

CSD-17 IPM HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2009

The Intersessional Preparatory Meeting (IPM) for the 17th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17) discussed desertification during the morning, and addressed the issue of Africa during the afternoon.

DESERTIFICATION

Panelist Alemneh Dejene, FAO, discussed the constraints to the desertification challenge and emphasized, among other options, combining organic and non-organic land inputs, maximizing synergy between agriculture and livestock management and increasing national investment and international cooperation. Panelist Melchiade Bukuru, UNCCD, highlighted the global benefits of combating desertification and proposed options that include prioritizing the issue at all levels and mainstreaming it in national development, financial, climate change, biodiversity, water and poverty programmes.

The G-77/CHINA highlighted the potential of the UNCCD to address poverty, and underlined the need for capacity building, and technical and new, additional and predictable financial resources. The EU proposed that CSD-17 urge enhanced synergies among the Rio Conventions, and said the Committee on Science and Technology conference should mobilize the scientific community. The ARAB GROUP emphasized the need, *inter alia*, to increase participation in implementation of relevant sub-regional programmes.

CAPE VERDE called on CSD-17 to propose concrete outcomes. FRANCE highlighted the need to assist farmers and pastoralists in arid areas to rehabilitate land and harness local knowledge. SPAIN emphasized that desertification, drought and food security need a global response. The US highlighted the importance of a bottom-up approach in combating desertification, with emphasis on people and habitats, lessons learned and local solutions.

SOUTH AFRICA said: the Global Mechanism (GM) should be more active in making available and mobilizing resources; political commitment and good governance should be ensured to enhance efforts to combat desertification, including through NEPAD programmes; and traditional governance is critical for the delivery of programmes. Indigenous Peoples supported the panelists' recommendations and highlighted the importance of alternative livelihoods. CANADA emphasized the importance of a robust scientific base for the UNCCD, and the need for secure access to land. BARBADOS looked forward to identifying partners with whom to share its experiences during CSD-17.

CHILE expressed concern that the GEF is not allocating funds for the rehabilitation of degraded lands and said funding for OP15 should be increased.

INDIA highlighted its National Afforestation Program and said the current global crisis should not dilute commitments. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed abandoning sector-based strategies in favor of an integrated approach. Business and Industry highlighted the need for reward schemes for effective agricultural practices. SWITZERLAND said the UNCCD's ten-year Strategy is a new opportunity for signatories to prevent desertification through sectoral policies.

NIGERIA expressed concern that GEF funding for land management is less than that for other areas, and said the work of the GM as a broker of funds should be placed under the UNCCD Secretariat's leadership. ALGERIA highlighted the need for support by the international community, including for implementation of the Sahara-Sahel Green Wall project. ARGENTINA announced that it will host the ninth Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD from 21 September-2 October 2009. CHINA suggested that, *inter alia*: specialized agencies should treat desertification as a priority and create rational scientific recommendations; and developed countries should help developing countries build their capacity to respond to drought and desertification, especially disaster prevention and management.

JAPAN noted the effectiveness of traditional knowledge in combating desertification. MOROCCO highlighted that protecting oases is central to the fight against desertification. MEXICO stated the need for integrated sustainable management of ecosystems in arid zones. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA highlighted the importance of regional cooperation, especially when transboundary issues are involved.

MALAWI noted the need for improved land productivity and reduced soil loss and soil erosion, and said policies should link land uses and livelihoods. IRAN highlighted a carbon sequestration project that involves 31 villages and is designed to develop participatory resource management, and said sandstorms and sand dune movements are an issue for his country. NGOs said biochar is not a carbon sequestration silver bullet, and the UNCCD should continue to support agro-ecological practices for SLM and be holistic in its approach to carbon dynamics.

SAUDI ARABIA said his country is spending US\$500 million to fight desertification, and will help many African countries that are suffering from food shortages, and noted efforts to bolster cooperation with Latin American countries. ISRAEL proposed that CSD-17 address relevant policies and adopt measures, including innovative ways for integrating cross-cutting issues in addressing desert and dry-land development. The Scientific and

Technological Community suggested integrating land and water considerations in an interdisciplinary and multi-level study of deserts. LIBYA highlighted the work of NEPAD and stressed the need to increase GEF funding for these issues. BOLIVIA noted interlinkages between desertification, poverty and global warming. Children and Youth stressed involving children and youth in the initiatives presented at the IPM.

BRAZIL highlighted the value of UNCCD in addressing desertification, but noted that the issue of desertification is broader than the UNCCD's scope of operation. She called for support to the UNCCD and GM and for regional and South-South cooperation. Farmers stressed the need to attract investment in degraded areas and to use best practices to recover degraded areas, supported Mexico's Plan of Action and urged Saudi Arabia to expand support beyond Africa. Women called for gender-disaggregated analyses of desertification, women's involvement in policy making, and the establishment of an adaptation fund for women to assist in coping during crises.

AFRICA

Panelist Kobie Brand, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, Africa Secretariat, highlighted the need for coordinated policies and planning for implementation at the local level. She noted the role of education in building leadership. Panelist Kaddu Sebunya, African Wildlife Foundation, underscored the importance of policies on large-scale conservation and the need to strengthen local incentives for coexistence between people and wildlife. The G77-CHINA highlighted ensuring that land policy reforms guarantee women's rights to land. Senegal, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, noted that urgent measures are needed, *inter alia*, to: diversify agriculture; preserve the environment and natural resources; and allow free access to markets. The EU recommended, *inter alia*, a "financial re-mobilisation of concerned African States and the international community towards sustainable rural and agricultural development."

Solomon Islands, on behalf of AOSIS, said the continued health of SIDS' and African countries' coastal and marine ecosystems offers an important development pillar for food security and rural development. ITALY said its goals as G-8 President include: incorporating issues related to Africa and development in the agenda; putting into effect a mechanism to examine the impact of G-8 initiatives; and establishing the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition.

MOROCCO emphasized South-South cooperation and said NEPAD offers the African continent scope for regional cooperation. PORTUGAL discussed activities undertaken in the context of cooperation among Portuguese speaking countries. INDONESIA said, *inter alia*: conflict resolution in Africa must be treated as a top priority; the structural imbalance in Africa's agriculture sector must be addressed; and development of basic infrastructure in agriculture and the rural sector should be treated as a priority. The ARAB GROUP stressed the development programmes and plans launched by NEPAD.

The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO stressed the importance, *inter alia*, of strengthening local and national governance and improving the living conditions of rural communities. The US said a comprehensive approach is required to improve agriculture and coordinated efforts among donors are important. LIBYA highlighted Africa's need for more financing. FRANCE said it is essential to improve agricultural and food security policies and strengthen institutional capacity. Workers and Trade Unions highlighted the recommendations from the First African Trade Union Conference on Labour and the Environment held in Johannesburg in July 2009, including the call to improve the accountability and transparency of multinational enterprises.

MALAWI supported regional initiatives as promoted by NEPAD. INDIA highlighted the offer to extend credit lines to African countries. NIGERIA emphasized the importance of policy capacity building and financing. Children and Youth emphasized the need to address African children and youth in national policies. JAPAN noted it would host a high-level African ministers' conference in March 2009 in Botswana to discuss the implementation of commitments made at TICAD IV. ARGENTINA highlighted the need to liberalize markets and create more access to credit.

SOUTH AFRICA emphasized the importance of integrated planning, good governance and support from the international community, and called for a successful conclusion of the DDA and urgent implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building. ISRAEL highlighted its experience in improving the quality of its agricultural production, and noted the challenge of adapting traditional practices to issues such as crop production, post-harvest techniques and marketing. CANADA: said it will keep its G-8 commitment to increase assistance to Africa; noted the relevance of the outcome of the Accra High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness; and indicated support for increased sustainable agricultural production, better nutrition and gender equality. Business and Industry emphasized access to inputs, markets, training and information sources, and highlighted its Farming First policy platform developed in cooperation with the Scientific and Technology Community and Farmers major groups.

MEXICO noted the need to support diversification of the African economy. NGOs drew attention to a lack of emphasis on fisheries and livestock. NORWAY said the three main pillars (equitable access to land, improved governance in the land sector and reduction of land related conflicts) in the guidelines for tenure adopted by the Economic Commission for Africa in September 2008 will promote sustainable development. The Scientific and Technological Community noted that institutional capacity exists, but actions need to be coordinated and inputs need to inform policies. Women urged pursuing vocational training for women based on the train-the-trainer model. Farmers endorsed the Windhoek Declaration and urged African governments to honor their commitments in the Maputo Declaration.

IN THE CORRIDORS

During an informal lunchtime briefing, Chair Verburg explained the process of developing the IPM Chair's text to be distributed Friday afternoon and outlined the bureau's proposed organization of work for CSD-17. On the latter, she said: two parallel working groups will be established on agriculture, rural development and cross-cutting issues, and on land, drought, desertification and Africa; and the Partnership Fair, Learning Centers and side events will be held. To raise the profile of the CSD, the Bureau is planning a High-Level Segment (HLS) targeting ministers of agriculture, rural development, development cooperation, environment and finance and eminent persons. The HLS will consist of topic-specific roundtables and dialogues between ministers and major groups and the policy-research community, and dialogues between ministers and heads of UN agencies and Chairs of Governing Councils or Executive Boards. Keynote speeches by eminent personalities will also be offered. One participant suggested including practitioners of traditional and local knowledge.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the CSD-17 IPM will be available on Monday, 2 March 2009, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/csd/ipm17/>