refreshing TGICA membership as the IPCC Fifth Assessment

cycle commences and finalized technical guidelines on socioeconomic scenarios, sea-level rise and observed impacts. Discussions on management and improvements to the Data Distribution Centre were also held. Members of the TGICA will also be briefed regarding ongoing work on scenario development (http://ipcc-wg1.ucar.edu/wg1/wg1_tgica.html).

► **FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND**

UNCCD AND UNU TO EXPAND RESEARCH ON ENVIRONMENTALLY-INDUCED MIGRATION

The Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UN University (UNU) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to be carried out as a joint work plan, beginning in 2009, to expand research on forced migration due to desertification, land degradation and drought. As a result of the 28 November 2008 MOU, a preliminary policy position paper is expected to be prepared and presented at the 17th session of the Commission on Sustainable



L-R: UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja and UNU Rector Konrad Osterwalder (photo courtesy of UNCCD)

Development in May 2009, followed by a joint publication, to be prepared by October 2009 for the ninth session of the UNCCD Conference of the Par-

ties (http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/pressrel/Collaboration_UNCCD_and_UNU_28_11_2008.pdf).

The UNCCD has requested comments, by 15 December 2008, on the report, "Policies for fighting water scarcity and combating desertification," which the Secretariat commissioned, with a view to evaluating whether the report articulates options for a Water Scarcity Adaptation Policy Framework for the UNCCD and elaborates an appropriate strategy that would be used for advocating for the adoption of the policy opinions by governments (<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/RecommendPolicy/waterscarcity.php>).

GUEST ARTICLE II (cont.)

For individual professionals and interested organisations such as the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), an oft-fragmented sector found a much-needed unanimity. And for the 2.5 billion poor people without safe sanitation, a host of new ideas, energy and approaches offered the hope that good toilets and proper hygiene for all people can be achieved.

The United Nations General Assembly established 2008 as the IYS to put the global community back on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goal sanitation target. Progress on the target – to halve, by 2015, the number of people without access to basic sanitation – is slow and could be missed by up to 700 million people. This is the case even when it is well known that poor sanitation and hygiene are the chief or underlying causes in the death of more than five million children every year, mainly through preventable diarrhoeal disease. Of the 2.5 billion people without safe sanitation, over one billion of them def-

ecate in the open – in fields, ditches or wherever they can find space. The environmental and disease-causing implications are staggering. Sanitation is thus interlinked with health and the environment. Good sanitation safeguards water resources and maximises the impact of drinking water quality improvements. Agriculture, fish production, energy production, industry, transport, recreation and tourism – the world’s biggest industry – all suffer economic harm if the water is polluted by faecal contamination.

Stakeholders worked to raise the profile of sanitation in 2008. They agreed upon the most fundamentally important messages: access to safe sanitation and good hygiene 1) improves health, 2) generates economic development, 3) promotes social development, 4) protects the environment, and 5) is universally achievable. To support efforts to reach out to political leaders, a series of regional sanitation meetings on large-scale, sustainable, affordable and appropriate sanitation and hygiene programmes were held, which led to positive, specific and

progressive declarations of intent. The case for sanitation was made at the G8 meeting in Japan, and other places where such messages are rarely heard. Popular media covered the topic, with new books and global media coverage addressing sanitation’s various facets.

The sector worked hard to highlight some of the latest positive developments in sanitation, such as the increase in decentralised, people-centred, demand-driven sanitation approaches. These approaches and other positive developments encouraged sanitation stakeholders to use the International Year of Sanitation 2008 not as an endpoint, but as a starting point. After all, 2.5 billion people want to use the toilet.

Link to the full article: <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-1/guestarticle59b.html>

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► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

QUICK START PROGRAMME TRUST FUND WINDOW OPEN

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SA-ICM) Quick Start Programme (QSP) is a time-limited trust fund, providing seed money to support sound chemicals management. Applications to the



Logos courtesy of the SAICM Secretariat

QSP trust fund can be submitted twice a

year. The sixth round of applications is now open and will close on 27 February 2009. Applications will be reviewed and appraised by the QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee at its seventh meeting on 16-17 April 2009 (<http://www.saicm.org/index.php?menuid=25&pageid=259>).

► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

JAPAN MAKES SUBMISSION TO COMMISSION ON THE LIMITS OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea has reported that Japan has made a submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, which contains a region-by-region description of the outer limits of Japan’s extended Continental Shelf. The consideration of the submission made by Japan will be included in the provisional agenda of the 23rd session

of the Commission to be held in New York, US, in March-April 2009 (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_jpn.htm).

RAMSAR REPORTS ON NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Ramsar Secretariat has reported that the Government of Italy has removed its Stagno di Cagliari site from the Montreux Record. This Record contains sites “where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring

or are likely to occur” (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.italy_cagliari_mr.htm). The Secretariat has also announced that the Governments of Gambia and Senegal have declared the first African Transboundary Ramsar Site and the first Transboundary Ramsar Site outside of Europe, called Niumi-Saloum (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.trn_niumi.htm).



Flags courtesy of the Ramsar Secretariat

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DSD POSTS ADVANCE MAJOR GROUP PRIORITIES DOCUMENT

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), which serves as the Secretariat for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), has

posted an advance draft that outlines Major groups’ priorities for action on the CSD17 thematic issues: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Each of the nine major groups submitted approxi-

mately 1000 word summaries of their priorities for action on the thematic issues, which are reproduced in this document (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd17/mg/mg_csd17_docs.pdf).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE



L-R: Bakytbek Duisekeyev (Kazakhstan) receives recognition of his country's participation in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds from Robert Hepworth, CMS Executive Secretary

CMS COP9 UNDERWAY

The ninth Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is taking place from 1-5 December 2008, in Rome, Italy. COP9 was preceded by several associated meetings from 27-30 November: the first Meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement; the seventh UN Environment Programme (UNEP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF) Siberian Crane Wetlands Project Steering Committee meeting; the 34th CMS Standing Committee meeting; and the Aridland Mammals meeting. COP9 will be followed by the Second Meeting to Identify and Elaborate an Option for International Cooperation on Migratory Sharks, to be held from 6-8 December. The COP9 agenda includes: reports from Convention and Agreement bodies, States and partners; measures to improve the conservation status of CMS Appendix I and II species; information management, capacity building, outreach and communication; cooperation with other Conventions and partners; key policy issues such as climate change and avian influenza; proposals for amendments to the CMS Appendices; and the "future shape" of the Convention, including budget, administration and institutional matters (<http://www.iisd.ca/cms/cop9/>).

CBD EXPERT GROUP ON BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE PUBLISHES DRAFT FINDINGS, GLOBAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSULTATION ADOPTS STRATEGY ON REDD

The first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including experts from 14 different countries, convened from 17-21 November 2008, in London, UK. The discussions focused on two main themes: the impacts of climate change on biodiversity, and biodiversity and climate

change mitigation. The draft findings of the meeting address: climate change and biodiversity interactions; impacts of climate change on biodiversity; biodiversity and climate change mitigation through land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) activities including Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD); and biodiversity and climate change mitigation through renewable energy technologies and geo-engineering. The draft findings are being distributed by the CBD Secretariat at the twenty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Poznań, Poland. The main findings will also be presented during a side event organized by the Secretariat of the CBD, on the margins of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC on 8 December 2008 (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cc/ahteg-bdcc-01/other/ahteg-bdcc-01-findings-en.pdf>).

The Global Indigenous Peoples Consultation on REDD convened from 12-14 November 2008, in Baguio City, the Philippines. The consultation was organized by Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education), the UN University Institute of Advanced Studies Traditional Knowledge Initiative, the UN REDD Programme and the CBD Secretariat. Participants adopted a global indigenous peoples strategy on REDD. The strategy makes reference to a number of overarching principles, including a human-rights approach to all REDD activities, and the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples. With regard to international processes and organizations, recommendations address: coordinating and sharing information with the UN agencies, specialized bodies and initiatives that are considered relevant for implementing action on climate change and indigenous peoples; recognizing the close links between traditional knowledge, biodiversity and climate change, and ensuring close cooperation and more synergy between the CBD and UNFCCC on traditional knowledge and climate change; supporting the establishment of a working group on local-level adaptation with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples; and establishing a working group/expert body on traditional knowledge and climate change under the joint liaison group of the CBD/UNFCCC/UNCCD. It is also recommended that the UN-REDD programme and other funders develop compliance guidelines, as well

as a grievance and recourse mechanism, to ensure that indigenous peoples' rights are observed at the national and international levels (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cc/ahteg-bdcc-01/other/ahteg-bdcc-01-redd-ilc-01-02-en.pdf>).

CITES RHINO TASK FORCE TO TACKLE RHINO POACHING, EXPERT WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS

The Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) held a meeting from 18-19 November 2008, in Nairobi, Kenya. Bringing together wildlife law enforcement officials from range, transit and consumer countries to facilitate the exchange of intelligence on rhino-related crimes, the meeting aimed to stop the escalation of rhino poaching and to break up criminal networks involved in the increasing illegal trade in their horns (http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press_release.shtml).

An international expert workshop on CITES non-detriment findings was held from 17-22 November 2008, in Cancun, Mexico. Its main goal was to prepare tools, methodologies and information needed to formulate non-detriment findings by building on existing work, such as the IUCN Checklist, parties' own experiences and results of other workshops. The workshop started with a full-day plenary session and then concentrated on working group sessions for the development of taxon-based guidelines. Proceedings and results will be presented to the CITES Plants and Animals Committees (http://www.conabio.gob.mx/institucion/cooperacion_internacional/TallerNDF/taller_ndf.html).

ITPGR PUBLISHES CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGR) has invited applications from entities and institutions based in the countries that are parties to the Treaty, for grants within the framework of the Funding Strategy. The deadline for submission of pre-proposals is 15 January 2009. The maximum grant size for projects is US\$50,000. The priorities for this period, as established by the Governing Body at its second session, are: information exchange, technology transfer and capacity building; managing and conserving plant genetic resources on-farm; and the sustainable use of plant genetic resources (ftp://ftp.fao.org/ag/agp/planttreaty/funding/cfp08_e.pdf).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

SECOND COMMITTEE APPROVES DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

The Second Committee of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) approved draft text on small island sustainable development, desertification, and oceans on 26 November 2008. On oceans, the Committee approved by consensus a draft resolution titled "towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations." The draft calls on the UN and member States to help Caribbean States and regional organizations to protect the Caribbean from pollution due to ships, illegal dumping and hazardous wastes, and to become parties to relevant multilateral agreements.

On small island developing States (SIDS), the Committee approved a draft resolution urging the UN, member States, and the Global Environment Facility to implement the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for Further

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, as well as to help SIDS in their adaptation efforts.

On desertification, the Second Committee recommended that UNGA call for the integration of desertification and land degradation into sustainable development plans and strategies, encourage affected parties and donors to take into account civil society's participation in Convention processes when setting priorities in national development strategies, and urge the Committee on Science and Technology to expedite efforts to create links with scientific communities in order to fully use relevant initiatives in sustainable land and water management.

On disasters, a draft text was agreed that calls on the international community to provide predictable resources to vulnerable developing countries and stresses the importance of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action in disaster risk reduction. An-

other draft resolution was agreed that calls for the implementation of the Hyogo documents, institutional strengthening and contributions to the UN Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/gaef3234.doc.htm>).

UNEP LAUNCHES GREEN STAR AWARDS

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP), with Green Cross International and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has launched the Green Star Awards. Honoring people along with public and private organizations, the awards will seek to increase awareness of the need to reduce large-scale environmental emergencies' impacts by rewarding extraordinary efforts to respond to such emergencies. The first Green Star Awards ceremony will take place on 8 May 2009, in Brussels, Belgium (<http://www.unep.org/greenstar/content/news.asp>).

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

FfD REVIEW CONFERENCE CONVENES

The Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus convened from 29 November-2 December 2008, in Doha, Qatar. The Conference discussed an Outcome Document highlighting progress made since the Monterrey Conference in 2002, and noting new and emerging challenges to financing development. In particular, countries identified the impact of the financial crisis, additional costs of climate change mitigation and adaptation, and damage to the environment, price volatility in international markets of key commodities, expanding economic cooperation,

and the growing needs for reconstruction and development of post-conflict countries as key challenges. Delegates emphasized the importance of aid effectiveness, and reaffirmed their resolve to take concerted global action to address all of these areas while consistently furthering economic and human development for all. They agreed to convene a more specialized conference under UN auspices on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its impact on development, as well as to continue the follow-up process on FfD and strengthen it in New York through the UN Economic and Social Council. Delegates also agreed to convene another FfD conference in 2013 (<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/doha/index.htm>).

A two-day Civil Society Forum on Financing for Development also met in Doha, and adopted a declaration in which NGO representatives affirm that systemic and global governance issues must be decided at the UN and support the call for a second UN Monetary and Financial Conference (<http://www.un-ngls.org/>).

GEF SUPPORTS BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN BRAZIL

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved, on 18 November 2008, a US\$4 million grant to the Government of the state of Espírito Santo, Brazil, for the Biodiversity and Watershed Conservation and Restoration Project, which will support the state's efforts to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss. The project will support the adoption of environmentally-friendly land use practices in two key Atlantic forest watersheds in Espírito Santo. The project will help create a long-term financing instrument for biodiversity conservation that could be replicated and serve as a model for other states within the country. It will also contribute to higher income for farmers and improved water supplies (<http://go.worldbank.org/YZ1OSB54T0>).



Delegates during the *Follow-up International Conference on FfD to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus* (photo courtesy of the UN)

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **UN Climate Change Conference - Poznań:** 1-12 December 2008, Poznań, Poland. <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/cop14/>
- **FAO High-Level Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa: The Challenges of Climate Change:** 15-17 December 2008. Sirte, Libya. <http://www.sirtewaterandenergy.org/>