

## SECOND MEETING OF THE *AD HOC* OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON PROTECTED AREAS: 11-15 FEBRUARY 2008

The second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas (WGPA 2) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) opens today at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) headquarters in Rome, Italy, and will continue until 15 February 2008. It will be followed by the thirteenth meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), to be held from 18-22 February 2008.

The Working Group will review the implementation of the Programme of Work for Protected Areas (PoWPA) and explore options for mobilizing, through different mechanisms, adequate and timely financial resources for the implementation of the PoWPA. Recommendations from WGPA 2 will be submitted to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP), which will take place from 19-30 May in Bonn, Germany.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CBD AND PROTECTED AREAS

The CBD, negotiated under the auspices of the UN Environment Programme, was opened for signature on 5 June 1992, and entered into force on 29 December 1993. There are currently 190 parties to the Convention, which aims to promote “the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.” The establishment and management of protected areas, together with conservation, sustainable use and restoration initiatives in the adjacent land and seascape, are central to CBD Article 8 (*In situ* Conservation).

**COP 2 AND 3:** At its second (November 1995, Jakarta, Indonesia) and third meetings (November 1996, Buenos Aires, Argentina), the COP considered CBD Article 8, and emphasized regional and international cooperation, and the importance of disseminating relevant experience.

**COP 4:** At its fourth meeting (May 1998, Bratislava, Slovakia), the COP decided to consider protected areas (PAs) as one of the three main themes for COP 7. It encouraged the CBD Executive Secretary to develop relationships with other processes with a view to fostering good management

practices in several areas related to PAs, including ecosystem and bioregional approaches to PA management and sustainable use of biodiversity, mechanisms to enhance stakeholder involvement, and transboundary PAs. It also established an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on marine and coastal PAs. PAs formed a central element of the thematic work programmes on marine and coastal biodiversity, and inland water ecosystems.

**COP 6:** At its sixth meeting (April 2002, The Hague, the Netherlands), the COP adopted an Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity, containing a number of activities related to PAs, and calling for work on the role and effectiveness of PAs. It also adopted the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, which specifies that by 2010 at least 10% of each of the world’s ecological regions should be effectively conserved, implying increasing representation of different ecological regions in PAs, and improving effectiveness of PAs; and protection of 50% of the most important areas for plant diversity should be ensured through effective conservation measures, including PAs. COP 6 further established an AHTEG on PAs to prepare consideration of the issue by COP 7.

**SBSTTA 8:** At its eighth meeting (March 2003, Montreal, Canada), SBSTTA produced a recommendation on marine and coastal PAs on the basis of the work of the AHTEG on marine and coastal PAs.

**MYPOW:** The Open-ended Inter-session Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the CBD COP up to 2010 (March 2003, Montreal, Canada) requested that the AHTEG on PAs, SBSTTA 9 and COP 7 consider the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (September 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa), which called for supporting initiatives for hotspot areas and other areas essential for biodiversity, and for promoting the development of national and regional ecological networks and corridors (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, paragraph 44(g)).

**SBSTTA 9:** On the basis of the work of the AHTEG on PAs, SBSTTA 9 (November 2003, Montreal, Canada) considered PAs as one of the themes for in-depth consideration and proposed a revised work programme.

**COP 7:** At its seventh meeting (February 2004, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), the COP adopted the PoWPA. The PoWPA consists of four interlinked elements on: direct actions for

planning, selecting, establishing, strengthening and managing PA systems and sites; governance, participation, equity and benefit-sharing; enabling activities; and standards, assessment and monitoring. COP 7 further decided to establish an *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on PAs and assess progress in the implementation of the work programme at each COP meeting until 2010.

**WGPA 1** The first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas (June 2005, Montecatini, Italy) adopted recommendations on: options for cooperation for establishing marine protected areas (MPAs) beyond national jurisdiction; further development of toolkits for the identification, designation, management, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional PA systems; options for mobilizing adequate and timely financial resources for the implementation of the PoWPA by developing countries and countries with economies in transition; and a process for the review of implementation of the PoWPA.

**COP 8:** At its eighth meeting (March 2006, Curitiba, Brazil), the COP assessed the implementation of the PoWPA for 2004-2006 and decided to convene WGPA 2 to evaluate progress and elaborate recommendations for improved implementation of the PoWPA. The COP also invited parties to elaborate financial plans incorporating national, regional and international sources.

#### **INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS**

##### **AD HOC OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON MARINE BIODIVERSITY BEYOND AREAS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION:**

This Working Group convened in February 2006 in New York under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly. The Working Group recognized the need to address the full range of issues relating to marine biological diversity in an integrated way, including: the legal framework for marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; impacts of fishing practices on such biodiversity; high seas marine protected areas; marine genetic resources beyond areas of national jurisdiction; marine scientific research; and coordination and cooperation. Issues and questions requiring further study were also identified and common ground was found on both institutional coordination and the need for short-term measures to address illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and destructive fishing practices as the most urgent threats to marine biodiversity. The Co-Chairs' summary of trends and report of discussion was transmitted to the 61st session of the General Assembly as an addendum to the Secretary-General's report on Oceans and the Law of the Sea.

##### **SOUTH AND WEST ASIA WORKSHOP ON**

**CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE PoWPA:** This workshop (April 2007, Dehradun, India) reviewed progress in implementing the 2006 PoWPA targets and identified challenges and capacity building needs as inputs for WGPA 2. The workshop also provided and considered practical hands-on tools and training in ecological gap assessments, sustainable finance plans and management effectiveness.

##### **EASTERN EUROPE REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR IMPLEMENTING PRIORITY ACTIVITIES OF THE**

**PoWPA:** This workshop (June 2007, Isle of Vilm, Germany) aimed to increase the capacity of government officials to

implement the PoWPA and provided an overview of ecological gap analysis, improving management effectiveness, and sustainable financing. Recommendations were developed for WGPA 2 and the participating countries also elaborated work plans to develop national master plans aimed at achieving the PoWPA.

##### **CAUCASUS / CENTRAL ASIA / EASTERN EUROPE REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENTS TO IMPLEMENT**

**PRIORITY ACTIVITIES OF THE PoWPA:** Participants responsible for PAs in 13 countries were provided with practical knowledge of tools for implementing the PoWPA at this workshop in August 2007 in Isle of Vilm, Germany. The participating countries agreed to provide a review to the CBD Secretariat of the implementation of the PoWPA and also elaborated workplans for achieving the PoWPA, including gap assessment, threat assessment, management effectiveness, capacity assessment, equity and benefits assessment, governance, policy environment, sustainable finance and monitoring of PA systems. For each of these elements they rated the actual status of implementation, its priority for the country, next steps and what is needed to take the next steps and obstacles. Recommendations for WGPA 2 focus on: raising additional funding for the implementation of the PoWPA; accelerating the implementation of the PoWPA; making tools available in Russian; and developing sustainable financing for PAs.

##### **ANGLOPHONE AFRICA SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE REVIEW OF AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR**

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PoWPA:** This workshop (August 2007, Cape Town, South Africa) sought to review progress and strengthen capacity for the implementation of the PoWPA and agree on recommendations for WGPA 2. Issues discussed included: PA system master planning technical themes, including ecological gap analysis, management effectiveness assessment, capacity action planning and sustainable financing; as well as next steps at both the national and regional levels.

##### **EXPERT WORKSHOP ON ECOLOGICAL CRITERIA AND BIOGEOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS FOR MARINE AREAS IN NEED OF PROTECTION:**

This workshop (October 2007, Azores, Portugal) refined and developed a consolidated set of scientific criteria for identifying ecological or biologically significant marine areas in need of protection in open ocean waters and deep sea habitats, and underscored MPAs as one of the essential tools to help achieve conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in MPAs beyond national jurisdiction.

##### **THE THIRD UNESCO WORLD CONGRESS OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES:**

This meeting (February 2008, Madrid, Spain) evaluated the progress and challenges for biosphere reserves, and elaborated the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves in the 21st century. Participants addressed the contribution of biosphere reserve zones to conservation and development taking into account constraints and opportunities inherent in each zone as well as their potential for innovative research and capacity building, and enhancing the role of ecosystem goods and services and development. UNESCO added two sites to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.