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CBD COP-4 HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY 7 MAY, 1998

On the fourth day of the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-4) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), delegates met in Working Group I and II throughout the day. Working Group I discussed marine and coastal biodiversity and began deliberation on agricultural biodiversity. Working Group II continued its discussion on national reports, considered the results of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS), discussed *in situ* conservation and began discussion on the relationship between the CBD and other international agreements. A brief afternoon plenary session reported on recommendations from the Bureau and procedural matters.

PLENARY

The Bureau was presented and the following positions were announced: Asia representative Mohammad Reza Salamat (Iran); rapporteur Feliciano Ortega Sampaio (Brazil); and the Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Biosafety, Veit Koester.

The Bureau proposed contact groups on, *inter alia*: SBSTTA, chaired by Professor Zakri A. Hamid (MALAYSIA); CHM, chaired by BRAZIL and the EU; biosafety, co-chaired by John Ashe (ANTIGUA and BARBUDA) and Katrin Kummer (SWITZERLAND).

WORKING GROUP I

On Thursday morning and afternoon, Working Group I (WG-I) reconvened with a report by the FAO on its ongoing collaborative efforts with the CBD, in particular, aspects of the joint work programme related to inland water ecosystems. The FAO noted that the Framework for GEF activities does not provide support for *ex-situ* conservation and the need for more attention on animal and aquatic genetic resources and farming systems, and offered assistance to Parties to implement their national policies and action plans.

On inland waters, Chair Marcel Vernooij (the Netherlands), established a contact group, chaired by Greg Thompson (Canada), to draft a consolidated text incorporating the amendments from WG-I's discussions on Wednesday.

WG-I began considering implementation of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/5). WG-I reaffirmed the Jakarta Mandate and supported the three-year work programme strengthening the development and application of the ecosystem and precautionary approaches, as well as integrated coastal area management. Many delegates supported: identification of indicators; a roster of experts; rigorous control over the introduction of alien species; and strengthening capacity building and increased research

and training. Many delegates called for cooperation with relevant international organizations, in particular RAMSAR, to avoid duplication of effort.

ICELAND and NORWAY, supported by AUSTRALIA, said that while they agreed with the proposed work programme, they were concerned with implementation issues. AUSTRALIA and the US said the work programme constitutes a first step to marshal and coordinate expertise at the global level and, with the support of ICELAND and NORWAY, the UK, on behalf of the EU, and FINLAND, for information required for implementation of activities at the local, national and regional levels.

ICELAND suggested amendments including, *inter alia*: regarding the implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management, deletion of the word "marine" since the term "coastal area" includes adjacent marine areas; and regarding marine and coastal protected areas, that either the objective should state clearly the necessity of promoting work on guidelines or the activities should be more ambitious. FIJI, SPAIN and the US preferred to retain the concept of "integrated marine and coastal area management" as it reflects best practices and the Jakarta Mandate.

TANZANIA, on behalf of the African Group, and supported by the SEYCHELLES, KENYA, ETHIOPIA, COMORES and SOUTH AFRICA, drew attention to the increased temperatures of the Indian Ocean and the resultant coral bleaching throughout the region, and the threat the potential broad biodiversity loss poses to local and indigenous coastal communities. He requested that the CBD Annex I (identification and monitoring) incorporate assessment of coral reef damage. He appealed to the COP to call upon the cooperation of the UNFCCC; PERU requested the same with respect to El Niño.

The SEYCHELLES, on behalf of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and supported by FIJI, NEW ZEALAND, JAMAICA, the BAHAMAS, COMORES, HAITI, GAMBIA, and ETHIOPIA, on behalf of the African Group, noting the exclusion of SIDS' concerns from the work programme, stressed that SIDS are responsible for a significant proportion of global biodiversity.

SWEDEN stressed coordination with regional scientific organizations and making information on genetic resources, including those being prospected by pharmaceutical companies, available to all Parties. FIJI and the INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE PROGRAM noted that the work programme does not incorporate Article 8(j), as directed by decision II/10, and asked the COP to support an amendment. The FOREST PEOPLES' PROGRAMME noted the recently established Industrial Shrimp Action Network and highlighted issues concerning sustainable mariculture. A contact group, to be chaired by John Nevil (Seychelles), was established.

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WG-I considered the Programme of Work on Agricultural Biological Diversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/6, UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf. 20, and UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.24). Most delegates expressed support for the SBSTTA recommendation III/4. ETHIOPIA, on behalf of the African Group, and supported by TANZANIA, KENYA and ZAMBIA, highlighted the importance of agricultural biodiversity for food security. TANZANIA said agricultural biodiversity could be the defining theme in this Convention.

INDIA and other delegations, including MOROCCO, TANZANIA and ETHIOPIA, urged the COP to adopt the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources as a protocol to the CBD. The UK, on behalf of the EU, said cooperation between the CBD and the FAO should be expanded to include other international bodies active in this field. MOROCCO stressed the need to strike a balance between acceptable production levels and conservation of biodiversity, especially for developing countries.

The PHILIPPINES noted with deep concern the emergence of technologies that sterilize agricultural varieties, depriving farmers the ability to reuse their seeds and called for, *inter alia*: a global assessment of agricultural biodiversity; prior informed consent for access; and capacity building for local and indigenous communities, including, *inter alia*, the design of viable incentives.

TANZANIA and INDIA stressed that the IPR regime and the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are detrimental to the objectives of the CBD. INDONESIA urged, *inter alia*, the Consultative Group of the International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) to give more attention to enhancing underutilized species.

WORKING GROUP II

In the morning session, Working Group II (WG-II) resumed its discussion on national reports. WG-II then turned to consideration of the outcome of UNGASS, and delegates discussed trade and environment, sustainable tourism, future work of the CSD and the role of the Convention (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/12). In the afternoon session, WG-II addressed cooperation with other agreements, institutions and processes relevant to *in situ* conservation (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/13), as well as the relationship between the CBD and TRIPS (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.29).

On national reports, BURUNDI, noting that guidelines are not enough, said that Parties' capacity to produce reports must be addressed. ALGERIA stressed the importance of developing flexible, clear and precise guidelines. TANZANIA underlined the importance of adequate and timely provision of resources to produce the reports. RUSSIA supported regional synthesis and requested harmonization of report content and format. The CZECH REPUBLIC, on behalf of the CEE, supported harmonization of reports with other biodiversity-related conventions. ZAMBIA called for biodiversity planning support and, with IRAN, opposed reports focusing on specific articles.

The INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION stressed the need to involve civil society in preparation of national reports, proposed that reports include updates on Article 6, and suggested that reports be made publicly available.

The MARSHALL ISLANDS, for Pacific Island Countries, noted that the Secretariat report overlooked issues important to SIDS. CHILE said that data, ideas and concepts alone will not implement the Convention, and called for real action. The EU, AUSTRALIA, GERMANY and INDONESIA supported the integration of biodiversity consideration into all sectors of human activities.

Regarding sustainable tourism, GERMANY proposed developing guidelines, based on a workshop on biological diversity and sustainable tourism held in Heidelberg in March 1998 (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.21). The EU favored elaboration of guidelines on biodiversity and sustainable tourism in cooperation with UNEP and the World Tourism Organization, and called for an *ad hoc* working group to prepare the guidelines. AUSTRALIA and SOUTH AFRICA suggested a small, regionally balanced group develop the guidelines. ZIMBABWE

supported development of a programme of work relating to tourism. The PACIFIC ISLANDS asked for clarification on the CBD's role in sustainable tourism and noted that a clearer mandate is necessary.

The WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION highlighted its: manual on sustainable tourism; conferences on tourism in SIDS; and seminars on Agenda 21 and tourism.

MALAWI, the PACIFIC ISLANDS, IRAN, AUSTRALIA, INDIA, INDONESIA, CANADA and TOGO supported strengthening cooperation and collaboration between the CBD and other agreements, institutions and processes to secure collective and coordinated action. The EU, COLOMBIA and INDIA supported cooperation with the WTO to address benefit sharing and IPR. The IVORY COAST recommended developing a methodology for expedient implementation of cooperation among conventions. KENYA encouraged promotion of synergy at the national level. BOLIVIA stressed the need for synergy with the UNFCCC due to its influence on biodiversity. The NATURE CONSERVANCY recommended that the COP outline the linkages between the UNFCCC and the CBD and ensure that the Kyoto Protocol is consistent with and in support of the CBD.

On *in situ* conservation, CHAD emphasized the detrimental impact of countries without protected areas and the long term challenge this presents for Parties. SOUTH AFRICA noted that *in situ* conservation is most important for the long-term. ECUADOR and TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO said protected areas should be given greater attention in the long term and at COP meetings. SWITZERLAND, the CZECH REPUBLIC, speaking for the CEE, and MONACO stressed the merits of the Pan-European strategy as an example of regional cooperation. CANADA encouraged the COP to strengthen cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Association. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO and SLOVENIA supported the IUCN's proposal to heighten support for protected areas. KENYA called to consider protected areas under the next programme of work of the CBD.

The Convention on Migratory Species and the World Heritage Convention highlighted areas of synergy with the CBD. The Bern Convention (Europe Region) and the Barcelona Convention (Mediterranean Region) welcomed memorandums of cooperation with the CBD. The IUCN, noting that Article 8 (*in situ* conservation) is critical, stressed collaboration with the CBD.

On trade, MALI opposed emphasizing a complementary relationship between trade and environment, noting, *inter alia*, the adverse impact of development on biological diversity. UGANDA supported the prior informed consent policy for access to genetic resources.

ETHIOPIA introduced its submission (UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.29) on conflicts between the CBD and TRIPS. ETHIOPIA, supported by UGANDA, proposed an open-ended *ad hoc* working group to address the issue. INDIA underlined the importance of the issue and proposed intersessional activities to address the issue. SWITZERLAND said the matter should be addressed by existing mechanisms. The EU said there is no hierarchy between the WTO and MEAs, and no conflict between TRIPS and the CBD. The EU preferred that these issues be addressed in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment. An NGO coalition urged the COP to affirm that the CBD takes precedence over the WTO, ensure that WTO decisions are not harmful to biodiversity and implement Article (8)j.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Some delegates speculated that certain countries may try to obstruct the adoption of a work programme on forests. Otherwise, the corridors were suspiciously quiet.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WG-I: WG-I will reconvene at 10:00 am in Hall C to continue discussion of agricultural biodiversity.

WG-II: WG-II will reconvene at 10:00 am to proceed with discussion on the relationship between the WTO and the CBD and begin the review of the operations of the Convention.