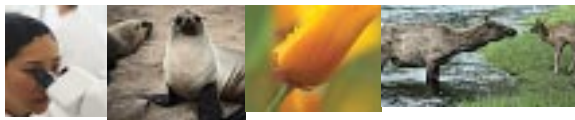




CBD

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CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY TO ENTER INTO FORCE ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2003

The process of entry into force is in its final stage. Ratification on June 13, 2003 by Palau triggered the countdown to the entry into force, which will happen on 11 September 2003.

The Protocol, adopted by the member governments of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on 29 January 2000 after more than five years of negotiation, aims at ensuring adequate safety in the transboundary movement and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on biological diversity and human health.

The Protocol requires countries that have ratified the Protocol to designate one national focal point and one or more competent national authorities no later than the date of entry into force of the Protocol for that Party and to communicate the names and

addresses to the Secretariat. Likewise, each country must communicate details of its point of contact for receiving notifications concerning any occurrence that may lead to unintentional transboundary movement of an LMO likely to have significant adverse effects on biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health in such States.

At the date of entry into force, a number of provisions will take effect immediately:

- Parties shipping LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment will have to give prior notification of the first shipment to an importing country that is a Party to the Protocol under what is referred to as the "Advance Informed Agreement" procedure. Sufficient information will have to be provided to enable importing countries make informed decisions.

(Continued on page 2)

FEATURE ARTICLE

Biodiversity at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and follow-up within the convention process

INTRODUCTION

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg from 26 August – 4 September 2002, was of great significance for the Convention on Biological Diversity. It acknowledged at the highest political level the validity of the Convention as a central tool in efforts to achieve the commitments to action made in Johannesburg and at previous international fora.

The Secretary-General's WEHAB (Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity) initiative and the intergovernmental negotiating process raised the profile of biodiversity and reinforced the conceptual link between the objectives of the Convention and the attainment of sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

The Plan of Implementation of the WSSD incorporated major elements of the decisions taken at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP-6) with respect to biodiversity.¹ In particular, the WSSD reaffirmed that the Convention on Biological Diversity is the key instrument for the conservation and sustainable use

of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, and underlined the need for new and additional financial and technical resources to facilitate its effective implementation. It also endorsed the commitment of Parties at the sixth meeting to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of life on Earth.

Biodiversity in The WSSD Plan of Implementation

Overview

That the WSSD Plan of Implementation incorporates major elements of the decisions taken at COP-6 with respect to biodiversity is partly due to the fact that COP 6 adopted a very clear message to WSSD, which

¹ See United Nations, *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002*, (A/CONE.199/20), United Nations, New York, 2002, resolution 2, annex, and resolution 1, annex.

(Continued on page 3)



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first issue of 2003.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development of September 2002 was of such significance for the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) that we have chosen to highlight its importance in the feature article of this issue: *Biodiversity at the World Summit on Sustainable Development*.

As we go to press, we have learnt of the ratification of the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol by the 50th State, Palau on June 13. As a result the threshold of ratifications required for entry into force has been met and the Protocol will have binding legal effect as of September 11. In our next issue, we will discuss the Protocol more fully.

Of particular importance during the first months of this year was the organization of SBSTTA-8 and MYPOW in March 2003. The meetings were held from March 10 to 14 and March 17 to 20 respectively.

SBSTTA continues to evolve as the authority of scientific, technical and technological advice in the UN system, demonstrating the important role it plays in implementing CBD objectives. One of the main results of SBSTTA-8, described in some detail in this Issue, was the adoption of a work programme on mountain biodiversity, the main theme of the meeting. The overall objective of the work programme is to reduce significantly the loss of mountain biological diversity.

The Open-ended Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Multi-year Programme of work (MYPOW) up to 2010 considered the outcome of the WSSD as it related to the Convention. The meeting recommended that the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting adopt the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties until 2010. Other adoptions of recommendations that generated significant attention included:

- the consideration by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Protected Areas of hotspots, ecological networks and corridors
- the recommendation to the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit to consider the process, nature, scope, elements and modalities of an international regime on access and benefit-sharing
- the requests to the Executive Secretary to report to the CSD on the contribution of the Convention to the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals with a particular focus on poverty eradication, and to develop a global partnership on biodiversity with other organizations and conventions in order to enhance synergies and avoid duplication of efforts

The meeting also invited Parties and Governments to promote technology transfer in accordance with the outcome of WSSD.

Other meetings organized by the Secretariat between January and March 2003 are the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group meeting on the potential impacts of genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) on smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities and farmers' rights, and the Expert Group meeting on indicators of biological diversity.

The past year has also seen some important meetings whose outcomes are described in the following pages. Further details are to be found on the CBD Web site at www.biodiv.org

The next issue of CBD News will report on **2010 – The Global Biodiversity Challenge** convened by the CBD and held in London, UK May 21 to 23. This meeting brought together some 150 experts in the work of the Convention to specifically focus on articulating a framework for action to address the

internationally agreed target of significantly reducing the current rates of biodiversity loss by the year 2010.

The meeting dates coincided with **The 2003 International Day for Biological Diversity** (22 May) whose theme was *Biodiversity and poverty alleviation* – challenges for sustainable development. In the words of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan: "Biological diversity is essential for human existence and has a crucial role to play in sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. Biodiversity provides millions of people with livelihoods, helps to ensure food security, and is a rich source of both traditional medicines and modern pharmaceuticals."

International Biological Diversity Day (IBD) is an opportunity for all the stakeholders to build public awareness of the value of biodiversity and its essential role in poverty alleviation and the achievement of sustainable development. The CBD salutes the creative participation of the Parties around the world in this celebration of the world's efforts to conserve biodiversity. News of these events is posted on the Web site. Meanwhile, in Montreal, the Secretariat implemented a pilot project in near-by schools to create awareness of biodiversity and the work of the CBD. We will report on this experience in our next Issue and build on it with our partners to create a global outreach programme for young people.

As ever I am extremely grateful to people who have written a report or feature for this newsletter. And, once again, I would like to invite you to submit any articles, meeting reports, comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter to the Secretariat.

Enjoy your reading!

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary

Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to enter into force on 11 September 2003 (Continued)

- Parties to the Protocol will also be required to use the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) to fulfill a number of specific obligations. The BCH is a largely Internet-based facility established under the Protocol to ease communications and exchange of information between the Parties.
- Parties will need to ensure that each transboundary movement is accompanied by appropriate documentation.
- A Party that approves for domestic use and marketing LMOs intended for direct use as food, feed or processing that may be exported

will be required to communicate this decision and details about the LMO to the world community via the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Since the adoption of the Protocol, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, an interim body established by the Conference of the Parties, has undertaken the preparations necessary for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP/MOP1). This meeting will take place 23-27 February, 2004 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, back-to-back with COP7.

"The first meeting of Parties will be an historic event that will provide a foundation for the future of the Protocol. I urge all countries that have not yet done so to ratify the Protocol as soon as possible in order to participate as full partners in the decision-making at the first meeting of Parties which will shape the future of the Protocol"

Hamdallah Zedan
CBD Executive Secretary



Biodiversity at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and follow-up within the convention process

(Continued)

was transmitted to both PrepCom IV and to the WSSD. This message was contained in both The Hague Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and decision VI/21 entitled "Annex to The Hague Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity." Since most of the elements of the Plan simply incorporate relevant COP-6 decisions, programmed activities under the Convention constitute important elements of the follow-up to WSSD. In several instances, however, it will be necessary to go beyond programmed activities. In particular Parties, Governments and international organizations need to develop and implement partnership initiatives in key areas.

The Plan addresses a number of thematic and cross-cutting issues within the Convention process, including forest biological diversity; marine and coastal biodiversity; access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing; the protection of the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities; enhancing synergies with relevant multilateral agreements and international trade agreements; the integration of the objectives of the Convention into global, regional and national programmes and policies; and the promotion of concrete international support and partnership for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

The WSSD also reinforces some of the decisions of the COP, notably with regard to financial resources, capacity-building, scientific and technical cooperation, and the creation of synergies and mutual supportiveness with other international agreements, particularly trade-related agreements.

I. NEW ISSUES

Negotiation of an international regime

One significant outcome of the WSSD which was not contemplated by COP-6 is contained in paragraph 44(o) of the Plan which provides for negotiation "within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, bearing in mind the Bonn Guidelines, an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources." Important issues such as the meaning of the term "international regime", the scope of such a regime and a mandate for its negotiation will have to be determined by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

The Plan at the same time in paragraph 44(n) emphasizes the need for continued development and implementation of the Bonn Guidelines.

Hotspots, Ecological Networks and Corridors

In addition, in paragraph 44(g) the Plan requires actions to "promote and support initiatives for hot spot areas and other areas essential for biodiversity and promote the development of national and ecological networks and corridors." Although the issues of hot

spots, networks and corridors are addressed within the Convention process in some of the thematic programmes of work (e.g. dry and sub-humid lands and forest biological diversity), and in cross-cutting issues such as impact assessment and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, the approach contemplated by the WSSD is more holistic. In any case, the issue of ecological networks and corridors will still have to be addressed by the Convention process in a broader and more cross-cutting manner.

Regional and sub-regional perspectives

The transboundary nature of most sustainable development issues has dictated that the international community pays increasing attention to regional and sub-regional implementation. Actions taken at the regional and sub-regional level provide a bridge between national realities and global priorities, while also addressing common areas of concern and shared interests arising from geographic, social and economic specificities. The Plan of Implementation has consequently not only addressed issues specific to certain regions but also underlined the need for regional and sub-regional implementation. The regions and sub-regions addressed in the Plan of Implementation are Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia, and the Economic Commission for Europe region. Part VIII of the Plan deals with sustainable development in Africa. Several paragraphs in this section deal with issues relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity. In particular, paragraph 70(e) calls for measures to support the conservation of Africa's biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. Other issues addressed include financial and technical support for sustainable forest management [paragraph 62 (n)]; development of projects, programmes and partnerships and resource mobilization for the effective implementation of the outcome of the African Process for the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment [paragraph 62 (i)]; and the establishment and support of national and cross-border conservation areas to promote ecosystem conservation according to the ecosystem approach, and to promote sustainable tourism [paragraph 70 (e)].

II. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Part X of the Plan of Implementation deals with issues relating to the means of implementation of Agenda 21 and the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as the WSSD Plan of Implementation. The issues covered include finance, trade, technology transfer, capacity building, and education. Paragraph 81 emphasizes that the internationally-agreed development goals "require significant increases in the flow of financial resources as elaborated in the Monterrey Consensus, including

through new and additional financial resources, in particular to developing countries, to support the implementation of national policies and programmes developed by them, improved trade opportunities, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies on a concessional or preferential basis, as mutually agreed, education and awareness raising, capacity building and information for decision-making and scientific capabilities within the time frame required to meet these goals and initiatives."

III. FOLLOW-UP TO WSSD WITHIN THE CONVENTION PROCESS

Existing programmed activities under the Convention constitute important elements of the follow-up to the World Summit. In several instances, however, it will be necessary to go beyond programmed activities. The COP at its 7th meeting in February 2004 will need to adopt appropriate decisions regarding follow-up to WSSD. The outcome of the Open-ended Inter-sessional Meeting on the Multi-year Programme of Work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010, which took place in Montreal from 17-20 March 2003, has already provided a basis for further work by the seventh meeting on this issue.

This meeting considered the outcome of the WSSD as it relates to the Convention process and made a number of recommendations regarding follow-up actions. In general, these actions are to be pursued within the framework of the Strategic Plan of the Convention and the Multi-year Programme of Work of the COP up to 2010. Within the overall framework of the proposed Multi-year Programme of Work, the meeting recommended that when undertaking in-depth reviews of the existing thematic and cross-cutting issues, items identified as priorities by the WSSD, such as poverty alleviation, human health, sustainable communities and livelihoods, and hotspots, ecological networks and corridors, should be considered in relation to the existing programmes of work. In this regard, the issue of island biodiversity has been incorporated as an item for in-depth review at the eighth meeting of the COP. In addition, the meeting recommended that the COP identify, for each upcoming meeting, appropriate ways, including within the Ministerial Segment, to address, issues of overarching importance, particularly the relevant socio-economic issues identified by the WSSD.

The proposed multi-year programme of work approved by the Inter-Sessional Meeting would considerably streamline and focus the work of the Conference of the Parties. With the exception of island biodiversity, no new issues would be taken up for in-depth consideration. Instead, the focus would be:

First, on reviewing ongoing programmes of work to assess progress and to introduce the necessary adjustments and refinements as appropriate; and

(Continued on page 4)



Biodiversity at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and follow-up within the convention process (Continued)

Second, on considering progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including the achievement of the 2010 target, and in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. In order to support implementation, at each of its meetings the COP would seek ways of refining mechanisms to support implementation, such as the financial mechanism, the clearing-house mechanism, and capacity-building activities.

If approved by the Conference of the Parties, this multi-year programme of work would mark the final stage in the transition from policy-making to implementation that has been evident in recent meetings of the COP.

Several of the recommendations adopted by the Inter-Sessional Meeting are addressed to the Convention's subsidiary bodies which have been requested to further review them and provide advice on appropriate follow-up actions to the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting. The following paragraphs provide a brief summary of the specific recommendations of the meeting on some of the key issues.

A. Hotspots, ecological networks and corridors

The Meeting recommended that this issue be considered by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Protected Areas, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its ninth meeting and the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting in the context of the work on protected areas, taking into account other relevant thematic programmes and cross-cutting issues, in the context of national strategies and action plans, and focusing on biodiversity loss.

B. International regime on access and benefit-sharing

The meeting underlined the need to incorporate this decision of the WSSD into the Convention process. It recommended that the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing should consider the process, nature, scope, elements and modalities

of an international regime and provide advice to the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting on how it may wish to address the issue.

C. Contribution of the Convention to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to the CSD process

The Meeting recognized the importance of close cooperation with the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and requested the Executive Secretary to strengthen such cooperation and to report to the CSD on progress made in the implementation of the Convention, with a particular focus on the contribution of the objectives of the Convention to poverty eradication. It also requested that, in preparation for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau, should:

- (a) Prepare a report on the relevance of the Millennium Development Goals for the programme of work under the Convention and explore and articulate in each of the programmes of work the links between biodiversity and the Millennium Development Goals in order to identify and highlight ways that biodiversity conservation and sustainable use can facilitate their achievement; and
- (b) Identify modalities to ensure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is consistent with the objectives of the Convention.

D. Global partnership on biodiversity

Partnerships and cooperation with relevant international agreements and processes are among the key themes in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. Cooperation with other organizations, conventions and processes has been an integral part of activities since the Convention was adopted. The programmes of work under the Convention have been developed and are

being implemented in close cooperation with a wide range of partners, and cooperation with other institutions is a standing item on the agenda for meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The Open-ended Inter-Sessional Meeting recommended that the COP, at its seventh meeting, request the Executive Secretary to develop a global partnership on biodiversity comprising the major biodiversity-related organizations, with the Secretariat of the Convention facilitating the process in order to enhance synergies, avoid duplication of efforts and improve implementation of biodiversity-related agreements.

E. Technology transfer & cooperation

The meeting recalled paragraphs 105 and 106 of the WSSD Plan of Implementation which address the issue of technology transfer and cooperation and invite Parties and Governments to promote technology transfer in the context of the Convention through Type 2 partnerships, in accordance with the outcome of WSSD.

IV. FUTURE ORIENTATION OF THE CONVENTION PROCESS

The outcomes of the Inter-Sessional Meeting provide a useful insight into the current thinking of the Parties to the Convention on the direction that the Convention process should take in the years ahead.

On the one hand, the focus will be on implementation of ongoing work programmes, as endorsed by the World Summit, to ensure the achievement of the 2010 target. Implementation will be guided by the Strategic Plan, making use of quantifiable targets to ensure that everything is on track and making adjustments and refinements as necessary. Central to all these efforts will be continued and strengthened cooperation with all partners. The Convention is a wide-ranging instrument that touches on all types of physical environments and virtually all sectors of human activity. It cannot be implemented in isolation. ■

SBSTTA 8 - FOCUS ON MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY

Approximately 460 participants representing 121 governments, as well as UN agencies, inter-governmental, non-governmental, indigenous and academic organizations attended the eighth session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 8) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) from 10-14 March 2003, in Montreal, Canada. The main theme of the meeting was Mountain Biodiversity.

Covering almost one quarter of the Earth's land surface and hosting about 12% of its population, mountain areas are a unique environment in their own right, and many of the existing thematic programmes under the Convention such as forests, inland waters, dry and sub-humid lands and

agriculture are intertwined with mountain biological diversity

A keynote presentation on mountain biodiversity was delivered by Dr. Christian Körner, Chair of the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment, who stressed that the safety of one-sixth of the world's human population is dependent on mountain ecosystems. He further noted that mountains are the last wilderness areas, pointing out that hot spots in these ecosystems contain approximately one-third of all existing plant species. Dr. Körner added that the concept of mountain should include altitude and latitude, and explained the definitions of lowlands, montane, alpine and nival areas.

The meeting adopted seven recommendations on: mountain biodiversity, - the main theme of the meeting -; inland waters; marine and coastal biodiversity; dry and sub-humid lands; biodiversity and tourism development; SBSTTA operations and the multi-year programme of work. The recommendations will be forwarded to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 7) to be held in April 2004, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Before the ninth meeting of SBSTTA, the programme of work on mountain biodiversity that was adopted by this meeting, will be reviewed in depth, together with its elements, goals, and suggested activities adopted. Its main characteristic





is that it will be highly specific to mountain ecosystems and propose targeted actions for the conservation and sustainable use of mountain ecosystems and their associated diversity. Its overall goal is the significant reduction of mountain biological diversity loss by 2010 at global, regional and national levels through the implementation of the three main objectives of the CBD.

SBSTTA 8 also reviewed the implementation of the programme of work on the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems; considering, in particular: a summary of the status, trends and threats to, inland water biodiversity; elements for the further elaboration and refinement of the programme of work; a work plan for developing methods and techniques for the valuation of goods and services of inland water ecosystems, incentives and policy reform and understanding of the ecosystem function; the provision of scientific advice and further guidance to assist in the national elaboration of Annex I to the Convention (as pertaining to inland water biodiversity); and methods and regional guidelines for the rapid assessment of inland water biodiversity for all types of inland water ecosystems.

The draft recommendations and the revised programme of work were adopted with a few amendments. The methods and regional guidelines for the rapid assessment of inland water biodiversity were adopted without change.

The meeting considered the review of the implementation of the programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity and recommended the elaboration of a revised programme of work, which should include elements of the previous programme of work, but also consider new priorities, such as those arising from WSSD. The results of the work of two marine-related ad hoc technical expert groups, those on marine and coastal protected areas and mariculture, will be used in elaborating components of the programme of work.

The meeting also considered a joint study of the Secretariat of the CBD and the United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) on the relationship between the CBD and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of the deep.

SBSTTA 8 adopted a proposal for the further refinement of the programme of work on dry and sub-humid lands and asked for close collaboration with the Secretariats of the other Rio Conventions and other biodiversity-related conventions in implementing this programme of work.

SBSTTA 8 also endorsed the revised text on sustainable tourism in vulnerable ecosystems, with few amendments, and forwarded a series of recommendations to the COP proposing the adoption of the guidelines and advising on future work to be undertaken on the issue of biological diversity and tourism.

SBSTTA 8 participants also had the opportunity to meet with poster presenters and to learn from case studies on mountain biological diversity, marine and coastal and inland waters ecosystems in various parts of the world.

Documents pertaining to SBSTTA 8 are available on the CBD Web site at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?lg=0&wg=sbstta-08>



INSIDE THE SECRETARIAT

2010 - The Global Biodiversity Challenge (21 to 23 May 2003, London, UK)

The Secretariat in partnership with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-WCMC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and financial support from the Government of the Netherlands, convened an international meeting on "2010 - The Global Biodiversity Challenge" held in London, UK from 21 to 23 May 2003. This meeting coincided with the International Day for Biological Diversity, on 22 May.

The meeting is a direct response to *decision VI/26* adopted at the 6th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in April 2002 whereby the Conference of the Parties adopted the Strategic Plan for the Convention, which commits Parties to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level. This target was endorsed by the Hague Ministerial Declaration of 14 April 2002 and by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in its Plan of Implementation.

This meeting is also part of the ongoing efforts of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other partners that specifically focus on integrating biodiversity issues in initiatives aimed at meeting the Millennium Development Goals. These initiatives acknowledge the Convention on Biological Diversity as an appropriate framework for further elaboration of the priority actions required to enhance the issue of integration of biodiversity in international and local efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs). The London meeting is therefore seen as an appropriate mechanism for placing biodiversity issues high on the global agenda for addressing the MDGs and thus opportunities to build on the momentum of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The outcomes of the meeting and the associated follow-up work are expected to ensure wider recognition of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services in poverty alleviation in the context of sustainable development.

The outcome(s) of the meeting will be submitted for the consideration of the ninth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity in November 2003 and the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties in April 2004. It is anticipated that the outcome(s) of the meeting will also be considered by the governing bodies of a range of other international biodiversity-related conventions and programmes.

For further information, please refer to CBD Web site: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=GBC-01>

CHM Capacity Building Workshop held in Africa

(31 March - 2 April, 2003, Nairobi, Kenya)

An Africa Regional Workshop on the Clearing-house Mechanism (CHM) was held to assist Parties to make more effective use of national CHMs to promote technical and scientific cooperation and to facilitate their participation in the programme areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention.

Organized over a period of three days and attended by 36 CHM national focal points, three United Nations specialized agencies, one donor Party,

two intergovernmental organizations and two international thematic focal points, the meeting broached a number of issues relevant to the new focus of the Clearing-house Mechanism, including:

- Access to and use of new information technologies in support of work to fulfill obligations under the Convention and to participate fully in the programme areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention;
- The role of international thematic focal points, the relevancy of their work programmes to national CHMs, and the possibility of joint collaborative initiatives at the national, sub-regional and regional levels;
- Issues pertaining to the building of capacity and the sustainability of technical infrastructure;
- The establishment of a regional African CHM to foster cooperation and sharing of expertise and resources.

Presentations by inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations contributed greatly to the overall objectives of the meeting, particularly presentations by those organizations with existing work programmes with the Secretariat. Presentations by international thematic focal points, BirdLife International and the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), offered participants the opportunity to discuss the possibility of implementing joint programmes and other activities in support of capacity-building, for example, participation in the evolving global invasive species information network.

(Continued on page 6)



Inside the secretariat (Continued)

Other discussions focused on the need to participate in African-based initiatives such as the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN) and the Commonwealth Knowledge Network (CKN). Indeed, participants voiced the view that both initiatives are complementary to the CHM and recommended the establishment of joint work programmes to increase capacity in the Africa region.

Finally, participation by the UNEP/GEF Enabling Activities offered participants new ideas on accessing funds to promote technical and scientific collaboration and to establish joint initiatives and activities.

For Meeting Report, please refer to CBD Web site: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/chm/chmafr-01/official/chmafr-01-02-en.pdf>

Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group meeting on the potential impacts of genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) on smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities and Farmers' Rights (19 - 21 February 2003, Montreal, Canada)

The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group meeting on the potential impacts of genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) was convened by the Executive Secretary to further analyse the potential impacts of GURTs on smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities and on Farmer's Rights, to prepare advice for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting (COP 7).

The Group identified a series of potential impacts including those related to the current development and timeframe application of GURTs, the targets of GURTs, environmental containment, agricultural productivity contribution, Farmers' Rights with special attention to the concept of Farmers' Rights in the context of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; and social, economic, political, ethical and other aspects.

The 22 participants included representatives of Australia, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Korea, Russian Federation, the Netherlands, Uganda, Ukraine USA, FAO, the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, the Canadian International Development Agency and Institut des Sciences de l'Environnement du Sénégal, indigenous peoples organizations (ETC Group, Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Network, International Indian Treaty Council, Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism), smallholder farmers (Policy Research for Development Alternatives - UBINIG, Umanotera - The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development), and the private sector (Delta & Pine Land Company and Biotechnology Industry Organization).

The Group will finalize the report for submission to the ninth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technological and Technical Advice for further consideration by the COP-7.

For further information, please refer to CBD Web site <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=TEGURT-01>

Expert Group meeting on indicators of biological diversity (10 - 12 February, 2003, Montreal, Canada)

In its decision VI/7 B, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to convene a technical expert meeting to further develop the three annexes on ongoing work on indicators for the following issues: principles for developing national-level monitoring and indicators; a set of standard questions for developing national-level indicators; and a list of available and potential indicators based on a conceptual framework that has qualitative and quantitative approaches.

In developing the list of indicators, mention was made of the need for harmonization and collaboration with regional and international initiatives, inter alia, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Pan-European processes, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) (paragraph 4 (d)).

The meeting was organized with financial support from the Government of the United Kingdom. A number of principles emerged from the discussions, which were considered, further elaborated and refined in the group discussion. The list of indicators and variables relating to inland water biological diversity was organized in a systematic way to reflect types and key areas they relate to. A procedure on implementing biodiversity assessments was developed and some key concepts clarified in a graphic way.

Government-nominated experts from nineteen countries attended, as well as representatives of FAO, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC), UNEP-World Conservation and Monitoring Centre, IUCN/SSC Biodiversity Assessment Initiative, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Mauritania, the Québec Ministry of Environment and Statikron.

For further information, please refer to CBD Web site: <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/indicators/documents.asp>

The Second Edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook Report (16 - 17 January, 2003, Montreal, Canada)

The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) decided that the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO) report should continue to be prepared as a periodic report on biological diversity and implementation of the Convention, and be made available in all the official United Nations languages. Specifically, by Decision VI/25, the Conference of Parties decided that the second edition of the GBO report should be prepared for publication in 2004

drawing upon information contained in the second national reports, the thematic reports and on the review of progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan to be undertaken in 2003.

In response to these decisions, the Secretariat initiated a process that will lead to the publication and launch of the next GBO report (GBO-2). As a first step, a draft operational plan to guide the overall production process was developed. In addition the Secretariat convened a scoping meeting of the GBO-2 Advisory Group. The aim was to discuss and agree on the following production items: focus, scope, content, approaches, methodologies and tools, data and information sources and treatment, WSSD implications, range of associated products, dissemination and outreach and the overall production schedule.

The Secretariat is currently following up on the conclusions and recommendations of the scoping meeting to ensure that the agreed action items are on course and that the GBO-2 report will be published in time for the COP 7 (April 2004).

For further information, please refer to CBD Web site: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=AGGBO-01>

Expert Meeting on Rapid Assessment of Biological Diversity of Inland Water Ecosystems (2 - 4 December 2002, Montreal, Canada)

The Expert Meeting was jointly organized by the CBD Secretariat and the Ramsar Convention Bureau and was attended by organizations such as FAO, UNEP-GEMS, IUCN and Conservation International. The Nature Conservancy and the University of Quebec at Montreal were also represented.

Conservation International had been commissioned to compile information on methods for the rapid assessment of inland water biological diversity and guidelines for their application. One working group complemented this draft focusing on purpose and scope, definitions and terms, issues to be considered when planning a rapid assessment, and the conceptual framework for it. A second working group complemented and revised a decision tree designed to select the appropriate assessment approach and associated methodologies.

The representatives of Small Island Developing States stressed the need to strengthen taxonomic capacities, address issues of invasive alien species and the promotion of sustainable tourism.

(See documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/8/8/ADD.5 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/8/INF/5) Final Report is posted on CBD Web site (.pdf format) at:

<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-08/information/sbstta-08-inf-05-en.pdf>

Open-ended Expert Workshop on Capacity-building for ABS

(2 - 4 December 2002, Montreal, Canada)

Capacity-building for access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing has been recognized as essential to



assist Parties with the implementation of the access and benefit-sharing provisions of the Convention. At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided to convene an open-ended expert workshop on capacity-building for access and benefit-sharing in order to further develop draft elements of an Action Plan on capacity-building for access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. The workshop included over 100 participants from Governments, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local community organizations, industry and the academic sector.

The meeting concluded with the adoption of a draft Action Plan on capacity-building for access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing for onward transmission to, and adoption by, the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting. The draft action plan is meant "to facilitate and support the development and strengthening of capacities of individuals, institutions, and communities for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention relating to access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, and in particular the Bonn Guidelines on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of their utilization". It identifies key areas requiring capacity-building and suggests mechanisms for the implementation of capacity-building through actions at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels. It also promotes coordination among actors undertaking capacity-building activities in order to encourage synergies and identify gaps in coverage. Recognizing that approaches for action necessary to implement the Action Plan will vary according to the national needs and priorities of countries, the appendix to the draft action plan also includes a list of possible approaches for implementation of activities identified in the Action Plan, to be undertaken at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels.

Meeting Documents are posted on CBD Web site at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=ABSWS-CB-01>

Workshop on Liability and Redress in the context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

(2 - 4 December, 2002, Rome, Italy)

The workshop was organized by the Government of Italy, in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat and with additional financial support from the European Community in response to the invitation by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Committee on Biosafety (ICCP). Seventy participants, including 59 government-nominated experts and observers from 37 countries and 11 experts from relevant organizations attended.

The Workshop was intended to be a brainstorming meeting on how requirements under Article 27 of the Protocol could be addressed. It reviewed existing legislation in the field of liability and redress for damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms and relevant international law on liability and redress. Various issues were considered, including: understanding of Article 27 of the Protocol; types of activities or scenarios for damage that might be covered by it; objectives and functions of liability rules

and procedures for damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms (LMOs); definition of damage; channelling liability, including State liability; financial security and funds; and forms of any instrument that might result from the process under Article 27 of the Protocol.

The Report is posted on the CBD Web site at: www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=BSWSLR-01

Liaison Group meeting on Capacity-building for Biosafety

(4-5 November 2002, Montreal, Canada)

The meeting was convened to provide advice on ways and means to enhance the coordination and implementation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. The Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP), at its third meeting in April 2002, proposed the establishment of the Liaison Group on Capacity-building for Biosafety as one of the five elements of the Coordination Mechanism for the implementation of the Action Plan.

Eighteen participants from government agencies and inter-governmental, non-governmental and private sector organizations with relevant expertise and those involved in biosafety capacity-building projects attended the meeting.

Four main items were considered namely: the coverage and gaps of existing projects/initiatives in implementation of the Action Plan; the operationalization of the Coordination Mechanism; the ways and means to enhance complementarity, synergies and partnerships between existing capacity-building projects/ initiatives; and the preliminary set of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan.

Recommendations were made on a number of issues, including measures to encourage countries to register and use information in the capacity-building databases in the Biosafety Clearing-House; options to address gaps in implementing the Action Plan, and ways and means to enhance coordination between existing initiatives, including among donors and implementers. The meeting also made suggestions on the scope and modalities for implementing the five elements of the Coordination Mechanism (i.e. the Liaison Group, capacity-building databases, coordination meetings, networking mechanism and the reporting system). Finally the meeting made recommendations on the characteristics, role and design of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan and how they could be structured and used at different levels.

The Summary Report is posted on the CBD Web site at: www.biodiv.org/doc/notifications/2003/ntf-2003-06-cpbs-en.pdf

Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change

(9 - 13 September, 2002, Montreal, Canada)

At this second meeting the Group agreed on a revised outline of the report document, drawing upon the two inter-sessional reports, the IPCC assessment reports and on the technical report on land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF).

The Group also agreed upon a schedule to finalize the proposed work. The Secretariat established a listserv to improve communication among the members of the Expert Group.

The Group also discussed issues on tools, methods and instruments for evaluating the impacts of climate change adaptation and mitigation options. Environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment were considered in detail as some of the main tools available, and biodiversity indicators as an important element within these tools.

The Summary Report is posted on the CBD Web site at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/cc/tegcc-02/official/tegcc-02-02-en.pdf>

Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity of Dry and Sub-Humid Lands

(18 - 22 March and 23 - 27 September, 2002, Montreal, Canada)

The AHTEG met in March and September 2002. The terms of reference, included consolidation and assessment of information on the status and trends of biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands; the possible establishment of an international network of dry and sub-humid areas of particular value for biodiversity, on indicators, on processes affecting biodiversity; global benefits derived from biodiversity; and the socio-economic impacts of its loss, including the inter-relationship between biodiversity and poverty. The task further included assessment of the progress and the effects of the specific measures that have been taken for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, for resource management and for the support of sustainable livelihoods; and assessment of international priorities set up at the regional and global levels and proposals for expected outcomes, further activities, possible actors and timetables for action based on the draft programme of work.

The report of the meeting was submitted to SBSTTA as information document UNRP/CBD/SBSTTA/8/INF/10. Mr. Babu Sarat (India), the AHTEG co-chair, delivered a summary report to Working Group II of SBSTTA. Elements of the work of the AHTEG were also presented in a pre-session document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10) and relevant recommendations are being made to COP-7.

Government-nominated experts from Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Lithuania, India, Mongolia, the Seychelles, Spain, Sri Lanka, Uruguay, United Kingdom, a representative of local and indigenous communities and representatives of the following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attended the meeting: The United Nations Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), FAO, UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), The Global Environment Facility (GEF), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Bank Group, the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dryland Areas (ICARDA) and a member of the SBSTTA Bureau. Prof. Willem van Cotthem served as the chairman of the two meetings.

The Final Report is posted on the CBD Web site at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-08/information/sbstta-08-inf-02-en.pdf> ■



NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS: INDIA AND THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL

The Government of India recently ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, by approving the proposal of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (India's focal point for the CBD).

To create heightened awareness of Genetically Modified Organisms and Biosafety issues in general, and the Cartagena Protocol in particular, the Ministry of Environment and Forests in collaboration with the Department of Biotechnology, has organized a series of workshops in various regions of the country. The first in the series was held in New Delhi in September 2002. Workshops for Western, Central and Eastern regions were held in Pune, Bhopal and Kolkatta respectively. Workshops for Southern, Northern and North Eastern regions were held in Bangalore

and Hyderabad, Lucknow and Guawhati in October and November.

Participants came from several regulatory agencies such as the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the Department of Biotechnology, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Commerce; scientific institutions (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Indian Council of Medical Research), universities engaged in biotechnology research; members of state biotechnology committees; pharmaceutical industry and seed companies; print and electronic media, farming and consumer communities, and NGOs.

Among the topics presented were: Cartagena Protocol - a perspective -; the Biosafety regulatory framework in India; the role of state governments in the implementation of the Biosafety framework; issues related to the release of GMOs into the environment; environmental implications of large-scale use of transgenic plants in commercial agriculture; GMO risk assessment and risk management; biotechnology and biosafety - public perception; Biosafety and the need to create public awareness.

These workshops provided a platform to share experiences and ideas on risk assessment and management of GMOs, as well as means for the effective implementation of the Biosafety Protocol.

INSIGHT

Setting conservation priorities in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands

By Marjo Vierros

Programme Officer – marine and coastal biological diversity CBD Secretariat

Last summer I had the opportunity to participate in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program (NOWRAMP). This was indeed an exceptional experience for me, as it not only highlighted first-hand the importance of the work of the Convention in preserving fragile coral reef ecosystems, but also showed me and the rest of the expedition participants the reality of a "wild" marine environment. During my previous life as a field-based marine biologist, I spent years working in a number of locations around the world, all impacted in various degrees by human activities. However, this was the first time I encountered an area that is so close to that mythical "base-line" state prior to human interference. All the top predators in the oceanic food Web were still present. In practical terms this meant that on every dive we were visited by big fish, such as Giant Trevally, and sharks. In fact, on one dive we watched in awe as several hundred sharks congregated on a reef edge. The endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals were also present in great numbers, and although we never approached them (this would have been against the law), they often swam over and played with our field gear. On land, the islands were covered by nesting seabirds and marine turtles, and the sight of all these animals together was something I will never forget. I was later told that when the ancient Polynesians sailed these waters during their Trans-Pacific voyages, they used the birds as a navigational aid and an indicator that land was close.

Our expedition to the Northwest Hawaiian islands was part of a multi-agency, multi-year effort that began in 2000. NOWRAMP's objective is to rapidly evaluate and map the shallow water reef habitats in the Northwest



Diver and coral reef in Northwest Hawaiian Islands – photo courtesy of Jim Watt

Hawaiian Islands. The resulting maps and all the associated data

collected during rapid biodiversity assessments will assist government and state agencies to better manage this unique resource. And unique it is. The Northwest Hawaiian Islands consist of dozens of tiny islands, atolls and shoals, all of them volcanic remnants, spanning more than 1,200 miles of the world's largest ocean. Their remote location, hundreds of miles north of Kaua'i, has kept them little known and seldom visited. As a result, coral reefs and sea life thrive, reminding us of a time before humans became the top predator in the ocean food chain. The living coral reefs of the area cover thousands of square miles, and provide a spectacular landscape hosting more than 7,000 species of plants and animals, many of which are found nowhere else in the world. Many that are rare, threatened or endangered have found their last refuge in this area.

One of my primary objectives, in addition to taking part in the field surveys and the setting up of permanent monitoring sites, was to conduct a marine gap analysis of the area. A gap analysis compiles spatially referenced information on the distribution of components of biodiversity on the level of ecosystems, communities and species; major threats to those components of biodiversity; and the current management regime. An evaluation can then be made on whether the current management regime adequately protects all types of biodiversity. Although it is difficult to define what "adequate" protection means in practical terms, the gap analysis undertaken as part of NOW RAMP will present management agencies with a set of options which identify a network of those sites that collectively capture viable examples of all native species and communities and that should receive the highest degree of protection in future management plans for the area. The first round



A map of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands

of the gap analysis is now completed, with future iterations incorporating new data as they become available. These analyses demonstrate the power of computer-based Geographic Information Systems tools. However, human interpretation of the results is required for selection of the best possible management options

Although such sites alone are not enough to conserve biological diversity or provide for its sustainable use, they should be considered as highly protected core sites in future management schemes. Fortunately, the commitment for conserving this area is high, and was formally recognized through President Clinton's declaration of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Preserve.

On a personal level, the experience of undertaking this work has helped my professional development by putting me back in touch with the field-based science that is the source of the information we need to make effective marine policy, be it local or global. It has also given me hope that the last wild places on this earth are not completely gone, and that the Convention has a vital role in ensuring that the conservation of biological diversity remains the common concern of mankind, providing for the well-being of humans through the food we eat and the nourishment of our souls. This is an experience everyone working for a global convention should have, and I would like to acknowledge my forward-thinking supervisors at the Secretariat for granting me this opportunity.





VIEWS

Community Based Biodiversity Conservation in India – some lessons to learn

Roshni Kutty, India

Mendha-lekha is a tribal hamlet in the central region of India. Forests that were initially managed by the locals were slowly taken over by the government. Increased restrictions limited individuals' ability to extract their daily requirements. They soon saw their forests diminishing at an alarming rate and their rivers running dry. These developments spurred villagers' attempt to regain control over the forests. The community organized itself into a stronger unit and took some important decisions, including:

- All domestic requirements of the village would be met from the surrounding forests without paying any fee to the government or bribes to the local staff. This would be accompanied by rules for sustainable extraction, including strict prohibition of any commercial use of timber.
- No outsider, government or private, would be allowed to carry out any programmes in the village or the forests without the permission of the village organization. [Kothari et al, 2000].

The forest has been rejuvenated and several species of wildlife have returned. The river now has plenty of fish throughout the year. The villagers have generated their own biogas plants, installed solar energy lamps, and continue to have regular meetings to discuss various government policies and schemes that affect their daily lives.

Morjim beach in the state of Goa has become famous for turtle conservation ecotourism. Where once there was large scale migration of local youth to nearby cities, they have put up shacks on the beach where the Olive Ridley turtles come to lay their eggs in an annual ritual, and now are able to earn a livelihood within their village while helping to protect one of the few remaining sea turtle nesting sites on the west coast of India.

Aravanchal Kaavu, a sacred grove in North Kerala has been preserved due to the revival of traditional customs in a new context – through village conservation committees.

Because of the soil and forest conservation carried out by the locals with the help of an NGO in Bhaonta Kolyala, the River Arvari flows uninterrupted through the village and today villagers, reap two harvests of wheat a year and sometimes even a third.

There are innumerable such examples across the Indian sub-continent where local communities have played an active role in biodiversity conservation. But who are these local communities and what is the role they play in the conservation of biological diversity?

Community-based conservation is the conservation by local communities, with or without outside help, of natural ecosystems containing substantial biodiversity value, including those with minimal-to-substantial human influence. The local context determines the appropriate approach to conservation for that area and therefore local communities are the most appropriate bodies to carry out the work. A local community may

be defined as a group of people sharing a geographical area, traditional and cultural linkages, but it is not necessarily a homogenous entity.

The benefits of community-based conservation flow not only to the local community, but to wildlife and biodiversity in general. Benefits to the local community include increased long-term availability of natural resources as well as other ecological benefits; economic benefits through ecotourism and the sale of surplus forest produce; awareness and empowerment, as well as enhanced ecological, social, political, legal and administrative capacity; increased local employment opportunities reducing the exodus to urban areas; social recognition – including enhanced appreciation of community knowledge-based systems; more cohesive community and developmental benefits; and a more just and egalitarian society.

Community conserved areas could become complementary conservation systems to official protected areas (i.e. as potential corridors and refuges for wildlife); can be an effective system for preservation of ecologically fragile but socially sensitive areas; offer 'voluntary' financial and human inputs reducing official resource constraint, helping to resolve conflicts such as forest encroachments and fires; and become models for more democratic and transparent governance.

For wildlife, the benefits include habitat regeneration and protection; protection from poachers and smugglers; protection from developmental forces; and protection against adverse conditions such as forest fires, encroachment and over-harvesting.

However, these benefits come with a cost. The local communities have to invest time, effort and finances for the protection of the natural area; there is a temporary loss of access to resources, especially for the underprivileged; conflict situations with neighboring and migrant communities; increased damage to life and property with increase in wildlife; as well as opportunity costs.

It is finally left to the local community to decide what their cost-benefit ratio is and to decide on the course of action for protection of their natural resources. Documented examples, such as those mentioned above, show that it is not an easy prescription to solving the global problem of an ever-decreasing biodiversity. However, local communities can be one of the strongest forces to counter the forces that are diminishing our biodiversity.

References:

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Ukrainian agriculture: a legacy from the past, perspectives for the future

Tatyana Stefanovska, Associate Professor, Ukraine National Agricultural University and Deputy-Director of the Center of Sustainable Development and Ecological Research

Ukraine is one of the largest countries in Europe but at the same time one of the most environmentally degraded, with 15% of its territory lying in the "zone of environmental disaster". Problems such as air and water pollution, deforestation, nuclear contamination, soil degradation and biodiversity loss represent a legacy of its communist past. Economic transition pressures also have had a negative effect on population growth, of which the rate is – 0.78%, with rural areas most affected. Nevertheless, 15% of its territory is now being preserved as protected areas.

Ukraine has quite a rich biodiversity, a consequence of its soil diversity- an essential part of well-functioning ecosystems. The quality of its soils – it has a quarter of the world's chernozems (black fertile soil) - determines whether a community can grow enough food to support its population. Since it also has favorable climate, agriculture has always been a key sector in the Ukrainian economy with 55 % of its territory being arable lands. Unfortunately, the pressure of human activity on agricultural ecosystems has resulted in land degradation. Forty percent of the arable land suffers from erosion that removes millions of tons of humus, thousand of tons of nitrogen and potassium. Soil fertility is constantly declining causing economic losses estimated at US\$ 2.3 billion.

Soil degradation is increased by nuclear contamination, high levels of toxic substances, inadequate soil cultivation and deforestation. The polluted areas resulting from the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident include 3.5 million hectares of agricultural lands. Hazardous chemical pesticides, especially from past practices, polluted over 11% of cultivated lands.

Obsolete and banned pesticides continue to be among the most serious sources of soil pollution. Pesticide residues, including highly toxic and persistent DDT and HCH can be found in the soil, water and crops in all regions. Improperly stored obsolete and banned pesticides exceed 13,520 tones and are found in all administrative districts. Most of these stockpiles were accumulated in the 1970s from temporary storage, and the conditions have deteriorated dramatically ever since.

Intensive soil amelioration undertaken until the early 1980s in the northwestern region of Polissja, led to the significant increase of wetlands degradation. Forest areas have been constantly decreasing under the pressure of human activities. Intensive management practices of site preparation, herbicide and fertilized use, and fire control to increase wood production have altered the landscape in the Carpathian Mountains, resulting in serious soil erosion and biodiversity reduction.

To solve some of these problems a long-term policy for environmental protection is emerging. It is backed by an appropriate legal framework, such as the Law on

(Continued on page 10)



Views (Continued)

Environmental Protection (1991), which has become the legislative base for nature conservation in the country.

Although Ukraine is one of the signatories of Agenda 21, the policy-makers have not yet integrated it in the national ecological legislation, which would ensure the sustainability of agriculture. However, some steps have been taken to promote and implement sustainability in agricultural practices, including: the creation of "Eco-Net" as an effort to halt biodiversity loss and reverse it, some soil-improvement measures and reforestation projects.

Nevertheless, such ecological measures to develop sustainable agriculture were not very efficient. To ensure ecological security in agriculture and mitigate its adverse impact on the environment, the following integrated

measures should be taken: ensure the implementation of the National Program of Land protection for 1996-2010; carry out soil conservation programs in the most eroded and degraded lands; use integrated approaches to soil fertility management; promote biological farming methods and ecologically clean production; strengthen the educational framework in order to integrate both formal and informal approaches in promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

Shifting from an intensive agricultural production to an ecologically friendly one is a challenge for the traditional agricultural education system. Education should put the environment into the broader social context of sustainable development, which is an essential precondition for creating awareness, changing consumption patterns, and generating a responsible attitude of people towards nature.

Unfortunately, public interest in higher education in modern agriculture is weak. Traditional university-level agricultural education alone cannot meet future challenges in management, conservation and agrobusiness. The educational system needs to put greater emphasis on non-formal education in order to influence a wide range of stakeholders.

Ukraine will only take a step towards sustainable agriculture through the integration of various economically viable and ecologically sound practices, which will also benefit biodiversity and human health. Sustainable agriculture lies at the heart of the creation of a sustainable society. We should not delay in taking the next step.



THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (22 MAY)

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22 International Day for Biological Diversity to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. A different theme is chosen each year; the 2003 theme is "Biodiversity and poverty alleviation - challenges for sustainable development."

In his Message on the International Day for Biological Diversity, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stressed that the Convention and the Biosafety Protocol "and the processes they have set in motion - are crucial for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources". Noting that the conservation of biodiversity is a job for all levels of society, he emphasized that "The involvement of local communities is particularly important, since many have already devised innovative approaches in resource management and other areas from which others can learn."

The essential relationship between biodiversity and poverty alleviation is clearly summarized in the statement marking the occasion by Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP. "Biological diversity is essential for alleviating poverty and (achieving) the Millennium Development Goals. The poor are the most likely to suffer from impacts on ecosystems such as, floods, crop failures and loss of genetic resources."

In the spirit of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Secretariat is determined to promote International Day for Biological Diversity as a reminder to the international community of the importance of striving towards the goals agreed upon at the Summit. Many of the Parties have fostered creative local public events to mark the occasion, emphasizing that governments, special interest groups, academic

institutions, communities and individuals are all stakeholders and have a responsibility to protect and conserve biodiversity and to use our biological resources in a sustainable way.

International Day for Biological Diversity was first created by the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly in late 1993, when it was known that the Convention of Biological Diversity would enter into force on 29 December 1993. From 1993 to 2000 the Day was 29 December. In December 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted May 22, the date of the adoption of the text of the Convention in 1992.

The Message of the Secretary General, the SCBD Press Release and other information is posted on the CBD Web site at: <http://www.biodiv.org/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2003.asp>

NEWCOMERS TO THE SECRETARIAT

Manuel Guariguata (Venezuela) joined the Secretariat as Environmental Affairs Officer in Conservation Ecology. He is an applied forest ecologist and is in charge of the thematic areas of forest and mountain biodiversity, climate change, and the ecosystem approach. He held previous research positions at the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), and worked as project leader in forest silviculture and as professor of conservation biology at the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE) in Costa Rica.

Robert Höft (Germany) works on scientific assessment, biodiversity indicators and monitoring. His background is in ecology with an emphasis on botany. Robert gathered research experience on Afroalpine vegetation, East African coastal forest remnants and montane forests in Papua New Guinea before he joined UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. Based in Paris and later in Nairobi, he coordinated several of UNESCO's regional projects within the framework of the joint WWF-UNESCO-Kew initiative on "People and Plants", a programme to promote ethnobotany and the sustainable use of plant resources.

Juliane Zeidler (Germany) is the Secretariat's Programme Officer for Dry and sub-humid lands. She is an ecologist and has worked for the past 12 years in Namibia, mainly under the National Programme to Combat Desertification but also with the National Biodiversity Programme. She was instrumental in the final editing of the NBSAP of Namibia. Juliane is now responsible for the implementation of the joint programme of work between the CBD and UNCCD.

Julie Crowley (Canada) is the new Traditional Knowledge Programme Assistant in the Social, Economic and Legal Affairs Division. Following a bachelor's degree in law, she recently completed a master's degree in environmental politics and international relations at the Université du Québec à Montréal. During her studies, Julie carried out research for the Observatoire de l'écopolitique internationale and worked for the Clearing-House Mechanism of the Convention through an internship programme funded by Québec's ministère des Relations internationales.

Camilla Mathiesen (Denmark) is the Junior Professional Officer in the Biosafety Unit. She is an environmental lawyer who previously worked with biotechnology issues in the Danish Ministry of

Environment. She comes to us from a post as Legal Adviser in the Environmental Department of the Confederation of Danish Industries.

Bob K. Kakuyo (Uganda) is responsible for the National Reports Unit and the Communication, Education and Public Awareness Unit in the division of Implementation and Outreach. Prior to joining the Secretariat, he worked with the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) of UNEP for 12 years specifically responsible for coordinating DEWA's programme in environmental assessment and reporting in the Africa region, including coordination of the Africa inputs for the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) report series, production of the national and sub-regional State of Environment (SoE) reports as well as the Africa Environment Outlook report. He comes to the Secretariat with a wealth of experience in the development of methodologies and tools for environmental assessments, reporting, capacity development and environment information networking. He also worked six years with IUCN in eastern Africa before joining UNEP in 1990. His academic background is in biological sciences with a focus on conservation biology.



NEW PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER NEWS

Retrieving information

A global CBD document search mechanism is now available on the CBD Web site. Its objective is to provide the Web user with a central search page for the following type of CBD information items: documents of meetings; National Reports; case-studies; library books and CBD articles (for intranet users).

The search page is currently available at: www.biodiv.org/doc/search.aspx and offers several search criteria: type of information, thematic area, meeting, country, language, year and keywords.

New publications

- Handbook of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2nd edition, updated to include the outcome of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- Book of abstracts – SBSTTA 8 on mountains, marine and coastal and inland water biodiversity.
- The Bonn Guidelines on access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their utilization (also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish).
- Action for a sustainable future: decisions from the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish).
- Leaflet on the role of science, technology and technical expertise (also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish).
- Booklet on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. Published in association with Botanic Gardens Conservation International

Joint Calendar of events and meetings of the three Rio Conventions

The three Rio-Conventions, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), have established an electronic *Joint Calendar* of events and meetings to promote sustainable development partnerships and synergies. The calendar is available on the Web at: <http://unfccc.int/calendar/rioconv/index.html>.

This *Joint Calendar* is the result of collaborative efforts between the CBD and its two partner Conventions - strengthened since the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) last year.

The purpose of this Web-based calendar is to inform about the main activities and events organized by the CBD and its other two partners, to increase the involvement of Parties and assist

them in better planning and meeting their pledges to the three Conventions.

The *Joint Calendar* will be updated on a regular basis to provide accurate and up-to-date information on meetings as well as to facilitate navigation by supplying useful links to the Web sites of each Convention.

The Secretariat of the CBD would like to express its gratitude to several sponsors whose generous contributions supported the development of the *Joint Calendar*.

SCBD Fellowship Programme

Last year, the Secretariat initiated a six-month Fellowship Programme for nationals from developing countries to gain knowledge in biological diversity in order to assist their organizations and communities in protecting and promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The Fellows take this opportunity to broaden their professional knowledge and experience by acquainting themselves with the issues facing biodiversity conservation and sustainable use worldwide and the functioning of the related inter-governmental processes.

Tatyana Stefanovska

(Associate Professor, Ukraine National Agricultural University and Deputy-Director of the Center of Sustainable Development and Ecological research):

Only recently ecological education became an important part of the agricultural curriculum in the Ukraine. There is still a lack of agriculture specialists who can put the environment into a broader social context. Biodiversity conservation is one of the key ecological issues for the environmental content of agricultural education. Courses related to biodiversity, offered to students as a part of an agricultural curriculum, do not have trans-disciplinary approaches. Therefore, my principal goal during this fellowship is to collect materials for developing a lecture on "Biodiversity conservation: a global approach". The goal of this course is to show how society affects global life support systems and how individuals can make contributions to solve environmental problems. It also emphasizes the importance of the Convention and other related International Agreements in biodiversity conservation. The course is designed as a lecture with group discussions and a final conference where students would present topics relevant to different biodiversity conservation aspects. Since this course will be offered to students who study economics, the lecture "Putting a Price on Biodiversity" and discussions of relevant articles is also included. For students who major in ecology, case studies on agricultural biodiversity conservation are being prepared as well.

Fabián Pina Amargós

(Centro de Investigaciones de Ecosistemas Costeros, Cayo Coco, Cuba)

During my Fellowship my main objectives were: to assist the Secretariat on marine and coastal biodiversity, scientific assessment, protected areas and sustainable tourism and to prepare related documents, including case studies; to finish papers committed with my projects in Cuba related to the fields of my Fellowship and to carry out a review of literature for my Ph.D. research project investigating the benefits of a marine protected area for conservation and sustainable use of fish.

The Fellowship was a valuable and important experience for me. I gained a very good insight into the work of the SCBD and the UN. Working on different fields gave me the opportunity to learn more, taking advantage of Internet facilities and other sources of knowledge. I also conducted an extensive search for information on ichthyology, marine ecology and MCPAs, which is beneficial to my career and to my PhD work.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to put my expertise at the service of the common goal of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. I also appreciate the close contact with staff members, which allowed me to work more efficiently with the documentation. The comments I received for my work have given me valuable inputs, ideas and guidance for the development of my research approach and will definitely contribute to my future research.

AWASOH Joel Ndonwi

(Centre for Biodiversity and Sustainable Development, Cameroon)

My fellowship program has been based on legal issues, specifically on liability and redress, Article 27 and Article 15, risk assessment of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

This gave me the chance to have a lot of information on living modified organisms (LMOs), as required by the Protocol which will serve as a guide in reviewing certain articles of the draft bill Regulating Safety in Modern Biotechnology in Cameroon. My organization is going to serve as a resource NGO in the field. I have had a lot of insight on other activities such as the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol (ICCP).

I also have benefited from other communication facilities such as the Internet. I believe all these resources will also serve as a suitable background for me to pursue environmental education in law and policy and will have a positive influence in my future career.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For a complete up-to-date list please visit: www.biodiv.org/events/default.asp?org=unep/scbd

Note: Meetings under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety are not all included since their timing depends on the entry into force of the Protocol

| Date & Venue | Title of Meeting | Status |
|--|--|-----------|
| July 2003 | | |
| 7 - 11 July 2003 Venue to be determined | Expert meeting on ecosystem approach | Tentative |
| September 2003 | | |
| 4 - 5 September 2003 Montreal, Canada | Meeting of the Bureau of the ICCP | Tentative |
| 8 - 10 September 2003 Venue to be determined | Advisory Group on anthologies of terms on invasive alien species | Tentative |
| 9 - 12 September 2003 Venue to be determined | Central and Eastern Europe regional meeting on the Clearing-House Mechanism | Tentative |
| 22 - 24 September 2003 Venue to be determined | Liaison Group Meeting on protected areas (in conjunction with the World Congress on Protected Areas, 8-17 September 2003) | Tentative |
| November 2003 | | |
| 6 - 8 November 2003 Montreal, Canada | International Workshop on forest protected areas | Tentative |
| 10 - 14 November 2003 Venue to be determined | Ninth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice | Tentative |
| 24 - 27 November 2003 Montpellier, France | Meeting on ways for the review of the implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity | Tentative |
| December 2003 | | |
| 1 - 5 December 2003 Venue to be determined | Second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing | Tentative |
| 1 - 5 December 2003 Venue to be determined | Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group meeting on non-timber forest resources | Tentative |
| January 2004 | | |
| 12 - 16 January 2004 Venue to be determined | Second meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on nontimber forest resources | Tentative |
| 13 - 15 January 2004 Venue to be determined | Asia and the Pacific regional meeting on the Clearing-House Mechanism | Tentative |
| 26 - 30 January 2004 Venue to be determined | Ad Hoc Working Group on Article 8(j) | Tentative |
| February 2004 | | |
| 10 - 12 February 2004 Venue to be determined | African regional preparatory meeting for the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity | Tentative |
| 10 - 12 February 2004 Venue to be determined | Asia and the Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity | Tentative |
| 10 - 12 February 2004 Venue to be determined | Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory meeting for the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity | Tentative |
| April 2004 | | |
| 19 - 30 April 2004 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | Seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-7) | Tentative |
| May 2004 | | |
| 3 - 7 May 2004 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | First meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP/MOP-1) | Tentative |

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