

**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**Distr.
GENERALUNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/11
11 May 2007

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON
REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONVENTION**

Second meeting

UNESCO, Paris, 9-13 July 2007

**UN REFORM PROCESSES ON INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND
SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE AND OTHER UN INITIATIVES RELEVANT TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY***Note by the Executive Secretary***I. INTRODUCTION**

1. A number of ongoing discussions in the United Nations system concerning international environmental governance and UN reform are relevant to the Convention. These discussions are briefly outlined in this note (Section II) and some considerations of relevance to the Convention are noted (Section III).

II. RELEVANT INITIATIVES

2. Issues related to international environmental governance have been addressed at several sessions of the UN General Assembly (resolutions: 53/187, 53/242, 56/193, 57/251, 59/226, 60/189) as well as at meetings of the UNEP Governing Council, which, since 2000, has been held in conjunction with the Global Ministerial Environment Forum. Issues addressed at these meetings have included:

(a) the status and funding of UNEP, and the issue of universal membership for the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum;

(b) the establishment of an Environmental Management Group and the role of UNEP in the UN Development Group, and

(c) coordination among the multilateral environmental agencies.

3. The 7th session of the UNEP Governing Council, in resolution VII/1, adopted the report of the open-ended intergovernmental group of ministers and their representatives on international environmental governance which made a number of recommendations on these matters, and on capacity building,

technology transfer and country-level coordination of the environmental pillar of sustainable development.

4. To address the latter point, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building was developed and adopted at the 23rd Session of the Governing Council in 2006. A comprehensive paper on implementation of the Plan was made to the 24th session of the Governing Council and is available as UNEP/GC/24/3/Add.1.

5. The General Assembly has encouraged the parties to, and the secretariats of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD, and other international instruments related to environment and sustainable development, as well as relevant organizations, especially the United Nations Environment Programme, including, as appropriate, the involvement of the environmental management group, to continue their work for enhancing complementarities among them with full respect for the status of the secretariats of the conventions and the autonomous decision-making prerogatives of the conferences of the parties to the conventions concerned, and to strengthen cooperation with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of those conventions at the international, regional and national levels and to report thereon to their respective conferences of the parties; (UNGA resolution 55/198, para 3).

6. Further, Heads of State and Government, at the 2005 Summit session of the General Assembly supported stronger system-wide coherence, and, recognizing the need for more efficient environmental activities in the UN system, with enhanced coordination, improved policy advice and guidance, strengthened scientific knowledge, assessment and cooperation, better treaty compliance, while respecting the legal autonomy of the treaties, as well as better integration of environmental activities in the broader sustainable development framework at the operational level, including through capacity-building, agreed to explore the possibility of a more coherent institutional framework to address this need, including a more integrated structure, building on existing institutions, and internationally agreed instruments, as well as the treaty bodies and the specialized agencies (UNGA Summit Outcome Document, paragraph 169).

7. The Chair of the 61st Session of the General Assembly, pursuant to the commitment contained in the Outcome Document, established, in January 2006, informal consultations on international environmental governance, co-chaired by Ambassador Enrique Berruga of Mexico and Ambassador Peter Maurer of Switzerland. Background documents for these consultations are available at the following website:

<http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/environmentalgovernance>

8. In addition to the above discussions on international environmental governance, the Secretary-General commissioned a High-Level Panel to on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and the Environment. The Panel's report "Delivering as One" was issued in November 2006. The following are among its recommendations:

(a) the establishment of One UN at country level, with one leader, one programme, one budget and, where appropriate, one office;

(b) that international environmental governance should be strengthened and made more coherent in order to improve effectiveness and targeted action of environmental activities in the UN system.

9. In response to the recommendations for a "One UN" approach to programming at country-level, UNDP is piloting the approach with eight pilot countries: Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay, and Vietnam. Further information is available at: <http://www.undg.org/?P=7>.

III. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CONVENTION

10. *Synergies and coordination.* While the consultations on international environmental governance are ongoing, there is likely to be a call for further coordination among multilateral environmental agreements and between these and UN agencies and organizations. This presents opportunities for the Convention in the areas of both promoting synergy and policy coherence and in leveraging additional support for implementation of the Convention.

11. *Mainstreaming of biodiversity.* Enhanced integration of environment and development provides further opportunities to promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity concerns in into their national strategies, plans and programmes. In particular, the “One UN” pilot programmes provide an opportunity to promote the integration of biodiversity into broader development policies. All eight of the “One UN” Pilot countries have completed their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity has written to the Ministers of the Environment of all eight countries encouraging them to integrate the priorities of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) into the “One UN” programmes.