

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee  
for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety  
18-19 February 2002, Yaounde**

**Attendance:**

- Bureau members present: Cameroon (Chair), France, India, Peru, Poland and Switzerland.

The Chairman informed the Bureau that members from the Islamic Republic of Iran, St Kitts and Nevis, South Africa and Ukraine were not able to come to the meeting due to last minute unavoidable circumstances. However, he indicated that since each regional group was represented by at least one Bureau member, there was a quorum and therefore the meeting could go ahead.

- Secretariat of the CBD: the Executive Secretary and the Senior Programme Officer, Biosafety Unit.
- A representative of UNEP and an observer from The Netherlands, host country for the third meeting of the ICCP, were also present at the meeting.

**Opening of the meeting:**

The Minister of Environment and Forests of Cameroon, H. E. Mr. Sylvestre Naah Ondo, came to address the Bureau meeting. He extended a warm welcome to Bureau members on behalf of the Government and people of Cameroon. He stated that Cameroon was honored to host this meeting and thanked the Bureau for having accepted to hold the meeting in Yaounde. He highlighted the importance that Cameroon attaches to the CBD and the Biosafety Protocol as evidenced by the speedy ratification of these instruments by the Government of Cameroon. He stressed that his country was in need of assistance from the international community to build the capacities required to implement effectively the provisions of the Protocol. Finally, he expressed the wish to see more countries ratify the Protocol before the next meeting of ICCP.

On behalf of the Bureau, the Chair of the ICCP, Ambassador Philemon Yang, thanked the Government of Cameroon for hosting this meeting of the Bureau. He congratulated Cameroon for having already ratified the Protocol and hoped also that more countries will follow this example so as to make it possible for the Protocol to enter into force as early as possible.

The Executive Secretary of the CBD, Mr. Hamdallah Zedan thanked also the Government of Cameroon for hosting the meeting of the Bureau of ICCP. He stressed the potential of the Protocol for solving some of the problems facing developing countries. He also stressed the importance of this meeting of the Bureau for preparing the third meeting of ICCP to be held in April 2002 in The Hague.

## **Agenda:**

The meeting adopted the agenda as annexed hereto (Annex 1).

## **Deliberations of the meeting:**

### 1. Status of preparations for the third meeting of ICCP (ICCP 3):

Under this item, the Bureau considered and discussed various issues pertaining to the overall organization and conduct of ICCP 3 meeting. It had before it the draft provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/1) and the draft annotated agenda (UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/1/Add.1) for ICCP 3 meeting. The Secretariat highlighted for the Bureau a number of issues on which guidance was required in order to finalize the documentation for ICCP 3 in a timely manner, and to envisage the overall organization and conduct of ICCP 3 meeting, including the issue of chairs of the working groups, should ICCP decide to establish two working groups. After some exchange of views, it was agreed that the Secretariat will finalize the annotated agenda for ICCP 3 including a proposal for the organization of work reflecting the consensus reached in the Bureau.

The Bureau was given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft pre-sessional documents for the ICCP3 meeting that were ready at the time of the meeting.

With regard to information documents to be made available to the third meeting of ICCP, the Bureau encouraged the Secretariat to contact relevant international organizations (eg: GEF, IPPC, UNIDO, OECD, Codex, Aarhus Convention, WTO) which may have information of relevance to the work of ICCP, in particular concerning activities undertaken by these organizations during the inter-sessional period, and the status of cooperation with the ICCP, to make available such information as information documents for ICCP 3 meeting.

The representative of The Netherlands, host country for the third meeting of ICCP 3, briefed the Bureau on the preparations and other arrangements that the host country is putting in place to ensure a successful participation in the meeting. Participants thanked the host country for the preparations under way so far and made some further observations on issues that needed further clarification by the host country (e.g.: hotel rates which should be commensurate with the applicable DSA, facilitating issuance of visas for participants, requirement of credit cards to guarantee hotel room booking), which the representative of the host country agreed to bring to the attention of the Government of The Netherlands to also take into account as they continue with the ongoing preparations to host COP 6 and ICCP 3.

### 2. Status of preparation for the inter-sessional meetings recommended by the second meeting of ICCP (ICCP 2):

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the progress of preparations and implementation of a number of inter-sessional meetings recommended by ICCP 2, namely:

a) Regional workshops of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH).

The Bureau heard a report on the regional workshop for the CEE region which was held from 5 to 9 February 2002 in Nitra, Slovakia. Two Members of the Bureau who attended part or all of the meeting in Nitra also gave a perspective on the outcomes of the meeting. It was noted that one country in that region, namely Bulgaria, the current chair of the CEE regional steering committee on biosafety, had advanced considerably in developing its national biosafety clearing-house, designed to be interoperable with the global BCH. The Bureau accepted a suggestion from the Secretariat to invite Bulgaria to make a presentation on this national BCH during ICCP 3 meeting.

The Bureau was also briefed about the outcome of the one-day training session on the BCH pilot phase organized by the Secretariat for the Africa region on 19 January 2002 in Nairobi as a supplement to the capacity building needs assessment meeting for the region which was held in February 2001. The Secretariat informed also the Bureau about the preparations for the upcoming meeting for the Asia/Pacific region which will be held in Beijing, China, from 4 to 8 March 2002.

The Bureau encouraged the Secretariat to endeavor to implement the recommendations coming out of all the regional meetings aimed at increasing the participation of countries in the pilot phase of the BCH, such as the preparation of prototypes/templates to assist countries in setting up their national BCH, the translation of the tool-kit for use of the BCH and the headings of the central portal of the global BCH from English into other UN languages.

The Secretariat was also asked to look into possibilities of initiating a programme of “training for the trainers” for the BCH, including using for example the fellowship programme approved by COP 5.

The Bureau discussed also the issue of the independent review of the pilot phase of the BCH requested by ICCP at its first and second meetings. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that a consultant has been hired to undertake this exercise with a view to completing it before COP 6 as requested by ICCP 2. The consultant will be attending the ongoing regional meetings on the BCH as a way of soliciting feedback from a sample of developing countries and countries with economies in transition attending these meetings.

The Bureau provided clarification on the roles of the different entities in the independent review process, e. g., the independent consultant, the Secretariat and the Bureau. It was noted that the role of the independent consultant is to undertake the independent review on the basis of the terms of reference stipulated by ICCP 1, using the indicators of achievement developed in the first note by the Bureau for the development and implementation of the pilot phase of the BCH. The Secretariat will make available the full report of the consultant to Governments together

with a summary to be prepared by the Secretariat. The Bureau, in line with the mandate given to it by ICCP to provide management oversight on the development and implementation of the pilot phase of the BCH, will prepare a note for consideration by ICCP 3 highlighting recommendations for further development of the BCH on the basis of the strengths and weaknesses that will have been identified in the report of the consultant in conducting the independent review. In preparing these recommendations, the Bureau will seek technical advice from the liaison group of technical experts who have been involved in the formulation of technical recommendations for the development and implementation of the pilot phase so far.

b) Technical experts meeting on article 18.2 (b) and 2(c) of the Protocol:

The Bureau was briefed about the preparations for this meeting. A number of issues pertaining to the organization and conduct of this meeting were considered after which the Secretariat was urged to proceed with the finalization of the arrangements for the meeting. The Bureau stressed the importance of the input from academia and other research bodies on the issues for this meeting.

c) Technical experts meeting on article 18.2 (a):

The Bureau was also briefed on a number of issues pertaining to the organization and conduct of this meeting. It was noted that although there was sufficient funding to make it possible to organize a meeting that could consist of up to 75 Government-nominated experts, so far the Secretariat had received nominations from less than 40 Governments. The Secretariat will issue a reminder urging more countries to make nominations in order to have a meeting that would be as open as possible given the importance of the issue to be considered by the meeting. The Bureau recommended that the participation of experts from non-governmental organizations, in particular from industry and others, should be encouraged.

3. Date and venue of the next meeting of the Bureau:

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Bureau will take place on Saturday 20 April 2002 in The Hague, at the venue of the third meeting of ICCP.

4. Any other matters:

Under this item, the Bureau considered the following matters:

a) Implementation of recommendation 2/12 of ICCP 2 (Cooperation between the Cartagena Protocol and the International Plant Protection Convention):

The Bureau was briefed on the ongoing discussions between the CBD Secretariat and the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) with a view to finalizing a memorandum of cooperation. The Bureau was also briefed on the upcoming meeting of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) of the IPPC which will consider, *inter*

*alia*, drafting of the standards on plant pest risk analysis for LMOs. The need to involve at least two experts from the ICCP in the drafting process under the ICPM was highlighted and the Secretariat was asked to contact the IPPC Secretariat and nominate François Pythoud and Eric Schoonejans as experts to represent the Biosafety Protocol process in the ICPM standards drafting process. Both were requested to provide the Secretariat with their CVs as soon as possible for their nomination. The Bureau member from France, having informed the Bureau of his likely presence at the next ICPM meeting, will be able to represent the Protocol at that meeting. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that a staff member of the Secretariat will also be attending that meeting.

b) Representation of the ICCP during discussions of items of relevance to the Protocol at COP 6:

It was agreed that if possible, the Chair of ICCP will be present at the first day of COP 6 to present the report of ICCP to the COP. If possible, it would also be desirable for the Chair to attend the high level segment of the COP that would take place on 18 April 2002. The issues expected to be discussed at the high level segment will include the input from the CBD to the WSSD process, including the ratification and entry into force of the Biosafety Protocol. In the event that the Chair cannot be available, the ICCP Bureau member from Switzerland who indicated that he will be attending COP 6, may represent the ICCP in discussions of relevance to the Protocol (e.g., programme budget, guidance to the financial mechanism, scenarios for convening the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MOP1), rules of procedures for meetings of the Conference of the Parties).

Regarding support for participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to COP 6 and ICCP 3, the Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that the Bureau of COP 5 had approved the support of two delegates, one for COP 6 and one for ICCP 3, subject to availability of financial resources. However, the Executive Secretary noted that to date, no contributions or pledges have as yet been received by the Secretariat to this effect. He used the opportunity to appeal to Bureau members representing donor countries to convey the message to their constituencies.

c) Logo for the Protocol:

The Bureau agreed to continue to consider the issue of a logo for the Protocol as soon as possible.

d) GEF-funded biosafety projects:

The Bureau considered the question of the GEF-funded national biosafety projects. Members expressed the view that the following issues will need to be considered by ICCP 3 and taken into account in formulating the recommendations, in order to ensure a successful contribution of those projects to the effective preparation of the recipient countries for entry into force and subsequent implementation of the Protocol, particularly with regard to Phase 2 of the project

(i.e. implementation of the national biosafety frameworks developed during the pilot project): coordination between various implementing agencies, role of the CBD Secretariat as a critical input in the coordination process, necessity of coordination meetings, the calendar of the next GEF Council meetings for ICCP recommendations to be conveyed to the Council.

e) Any other matter:

The Secretariat was requested to approach WTO with a view to seeking observer status under the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) committees, given the relevance of the work of these bodies to issues under the Protocol, particularly the question of standards to be considered under the Protocol.

----

Annex 1

**ICCP Bureau Meeting  
18-19 February 2002, Yaounde, Cameroon**

**Provisional agenda**

1. Status of preparations for the third meeting of ICCP (ICCP 3).
2. Status of preparations for the inter-sessional meetings recommended by the second meeting of ICCP (ICCP 2):
  - Regional meetings on capacity building for the Biosafety Clearing-House;
  - Technical experts meeting on article 18. 2 (b) and 18. 2 (c);
  - Technical experts meeting on article 18.2 (a).
3. Date and venue for the next ICCP Bureau meeting.
4. Any other matters.