



**CONVENTION ON  
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BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE  
OF THE PARTIES  
Geneva, 22 January 2008

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY HELD IN GENEVA  
ON SUNDAY, 20 JANUARY 2008**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The fifth meeting of the COP-8 Bureau was held on 20 January 2008 at the International Environment House in Geneva. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Fernando Coimbra of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, representing the President of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The following Bureau members attended the meeting:

Mr. Deon Stewart (Bahamas)  
Mr. Karma Nyedrup (Bhutan)  
Mrs. Mary Fosi Mbantenkhu (Cameroon)  
Mr. Robert McLean (Canada)  
Mr. Fernando Perez Egert (Chile)  
Ms. Andrea Stefan (Croatia)  
Mr. Ositadinma Anaedu (Nigeria)  
Mr. Jose Luis Herranz (Spain)  
Dr. Volodymyr Domashlinets (Ukraine)  
Mr. Abdul Hakim Aulayah (Yemen)

2. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Jochen Flasbarth of Germany (as host of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties), Mr. Fernando Casas and Mr. Timothy Hodges, Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing, as well as the Executive Secretary of the Convention, Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif.

**ITEM 1            OPENING OF THE MEETING**

3. The meeting was opened by Mr. Coimbra on behalf of the President of the Conference of the Parties, Her Excellency Ms. Marina Silva, Minister of Environment of Brazil. The Chair welcomed Bureau members and underlined the fact that the work facing the parties in the week ahead was of crucial importance to ensuring a productive outcome at COP 9. He expressed the hope on the part of the Presidency that the sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing would yield successful results, and underlined the fact that

the Presidency believes that the Bureau is well-placed to help make this a reality.

4. The Executive Secretary welcomed the Bureau members and wished members a happy and productive new year. He conveyed thanks to the outstanding contributions that have been made by all the regions in acting on COP 8 decisions.

## **ITEM 2            ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

5. The Bureau adopted the following agenda as proposed by the Executive Secretary, following consultation with the Presidency:

1.        Opening of the meeting.
2.        Adoption of the agenda.
3.        Sixth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing.
4.        Preparations for the second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas.
5.        Preparations for and organizational matters relating to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including its high level segment.
6.        Report on the activities of the Secretariat in 2007.
7.        Other matters.
8.        Closure of the meeting.

## **ITEM 3            SIXTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING**

6. Officers: It was agreed that, consistent with the rules of procedure and practice, the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties would serve as the Bureau of the sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. As decided at the previous meeting of the Bureau, Ms. Mary Fosi Mbantenkhu of Cameroon agreed to act as Rapporteur for the meeting.

7. The Co-Chairs of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing were invited to brief the Bureau with respect to the organisation of work proposed. They briefly informed the Bureau that, since the fifth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing, they had worked closely but struggled to move the process forward due to a lack of time and the resources required to meet with all governments and stakeholders in the intervening period since October 2007. They reported that in Nairobi in December 2007 they had had the opportunity to meet the African Group, the Permanent Representative Committee of UNEP, as well as Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP. As a result of this regional consultation, it was the view of the Co-Chairs that the African Group was well-prepared to engage in discussion during the sixth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. The Co-Chairs appealed to the Bureau to assist in raising the profile with respect to the fact that negotiations on access and benefit-sharing have relevance to other items on the agenda of the ninth Conference of the Parties.

8. Following a discussion on the organisation of work, the Bureau endorsed the organisation of work proposed by the Co-Chairs, with the caveat that, given the importance of regional and inter-regional consultations for the process, the Co-chairs would ensure that the organisation of work would seek to allow for regional and inter-regional consultations as requested, reserve as much time in plenary as possible, and ensure that the various issues on the agenda would not be taken up in tandem.. The Chair suggested that the Bureau should therefore, recommend the adoption of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing as proposed. It was so decided.

9. In closing discussion on this agenda item, the Chair informed the Bureau that the Minister of Environment of Brazil had requested that the President of COP 8 read a statement during the opening session of the sixth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. This was welcomed by the Bureau.

#### **ITEM 4            PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND MEETING OF THE *AD HOC* OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON PROTECTED AREAS**

10. Under this item, the Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that at the margins of the second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas, a training workshop with the Friends of POWPA, was organized on 10 February, and that a second training workshop in partnership with FAO and the consortium of scientific institutions would also take place before SBSTTA 13.

11. The Executive Secretary then informed the Bureau that a number of keynote speakers had confirmed their participation in the meeting. These include the President of Micronesia, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico, the Minister of Environment of Ecuador, the Minister of the Environment, Water, Forests and Tourism of Madagascar, and the Minister of Environment of Italy. The Chair indicated the interest on the part of the Presidency of COP 8 to make a keynote presentation highlighting the increase in protected areas in Brazil. The Bureau welcomed the offer of Brazil and was of the view that the key note presentations should not exceed 15 minutes and should aim at exchanging best practices and lessons learned. General statements should therefore be avoided.

12. Germany, on behalf of the COP9 Presidency, informed the Bureau of its “Web of life” Initiative being spearheaded by the German Minister of Environment in cooperation with other partners with a view of providing financial support to countries aiming at enhancing their protected areas efforts. Specifically, Germany shall suggest that Parties where potential protected areas had been identified, and where a demonstrable level of national commitment was evident, would be invited to submit proposals outlining the funding and analysis required establishing the protected area. This initiative, the ‘Web of Life’, would be launched at the high level segment of COP9 and a presentation will be made at a side event during the second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas.

13. The Executive Secretary very much welcomed this initiative and took the opportunity to underline how successful the Programme of Work for Protected Areas (POWPA) has been. In particular, he drew the attention of the Bureau to the Friends of POWPA initiative through which over US \$700,000 had been mobilized through a partnership including not only government representatives such as Canada and Germany but also NGOs and international organizations. As a result in less than one year 8 regional workshops have been organized and over 500 practitioners had been trained. He further indicated that a brochure highlighting the benefits of protected areas, which includes substantive input from all the Friends of POWPA, has been prepared by the

Secretariat and will be launched in Rome. The Executive Secretary concluded that the experience of the Friends of POWPA should serve as a useful example to be emulated for the implementation of the other programme of work of the convention.

**ITEM 5            PREPARATIONS FOR AND ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS  
RELATING TO THE NINTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
PARTIES, INCLUDING ITS HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT.**

14. The representative of Germany briefed the Bureau on the preparations for the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Bureau was advised that preparations were on track and that a second on-site mission involving the Secretariat would be taking place on the back of the sixth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing.

15. With regard to the High Level Segment, the representative of Germany advised the Bureau that letters of invitation by the Chancellor will be addressed in the near future to the President of Brazil in its capacity as the host of COP8, the Prime Minister of Japan as the Chair of the G8, the Prime Minister of Canada as the host of the secretariat and the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda as the representative of the country chairing the group of 77 and China as well as to the United Nations Secretary General. A high-level luncheon would be hosted on 28 May by the Chancellor of Germany, following which the high level participants would be briefed by the chairs of the working groups and ministers wishing to make statements will be able to do so. The representative of Germany further informed the Bureau a special event will be organized for parties and other stakeholders wishing to make commitments for the implementation phase of the Convention which will include statements by the Mayors, the Youth and the Business community. The HLS would be closed by a reception offered by the President of Germany. The representative of Germany further informed the Bureau that it is the intention of his Government to organize a Green COP and all the environmental impact of the meeting will be offset which will include travel of delegates attending the meeting. A detailed organization of work of the high level segment will be soon available.

16. In response to a question about Informal Dialogue planned for the heads of the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the heads of the Rio Conventions, the Executive Secretary explained that it will be the first time that the convention will be meeting at the headquarters of the secretariat of the two other Rio Convention and COP9 provides therefore a useful opportunity for parties to engage into an informal dialogue with their respective Executive Secretaries. A similar dialogue is being suggested with the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions and the other heads of agencies.

17. In response to a question regarding the nomination of Co-Chairs, the Executive Secretary indicated that the sooner co-chairs were identified, the better in order that the Secretariat could initiate contact in order to work closely with them in the lead up to the COP. The bureau agreed that this was an important to designate the two chairs of the working groups in advance and that skilled individuals should be identified, bearing in mind that regional and gender balance must be maintained.

18. The Executive Secretary brought to the attention of the Bureau the draft agendas for the Regional Preparatory Meetings that will be held on 17 and 18 May. He expressed thanks to the Government of Spain providing the funding necessary to hold the Regional Preparatory Meetings. The issue of the need for translation, even informal, to be available during the Regional Preparatory Meetings was raised by the Chair as an important point for consideration. The Bureau endorsed the suggested draft agendas for the regional preparatory meetings.

19. The representative of the Government of Croatia reminded the Bureau of the EU proposal to establish a contact group on financial resources. The bureau agreed to discuss the issue further after regional consultations.

#### **ITEM 6           REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT IN 2007**

20. The Executive Secretary introduced the report on Activities of the Secretariat in 2007, which provided detailed information to Parties on the implementation of the work programme of the Secretariat arising from COP8 decisions. He also informed the Bureau that the “2007 Year in Review” would be launched in Rome so as to reach as broad an audience as possible. He further informed the Bureau that, further to a mission he had just concluded, Brunei Darussalam has decided to accede to the Convention on Biological Diversity. This news was very much welcomed by the Bureau, with the Chair expressing the hope that such movement towards universal membership would continue.

21. Following a statement made by the representative of Nigeria, the Bureau expressed its appreciation to the Executive Secretary and his team for the progress achieved and measures taken to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the secretariat. The representative of Nigeria stated that the activities conducted and results achieved in 2007 were evidence of the fact that the Secretariat had been able to raise confidence amongst the donor community, witnessed by the increase in the flow of resources. He commended the Government of Spain for the support they have been, and continue to, provide and expressed thanks to the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat for their efforts.

#### **ITEM 7           OTHER MATTERS**

22. Under this agenda item, the Executive Secretary advised members that a Gender Plan of Action for the CBD was in the process of being finalised by the SCBD for submission to COP 9. This initiative was welcomed by the Bureau. The Gender Focal Point of the SCBD and a representative from the IUCN were then invited to make a brief presentation to the Bureau on the results of the Workshop to develop a Gender Plan of Action, funded by the Government of the Netherlands and organised in cooperation with the IUCN, which had been hosted just prior to the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. With the caveat that a few clarifications were requested, Bureau members commended and thanked the SCBD for taking this initiative, and expressed their interest in reviewing the final Plan of Action prior to submission to the COP.

23. The representative of the Government of Germany took the opportunity to inform the Bureau that the 400 concrete targets contained in its recently launched National Biodiversity Strategy had all been gender-proofed.

#### **ITEM 8           CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

20. The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 17:45.

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