



SIDS INTER-REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 29 JANUARY 2004

In the morning, delegates met in Plenary to hear statements by Ministers, Heads of Delegation, observer States and Heads of Organization. An informal ministerial consultation took place in the afternoon to discuss the draft Political Declaration and the draft Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA. Following the informal ministerial consultation, participants met in Plenary and were briefed on the schedule for Friday's proceedings. The drafting group met in the evening to revise the draft Declaration and draft Strategy for consideration by the Plenary on Friday morning.

PLENARY

On implementation of sustainable development strategies, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO and the UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC) drew attention to the inadequate integration of the BPOA into national and regional planning processes and urged greater involvement of civil society. SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES and the COMOROS identified poverty as a major impediment to sustainable development. ECLAC highlighted, *inter alia*, insufficient financial resources and weak institutional capacity as obstacles to the implementation of the BPOA. KIRIBATI emphasized the importance of product diversification, education and training, communications and transport and ecotourism in achieving sustainable development.

Stressing the link between environment and development, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY said there is a need for a strong SIDS voice at the forefront of the international sustainable development debate, and announced a partnership with the WORLD-WIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF), governments and other civil society organizations to support marine biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods.

On the meeting's outcomes, the US VIRGIN ISLANDS said it has limited access to technical organizations and UN programmes and, with the WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

(WMO), emphasized that the draft Strategy should focus on implementation of the BPOA. ITALY underscored the need to synthesize the conclusions of the regional meetings.

On the outcomes of the International Meeting, TONGA recognized the opportunity to mainstream the BPOA review beyond the International Meeting into activities under UN bodies and the secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements. NEW ZEALAND recommended that the outcomes of the International Meeting recognize the need to assist SIDS in developing appropriate, affordable and cost-effective adaptation measures to respond to climate change. ITALY, GERMANY, AUSTRALIA and numerous intergovernmental organizations underlined their support to SIDS and to achieving a successful outcome to the International Meeting.

ECLAC said the implementation of Agenda 21 and the International Meeting's outcomes should be pursued at the regional and subregional levels, through regional commissions and other subregional bodies. The UNEP urged SIDS to focus on: priority setting based on the BPOA, JPOI and MDGs; programmatic activities at the regional and inter-regional levels; regional and international cooperation; obtaining funding from the GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF); and implementing partnerships. The INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION suggested that the outcomes of the International Meeting should be coordinated and integrated with the activities of relevant UN agencies. The PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION/WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION said health-related issues should be a priority outcome of the International Meeting with a particular focus on non-communicable diseases and HIV/AIDS. The CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM called on governments to include targets and time-bound actions in the draft Strategy to address sustainable development in SIDS, urged formalization and strengthening of the structure of AOSIS, and underscored the need to ensure full and active civil society participation at the International Meeting.

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Alice Bisiaux <alice@iisd.org>; Lauren Flejzor <lauren@iisd.org>; Prisma Nuengsigkapan <prisna@iisd.org>; Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>; and Hugh Wilkins <hugh@iisd.org>. The Digital Editor is Leila Mead <leila@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), the Government of Canada (through CIDA, DFAIT and Environment Canada), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DFID and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs - DEFRA), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of Germany (through the German Federal Ministry of Environment - BMU, and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation - BMZ). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2004 is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Government of Australia, Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Swan International, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES) and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI). Funding for translation of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* in French has been provided by the International Organization of the Francophonie (IOF) and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-212-644-0217 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.



On climate change, the COMOROS called for the application of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the support of the international community. KIRIBATI described the social and economic consequences of sea-level rise and climate change, noting that these impacts have been exacerbated by environmental degradation and population growth. ICELAND said the Arctic environment is as an indicator of climatic change. GERMANY and ICELAND stressed the need to promote and implement renewable energy initiatives. The WMO said it would continue to help SIDS address natural disasters and build capacity for disaster management.

On marine and coastal resources, ICELAND noted the reliance of SIDS on marine resources and the need for improved ocean resource assessments, reporting and management. The CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FISHERIES MECHANISM said Caribbean SIDS face many challenges regarding the sustainable management of fisheries and aquatic resources. He urged governments to increase information for decision making, and increase capacity for the sustainable management of oceans and fisheries.

On trade-related issues, several SIDS urged the international community to recognize the vulnerability of SIDS. DOMINICA and others called for preferential and differentiated treatment. SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES noted the limited role SIDS play in trade negotiations and described the social and economic consequences of trade barriers to SIDS exports. AUSTRALIA underlined the need to conclude the Doha Round and for the improved participation of SIDS in that process. NEW ZEALAND said that the International Meeting should emphasize the importance attached to the successful outcome of the Doha Round, particularly in removing trade distorting policies in the agriculture sector.

On cooperation and coordination, SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES said unity among SIDS must be encouraged, and DOMINICA underlined the importance of regional integration.

On capacity building and financial assistance, SURINAME stressed the need for institutional strengthening to build the resilience of SIDS. The COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT said 60% of its technical assistance programmes are directed to small States and expressed its commitment to help SIDS meet their capacity building and technology transfer needs. The GEF informed participants of its Capacity Development Initiative and noted that it has financed 163 national projects and 15 regional projects for SIDS totalling US\$507 million to help them address environmental challenges that affect economic and social development.

UNEP reported on its: preparation of regional booklets on the state of the environment in SIDS; review of subregional position papers on sustainable development; assistance to AIMS and African SIDS; preparation of elements of a proposed Caribbean SIDS Programme; and facilitation of capacity building workshops in SIDS. Noting that his organization is responsible for

coordinating the implementation of the BPOA within the Asia and Pacific region, ESCAP outlined training and assistance programmes for SIDS. The COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT informed participants that it is addressing challenges faced by SIDS, such as lack of participation in trade negotiations, the promotion of foreign investment and the consequences of "September 11" on tourism.

IN THE DRAFTING GROUP

Following an all night session, delegates in the drafting group concluded their work on the draft Political Declaration and the draft Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA at 5:00 am on Thursday. In the afternoon, ministers and heads of delegation convened for an informal consultation to exchange initial views on the draft outcome documents. Ministers mandated the drafting group to reconvene to incorporate their concerns. Following detailed discussions, the drafting group concluded its work with a revised Political Declaration and draft Strategy, which will be considered in Plenary on Friday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Participants milling in the corridors and waiting to hear the outcome of the ministerial consultations were rewarded in the late afternoon with a resounding applause stemming from the ministers in the closed-door meeting. According to some delegates, ministers and other high-level representatives were actively engaged in the review of the draft documents. The ministerial consultations discussed, *inter alia*, language regarding good governance, whether or not to prohibit the passage of ships transporting toxic or radioactive substances through SIDS' waters, and LDC graduation. On good governance, some high-level representatives highlighted that this was a concern of the donor countries and not of SIDS, while others supported such a reference.

On another issue, several delegates are not too optimistic about getting support from both the G-77/China and the donor community for recognizing SIDS as a special and preferential group within the WTO, despite this being a critical issue for many SIDS.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Participants will convene at 9:00 am in Plenary to consider and approve the revised draft Political Declaration and draft Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA.

CLOSING CEREMONY: The closing ceremony is scheduled to take place at 3:00 pm.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin's* summary and analysis report will be available on Monday, 2 February 2004 on the IISD Linkages website at: <http://www.iisd.ca/sids/bpoa10/bahamasprep/>