

WGPA 2 HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2008

Delegates to the second meeting of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas (WGPA 2) convened in plenary throughout the day where they considered revised conference room papers (CRP) on Review of Implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) and Options for Mobilizing Financial Resources for the Implementation of the (PoWPA). The closing plenary convened in the evening to adopt the meeting report and recommendations for considerations by COP 9.

PLENARY

REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PoWPA:

Delegates were invited to consider a revised CRP on Review of Implementation of PoWPA. Regarding assigning IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to PAs for reporting purposes, the EU, BURKINA FASO and CROATIA supported a formulation "recognizing the need to finalize the ongoing process of refining the guidelines for applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories," while BRAZIL called for consistency with previously agreed language in decision VII/28 (Protected Areas), which recognizes the value of a single international classification system for PAs.

On enhancing activities and resources for implementing the PoWPA, delegates were divided on whether to retain or delete reference to "research and academic institutions" and "towards organizing and forming regional technical support networks." The EU, CHINA and the AFRICAN GROUP favored maintaining the first reference and deleting the latter. CANADA, questioned the proposed deletion of "regional technical support networks."

On the UNEP/IUCN TEMATEA, an issue-based module on PAs, the EU supported its use, CANADA wanted it to be "considered" and BRAZIL preferred that it be "noted." On implementation tools, the EU, supported by the AFRICAN GROUP, but opposed by BRAZIL, rejected their development being "subject to available funds." Regarding the development of a central website on the PoWPA, the EU, supported by NEW ZEALAND but opposed by the AFRICAN GROUP, called for it to be "subject to available funds." Although a majority of parties supported language promoting development activities in the context of PAs to contribute to the eradication of poverty, an exact formulation could not be agreed upon. On increasing public awareness on PAs, BRAZIL suggested language linking poverty eradication and sustaining human wellbeing, to which parties agreed.

Delegates remained divided about whether to refer directly to "mitigation and adaptation" in the context of enhancing awareness about the linkages between PAs and climate change.

Discussions then turned to a second revision of a CRP on Review of Implementation of the PoWPA. Despite informal consultations, delegates could not reach agreement on compromise text encouraging parties to transmit to the Executive Secretary information on scientifically assessed candidate sites, which was opposed by BRAZIL. On participation of indigenous and local communities in the governance of PAs, parties agreed to ensure that such participation is consistent with national law and international obligations.

OPTIONS FOR MOBILIZING FINANCIAL

RESOURCES: Delegates considered a revised CRP on Options for Mobilizing Financial Resources. The EU continued to support reference to "different mechanisms," in the title, opposed by BRAZIL, who preferred the title to focus on PoWPA implementation "by developing countries, in particular, Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States and countries with economies in transition."

On mobilizing adequate financial resources; MALAYSIA stated that such resources should be "timely and predictable;" CANADA, opposed by GREENPEACE, proposed deleting "new and additional financial resources;" the EU stressed the need for the recommendations to address all parties and not only developed countries parties; ETHIOPIA proposed a general reference to regional development banks instead of the African Development Bank; and AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL and CANADA, opposed by the EU, preferred deleting reference to "the equitable sharing and distribution of finances" to local communities.

On sustainable financial planning, CHINA, supported by CANADA, BRAZIL, NEW ZEALAND, PAKISTAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE and others, proposed "a diversified portfolio of financial mechanisms;" exploring "the concept of payments for ecosystem goods and services," while ensuring the equitable sharing of benefits with indigenous and local communities; and exploring "the potential of biodiversity offsets as a financial mechanism." The EU preferred to retain reference to "new and innovative financial mechanisms" as well as inclusion of an annex containing the list of financial mechanisms referred to in the recommendation on mobilizing financial resources (UNEP/CBD/WG-PA/2/4). CHINA stressed that such an annex should not be legally binding.

Regarding the use of innovative financing mechanisms, delegates agreed to CHINA's proposal that countries should create a management environment, which encourages innovation

in the management and use of financial mechanisms and, as appropriate, the removal of barriers to the diversification of income sources for PAs. The EU maintained its preference for its initial proposal containing stronger language on the use of financial mechanisms and the removal of barriers as alternative bracketed text. Delegates could not agree on a reference to enhancing the effectiveness of resource management, which remained bracketed.

On PA contributions to poverty eradication, delegates decided to retain brackets on two alternative proposals: one by BRAZIL stating that countries should develop a "socioeconomic justification" to increase PA funding by linking PAs to development agendas; and another proposed by CUBA, stating that better integration of conservation and development should be achieved by promoting the valuation of ecosystem services. They agreed to an additional proposal by the EU stating that better integration should be achieved by exploring the potential of public-private sector financing mechanisms.

Regarding fundraising targets, delegates agreed to refer to "national" targets as favored by ARGENTINA, CANADA and INDIA, but initially opposed by BRAZIL. On funding opportunities in the context of climate change, delegates agreed to retain a proposal made by CANADA to reference "global efforts to address climate change," thus deleting NORWAY's reference to the potential of reduced deforestation. References to climate change adaptation and mitigation and to "options under the UNFCCC and/or the UNCCD" remained bracketed.

Delegates accepted an EU proposal to enhance implementation of provisions in decision VIII/24 referring to donor responsibilities. Delegates agreed to language urging donor countries to collaborate with developing countries on capacity development and cooperation on the PoWPA. CHINA proposed text on "new and additional funds to assist the implementation of the PoWPA," which remained bracketed. AUSTRALIA said that calling on countries to increase their official development assistance falls outside the mandate of the Working Group.

Parties agreed on a proposal by BRAZIL inviting the GEF to provide new and additional resources for PAs within the GEF portfolio. However, brackets could not be lifted from the remaining recommendations.

CLOSING PLENARY

Mary Fosi, Rapporteur, presented the draft report of the meeting (UNEP/CBD/WG-PA/2/L.1), which was adopted with amendments, including a note that indigenous and local communities had not been given sufficient opportunity to express their views.

Ositadinma Anaedu, Chair of the informal sessions, detailed progress made by WGPA 2. Referring to the outcome documents: the Review of Implementation of the PoWPA (UNEP/CBD/WG-PA/2/L.2), and Options for Mobilizing Financial Resources for the Implementation for the PoWPA (UNEP/CBD/WG-PA/2/L.3), he explained that both texts remained heavily bracketed, and drew attention to a number of textual corrections, including noting that the Annex in UNEP/CBD/WG-PA/2/L.2 was "neither discussed nor negotiated." He then recommended the documents for adoption. WGPA 2 Chair José Antônio Marcondes de Carvalho invited comments and a number of interventions were made to clarify the status of various references in brackets, after which the documents were adopted.

CLOSING STATEMENTS: GREENPEACE expressed disappointment regarding procedural aspects of the meeting and its outcome, stating that the level of political impetus in the context of PAs would have to be increased before COP 9. The EU voiced concern regarding the lack of full consideration of

financing needs, including innovative financing mechanisms and public-private partnerships. Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD Executive Secretary, underscored the role of indigenous peoples in the conservation of biodiversity and thanked delegates for their participation. He expressed frustration with the meeting's outcome and hoped for a more successful discussion during COP 9. Chair Marcondes de Carvalho thanked delegates, the Secretariat, NGOs and indigenous peoples, stating that the extensively bracketed text would impact on the workload at COP 9. He gave the meeting to a close at 9:31 pm.

IN THE CORRIDORS

WGPA 2 ended with a general feeling of frustration owing to the fact that many felt it had underachieved. "We are leaving the meeting with brackets and we'll have to live with these brackets" said one delegate, referring to the staggering 150 brackets contained in the two recommendations, which will present a heavy burden for COP 9.

On funding, developed country delegates expressed their disappointment that discussion of innovative funding mechanisms did not move forward, while developing country representatives lamented that "once again" there was "no real commitment" from donor countries to live up to their funding promises. "Nothing new on the funding front" was how one delegate summed up the situation, noting that WGPA 2 discussions on funding resembled those under other multilateral environmental processes.

The outcome regarding the review of implementation was received more favorably, mainly because it reflects positive experiences with regional workshops for technical cooperation, capacity building and the development of supporting tools and documentation. A group of participants expressed relief that "at least the recommendation recognizes some of the things that are working well, while addressing the need to speed up ecological gap analyses, financial needs assessments and reporting." Others noted the remarkable disjuncture between good progress in PoWPA implementation on the ground and the apparent absence of will to support implementation in the international arena. One participant's explanation was that the "very nature of protected areas, which fall entirely under national jurisdiction, does not allow for the adoption of prescriptive international rules." In addition, many felt that time devoted to the negotiations could have been used more efficiently.

One delegate said that the lessons of WGPA 2 must be heeded at SBSTTA 13, considering its heavy agenda, especially as "practically every item has the potential to become highly contentious." The SBSTTA 13 agenda includes a number of issues, which have proved to be controversial in the past, such as invasive alien species, marine genetic resources beyond national jurisdiction and mutually supportive actions to address climate change within the three Rio Conventions. The meeting will also perform in-depth reviews of the CBD's programmes of work on agricultural biodiversity and forest biodiversity. Both agenda items, delegates commented, could become tainted by disagreements emanating from recent discussions on biofuels and the role of forest conservation in mitigating climate change. One seasoned SBSTTA participant remained circumspect, noting that "CBD parties simply can't afford to forward any more bracketed text to the COP if they want to maintain a realistic chance of achieving the 2010 biodiversity targets."

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of WGPA 2 will be combined with the summary from SBSTTA 13 and will be available on Monday, 25 February 2008, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wgpa2>