

## **CBD COP-8 HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 24 MARCH 2006**

Delegates to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-8) met in two working groups throughout the day. Working Group I (WG-I) reached agreement on genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) and addressed protected areas (PAs), invasive alien species (IAS), and liability and redress. Working Group II (WG-II) considered: financial resources; implementation of the 2010 target; national reporting; and cooperation with other organizations.

A brief plenary convened in the afternoon to hear reports on WG deliberations and from the contact group on the budget, and an update on regional nominations for the Bureau. Delegates paid tribute to Tewolde Egziabher (Ethiopia) for being named "Champion of the Earth 2006" by UNEP.

### **WORKING GROUP I**

**GURTS:** WG-I Chair Matthew Jebb (Ireland) reported on agreement reached to propose adoption only of the respective SBSTTA-10 recommendation, thus deleting the recommendation from the Article 8(j) Working Group including the case-by-case risk assessment, and inserting a reference to respecting the mandate of Decision V/5 (Agricultural biodiversity) with regard to future research on the impacts of GURTs.

**PROTECTED AREAS: Marine protected areas (MPAs):** WG-I Chair Jebb established a Friends of the Chair group on MPAs beyond national jurisdiction, in light of the outcome of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Working Group.

NEW ZEALAND suggested that the CBD focus on: implementation of the work programme and achievement of the 2010 target; integration of science; and cooperation with the UNGA process and other international and regional organizations. CANADA, supported by ICELAND, highlighted the scientific and technical input of CBD, and proposed focusing on selection criteria for significant areas, biogeography delineation, development of tools and cooperation with other organizations. AUSTRALIA proposed that CBD recognize the competence of UNGA processes on high seas governance issues and prioritize national capacity building. SOUTH AFRICA suggested that COP-8 propose to UNGA that its Working Group accelerate the development of an instrument or mechanism for high seas PAs recognizing the role CBD can play, and adopt interim measures. Noting that the UNGA Working Group was informal and its Co-Chairs' report only informational, GREENPEACE urged a COP decision: recognizing the governance gap on high seas PAs; encouraging UNGA to adopt interim measures; establishing an *ad hoc* technical expert group (AHTEG) on criteria for establishing MPAs; and working on threats to marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.

KIRIBATI stressed the link between MPAs and local communities' livelihoods and traditional practices. IUCN urged work on biogeographical classification systems. WWF recalled that without adequate fisheries management, any MPA would be under constant threat, and urged States to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

**Options for mobilizing financial resources:** PERU, MEXICO and GHANA supported bracketed language on linking PA funding to the Clean Development Mechanism, and JAMAICA and MEXICO supported bracketed language on removing perverse subsidies and redirecting them to support PAs. AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and BRAZIL proposed deletion of bracketed text on both issues.

TUVALU requested overall further refinement of options. PERU and MEXICO urged development banks to ensure that their institutional policy address biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and indigenous communities' consent. PALAU highlighted the need for institutional strengthening and improved governance of PAs, involving indigenous communities; and the GLOBAL FOREST COALITION the need for public funding for indigenous and local communities to protect their areas.

The EU proposed focusing the second meeting of the PA Working Group on funding issues, and continuing these discussions at the national and regional level. Urging an adequate GEF fourth replenishment, IUCN and an NGO representative also requested that the next meeting of the PA Working Group focus on financial commitments. NEW ZEALAND stressed focusing on impediments to national implementation and resources to address such impediments.

**INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES:** The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/3) and NEW ZEALAND reported on the AHTEG on IAS. SOUTH AFRICA emphasized regional development of IAS information systems. CHILE called on parties to develop coordinated training activities with neighboring countries.

MEXICO and URUGUAY called for risk analysis on species that are subject to export and potentially invasive. ZAMBIA and KENYA called for text encouraging relevant organizations to conduct risk assessments, rather than only developing a code of practice. Mongolia, for ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, called for greater efforts to prevent movement of IAS. MALAYSIA, TURKMENISTAN, INDIA, KENYA and SENEGAL prioritized capacity building and additional funding, with PERU highlighting the particular situation of centers of origin. MALDIVES and MICRONESIA called for information and experience exchange. Highlighting cases of pests despite possession of a phytosanitary certificate, the SEYCHELLES and INDIA urged compliance with international agreements.

The EU, with NORWAY, suggested additional language urging CBD parties to implement the Climate Change Convention and Protocol sinks-related provisions to avoid introduction of potentially invasive alien trees and adopt

preventive and mitigating measures. NEW ZEALAND, CANADA and BRAZIL opposed, recalling that the current provision is the result of a SBSTTA compromise.

AUSTRALIA, supported by ARGENTINA, drew attention to the outstanding procedural issues related to Decision VI/23 (IAS) and suggested leaving the issue for COP-9 consideration. JAMAICA and the EU proposed deleting references to the outstanding procedural and substantive issues in the AHTEG report.

The GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAMME and FAO reported on their work on IAS. The IIFB underlined the real threat of IAS to native species that are crucial for indigenous peoples' survival, and called for full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in developing national strategies to control IAS.

**LIABILITY AND REDRESS:** CANADA reported on the AHTEG meeting and recommendations (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/27/Add.3), and delegates agreed that a Chair's text will be prepared.

### WORKING GROUP II

**FINANCIAL RESOURCES:** The Philippines, on behalf of G-77/CHINA, expressed concerns regarding the availability and accessibility of Global Environment Facility (GEF) financing, especially the implications of the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) on developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States. SOUTH AFRICA asked that the CBD be actively involved in the RAF review in two years and, with INDIA, stressed that developing countries should receive funding according to national priorities. CHINA and NIGERIA emphasized that the COP should give guidance to GEF on financing, not vice versa. CAMEROON called for the adoption of the financial mechanism endorsed by Biosafety Protocol COP/MOP-3.

CANADA supported the RAF, noting that it provides a more equitable and transparent process of resource allocation, and with AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND requested more information about the proposed biodiversity finance study group before considering its adoption. JAPAN suggested that COP "invite," rather than "urge" donor countries to increase their contributions to the GEF.

G-77/CHINA, stressed that financing has been mainly focused on conservation measures, and called for more resources for sustainable use and benefit-sharing. MEXICO highlighted synergy between the Rio Conventions for efficient resource management and, supported by BOLIVIA and PERU, the importance of new innovative financial mechanisms such as national and regional environmental funds. ECUADOR requested financial sustainability for work on PAs. NEW ZEALAND suggested integrating biodiversity into national sustainable development plans to ensure donor alignment.

CHINA, supported by many, urged that the fourth GEF replenishment not be delayed, and COLOMBIA urged donor countries to contribute. TURKMENISTAN proposed to add a reference to countries with economies in transition in text urging GEF to simplify its procedures. INDONESIA stressed the need for conducting an in-depth review of the financial mechanism, with AUSTRALIA welcoming the review at COP-9 and NEW ZEALAND asking that it be cost-effective. SWITZERLAND questioned the appropriateness of the questionnaire on the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. ECOROPA suggested that the in-depth review address cost-effective means to address direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

**GUIDANCE TO THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM:** WG-II Chair Sem Shikongo (Namibia) introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/10 and INF/1), and delegates established a contact group on the issue.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2010 TARGET:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/4/Rev.1, 8/22, INF/5, INF/17, INF/31 and INF/33). The EU and NORWAY called for adopting the framework for

monitoring progress towards the 2010 target, including goals and targets, without reopening discussions and highlighted the need to further develop national and regional targets. COLOMBIA stressed the need to refine and revise the 2010 goals and targets, particularly those relating to traditional knowledge and technology transfer. CANADA suggested provisionally endorsing the framework and reviewing goals and targets after 2010, with AUSTRALIA also suggesting that their application be consistent with other international agreements. Alternatively, AUSTRALIA proposed aligning the wording of targets related to traditional knowledge with Article 8(j) and revising the target on access to genetic resources. THAILAND recommended consolidating targets between closely-related work programmes. INDIA noted the goals and targets cannot be used to evaluate national implementation. GHANA called for financial resources to strengthen legislation on unauthorized harvesting of biological resources, and ECUADOR for preparation of reports on the 2010 target and development of additional indicators. GREENPEACE called for more ambitious targets on forest and marine biodiversity.

INDIA endorsed the draft guidelines for the review of work programmes. The EU emphasized the importance of indicators in assessing progress towards the 2010 targets. NORWAY welcomed further work on indicators for traditional knowledge, with CANADA pointing to the work of the IIFB working group on indicators. ICELAND suggested using other conservation measures, rather than only PA coverage, as an indicator for ecosystem conservation.

**NATIONAL REPORTING:** The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/4/Rev.1 and 8/24). The EU suggested streamlining the reporting process and orienting it to outcomes. LEBANON and others supported harmonizing reporting processes of biodiversity-related conventions. CHINA proposed reducing the number of thematic reports. CANADA suggested enhancing the role of reporting in CBD decision-making. CAMEROON proposed including information on the World Biodiversity Day in national reports. JAPAN and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA called for reasonable deadlines for submitting reports. NORWAY and AUSTRALIA opposed text on enhancing the Secretariat's technical support services to parties.

**COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:** The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/25). Stressing synergy at the national, regional and international levels, the EU suggested that the Biodiversity Liaison Group meet more regularly, and supported the global partnership on biodiversity as an initiative to ensure implementation on the ground. Discussion will resume on Monday.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

Following the acclaimed elimination of the controversial 2(b) on GURTs, participants immersed themselves once again into high seas protected areas. While opinions diverged as to whether the non-negotiated outcome of the UNGA Working Group has superseded the Montecatini recommendations, consensus seemed to emerge on the need to redefine the role of the CBD in terms of scientific and technical input to a possible, future UN-led process. Different hypotheses emerged, as a thin line separates science from policy, and technical from legal issues. According to some, agreement on the protection of deep sea biodiversity through protected areas will be elusive, if isolated from discussions on marine genetic resources and benefit-sharing.

With discussion on MPAs continuing on Monday on the basis of an expected Chair's draft text, delegates will have to juggle a hectic schedule in the second week of COP-8. Rumored contact groups on ABS and guidance to the financial mechanism, and potentially heated discussions on incentive measures, may well take attention away from the highly anticipated High-level Ministerial Segment.