

CSD 17 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2009

The High-Level Segment continued on Thursday with roundtable discussions on “Realizing a Sustainable Green Revolution in Africa” and “Integrated Land and Water Management.” CSD 17 delegates also negotiated draft recommendations in Working Groups and multiple informal consultations throughout the day and into the night.

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES

REALIZING A SUSTAINABLE GREEN REVOLUTION IN AFRICA: Robert Watson, Director, International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), highlighted, *inter alia*: the multi-functionality of agriculture; agro-ecological practices and the critical role of natural resources and biodiversity; adapting to a changing climate; increasing water efficiency; acknowledging the role of women; reforming international trade; investing in science and technology and improving extension services; and investing in rural development. Tesfai Teclé, Special Advisor to the Chairman, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, introduced his organization’s strategy to reduce hunger and poverty in Africa through agricultural development. Matthew Wyatt, Assistant President, IFAD, stressed: smallholder farmers must be in the vanguard of a sustainable African green revolution; such a revolution is possible only if small holders get the support they need; and investment is needed in infrastructure, financial resources, technology, extension services and payments for environmental services.

Delegates then divided into two groups to discuss the theme. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism, chaired one group, in which delegates highlighted, *inter alia*: traditional knowledge and technologies; the role of women and their empowerment; climate change mitigation and adaptation; good management of irrigation; South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation; investment in and improvement of rural infrastructure; access to markets by farmers, especially smallholder farmers; biofuel development without causing negative impacts on the environment and food security; research done in response to farmers’ needs and dissemination of research results; land tenure, particularly for women; use of satellite technology in agriculture; the important role of the private sector; private-public partnerships; strengthening appropriate institutions and farmers’ organizations; information, education and training; and addressing the problem of migration from rural to urban areas.

Homero Bibiloni, Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development, Argentina, and Paul Biyoghe Mba, Minister of Agriculture, Husbandry, Food Security and Rural Development,

Gabon, co-chaired the other group. Participants emphasized the importance of urgently bringing about a green revolution in Africa to attain food security and combat desertification, water scarcity and the threat of climate change. Speakers focused on, in particular: South-South cooperation; increased international support; easier access to markets; technology transfer; partnerships and government political will and the role of the public sector; capacity building, especially to combat desertification and soil degradation; and use of indigenous knowledge. Some participants stressed a “green-green” revolution sensitive to environmental and biodiversity considerations, the risk of GMOs, culturally-appropriate food, and sustainable biofuels. Increased productivity was discussed, as well as multifunctional agriculture, dependence on rain and IWRM, inclusion and empowerment of small farmers and women, and population growth. Several participants reported on their governments’ programmes of support to Africa.

INTEGRATED LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT: The Prince of Orange, HRH Willem-Alexander, Chair, UN Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, recalling his recent trip to Afghanistan, highlighted resilient agriculture as the most effective way to bring peace, stability and sustainable development. Jose de Jesus Romo Santos, Mexican Ministry of Agriculture, discussed the implementation of sustainable management practices and highlighted some of his country’s efforts to advance sustainable agriculture and rural development. Katherine Sierra, Vice President for Sustainable Development, World Bank, stressed, *inter alia*, enhancing environmental services and sustainability, and improving fisheries governance.

Delegates then divided into two groups to discuss the roundtable theme. Luis Alberto Ferraté, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Guatemala, chaired one of the parallel roundtables. Some countries highlighted the adoption of policies enabling international partnerships. Threats discussed included: water resource deficit; natural disasters; mountain development; land degradation; vulnerability to climate; increasing land productivity and rural income; the role of tariffs and subsidies; access to technologies such as geographic information systems; and desertification. Use of water in highly subsidized agriculture was raised. One country proposed a forum for Africa to increase support and cooperation for the continent; another noted community-oriented groups with participation of farmers to promote efficient water use. Flexibility to tailor programs to different needs and the value of working together locally to help each other was stressed. One country warned about being critical in appraising advancements in sustainable development. Others highlighted indigenous knowledge, and land management that incorporates ecosystem services. One country talked about

a crisis of values. WOMEN drew attention to, *inter alia*: land tenure; access opportunities in decision-making; institutional transformation; and significant resource allocation to help small-scale farmers and pastoralists.

Christopher Tufton, Minister of Agriculture, Jamaica, and Sumardjo Gatot Irano, Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Indonesia, co-chaired the other parallel roundtable. Speakers stressed the need to: improve rural livelihoods; improve dissemination of knowledge and good practices; implement systematic policies to improve resilience; give UNCCD the same importance as the UNFCCC; improve access to wastewater treatment technologies; integrate international legal instruments related to land; tackle land tenure issues when introducing ecosystem service payments; and invest in research. Also discussed were the role of women in agriculture; impacts of biofuel production; climate mitigation aspects of agriculture; and the impact of climate change on water and land management. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES called for a moratorium on oil and gas exploration and for the decentralization of land use planning to the local and ecosystem levels.

WORKING GROUP 1

AGRICULTURE: The US noted that a number of issues addressed in this section also appear in other sections. CANADA offered text, supported by all delegates, “contributing to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.” The US and CANADA agreed to “poverty eradication.” CANADA suggested highlighting the commitments of “national governments” but the G-77/CHINA objected. SWITZERLAND offered text on, *inter alia*, the increasing role of agriculture in protecting natural resources. On increasing capacity of developing countries, the US suggested “efforts at all levels” rather than “international efforts,” but the G-77/CHINA objected. The EU proposed reference to “adaptation and mitigation,” which the G-77/CHINA opposed. BRAZIL for the G-77/CHINA noted that climate discussions are carried out at the UNFCCC and this section cannot add to what is discussed there.

In the afternoon, the contact group on trade resumed its work, and Co-Chair Raguz assigned a contact group on agriculture.

INTERLINKAGES, CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, INCLUDING MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

Paragraphs were agreed on: addressing the three pillars of sustainable development; public health systems, with mention of “communicable” diseases, as proposed earlier by the G-77/CHINA; promoting access to education; livelihoods of vulnerable groups; and empowering rural women. In the paragraph on ensuring that biodiversity, land, water and forests provide ecosystem services, the G-77/CHINA insisted on mentioning “with support of the international community.”

In text on unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, the EU proposed referencing the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the G-77/CHINA suggested adding “especially in developed countries” when mentioning sustainable lifestyles. Reference to climate change as a “cross-cutting issue” was deleted. The G-77/CHINA proposed new language to replace all paragraphs on the subject, and the introductory paragraph was streamlined, but the G-77/CHINA insisted on mentioning the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

WORKING GROUP 2

AFRICA: The chapeau was agreed *ad referendum* after the EU added “*inter alia*” to MDG language, CANADA referenced investment in agriculture, the EU dropped “sustainable” from green revolution and SWITZERLAND referenced maintaining ecosystem functions. Text was agreed on stimulating private investment with additions on supporting small farmers, gender equality (CANADA, EU), corporate social responsibility (G-77/CHINA) and environmental sustainability (EU,

SWITZERLAND). Agreed text on accelerating agricultural development was reopened to accept a G-77/CHINA request to strike reference to the Maputo Declaration 10% budget target. The EU streamlined its proposal on land acquisition by foreign investors, but the G-77/CHINA proposed an alternate text and SWITZERLAND suggested an alternative calling for a code of conduct on such investments.

The EU, US and JAPAN objected to the G-77/CHINA texts on providing for stronger national action and international support to build domestic productive competitive export supply capacities for African countries; and a new subparagraph to replace the first three subparagraphs under promoting an enabling environment for sustainable development. The G-77/CHINA could not accept text proposed by the EU on sustainable consumption and production, or text proposed by the US on encouraging the development of African legislation geared to transparent and sustainable management of natural resources. The US suggested deleting “access” in the G-77/CHINA text on improving access of farmers to and their integration into local, regional and world markets, while the G-77/CHINA insisted on its retention. The G-77/CHINA proposed deleting a paragraph proposed by the EU, US, AUSTRALIA and JAPAN on debt restructuring.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT: The G-77/CHINA retained brackets around a reformulated US-proposed reference to poverty eradication. The G-77/CHINA agreed to refer to “securing” equitable land tenure, but said a reference to “women’s rights” in this regard should indicate this action would be in accordance with national legislation and institutions, which the EU bracketed. The G-77/CHINA maintained brackets on reference to building resilience of rural communities to cope with “conflicts.” Delegates discussed alternative options for references to resources, but they remain bracketed.

DROUGHT: In text on IWRM, the G-77/CHINA proposed highlighting its importance within each country, including through water demand management and risk management policies. The EU, supported by the US, suggested dividing the subparagraph into two, with one highlighting the importance of IWRM and a second noting water demand management and risk management policies. The G-77/CHINA accepted a US-proposed reference to ecosystem services in the chapeau.

Delegates debated alternative ways to refer to funding for research and development on the underlying causes and effects of drought, with options for various subparagraphs including “mobilize and enhance,” “continue to mobilize,” and “provide where appropriate.” The G-77/CHINA suggested adding a call for facilitating “affordable” access to drought-tolerant seed varieties, which the US and EU bracketed.

IN THE CORRIDORS

On Thursday afternoon, delegates were informed that negotiations would end at 10:00 pm and that a new Chair’s draft text would be distributed Friday morning with redrafted language for unresolved paragraphs. The announcement was generally welcomed by weary negotiators, who were almost reconciled to sitting through another long night of negotiations after steering their bosses around the many parallel roundtables during the day. The deadline affected the tempo of give-and-take on Thursday afternoon: delegates were heard commending each other on “sincere efforts at compromise,” the text was being streamlined and even shortened, and contact groups were seen frantically struggling to remove remaining brackets. Some commented that there was a growing understanding that issues like trade and climate change, which many argued clearly belong to other fora, are hanging like a pall over the session, draining it of precious time.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of CSD 17 will be available on Monday, 18 May 2009, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csd17/>