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Article 6 of the Convention

**Report on the African regional workshop on Article 6 of the Convention**

Note by the secretariat\*

*Summary*

The African regional workshop on Article 6 was hosted by the Government of the Gambia in Banjul, Gambia, from 28 to 30 January 2004. Participants from more than 30 countries in the region discussed how to further develop and implement the New Delhi work programme on Article 6, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth session in November 2002.

Many participants emphasized that Article 6 is a priority issue under the Convention for the African region. The workshop presentations and discussions made it clear that important regional resources for implementing Article 6 activities already exist; these include effective organizations and experts, successful programmes and activities, and cooperative agreements with regional and international partners. However, there are many barriers to strengthening climate change outreach, education and training, including lack of financial and human resources, competition from other problems and priorities, and linguistic differences. The workshop explored opportunities and strategies for overcoming these barriers.

The Subsidiary Body for Implementation may wish to use the information contained in this report to identify matters for further consideration and to agree on further action.

\* Co-organization of the workshop necessitated extensive bilateral review and inputs to the report which resulted in the late submission of the document.

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Mandate**

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its seventeenth session, reaffirmed that regional workshops could be a means of further developing and implementing the New Delhi work programme on Article 6, and that such workshops could advance the work on assessing needs, identifying priorities, sharing experience and exchanging information on related activities (FCCC/SBSTA/2002/13, para. 52 (b)). The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), at its eighteenth session, reiterated the need for regional workshops on Article 6 and welcomed the offer of the Government of the Gambia to host an African regional workshop early in 2004 (FCCC/SBI/2003/8, para. 35 (c)).

2. In addition, the Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 11/CP.8, encouraged intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue their activities relevant to Article 6 and invited them to develop programmatic responses to the five-year work programme (FCCC/CP/2002/7/Add.1). Organization of this workshop was one of the contributions the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in this regard.

### **B. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation**

3. The SBI may wish to use the information in this report to identify matters for further consideration, and to agree on further action.

## **II. Organization of the workshop**

4. The African regional workshop on Article 6 was held in Banjul, Gambia, from 28 to 30 January 2004. It was hosted by the Department of Water Resources of the Gambia and organized by UNEP with the support of the UNFCCC secretariat. UNEP and the Governments of the United States of America and Canada provided financing for the event. The provision of interpretation in French and English was made possible by a financial contribution from the Government of France. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) funded the participation of an African expert presenter on training.

5. Regional and international experts were invited to make presentations and participate in discussions at the workshop. Each African UNFCCC focal point was also invited to nominate a national representative to participate and receive funding. Twenty seven experts representing 26 countries from the African region attended the workshop, together with representatives of several intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

## **III. Proceedings**

6. At the invitation of the Chair of the SBI, Ms. Daniela Stoycheva, who was unable to attend, Mr. Abdullatif Benrageb, Chair of the SBSTA, chaired the workshop on her behalf.

7. The workshop was opened by Ms. Susan Wafaa Ogoo, Secretary of State, Department of State for Fisheries, Natural Resources and the Environment of the Gambia. Ms. Wafaa Ogoo urged the development of a regional cooperation strategy on mobilizing support for implementing the Convention. Welcoming and opening remarks were also made by UNFCCC focal point Mr. Bubu Jallow of the Gambia, UNFCCC Article 6 focal point Ms. Fatou Gaye of the Gambia, Mr. Benrageb, and a representative of the UNFCCC secretariat.

8. The workshop was organized in an introductory session, plenary thematic sessions and three parallel working sessions on public awareness, communication and public participation, and access to information; training and education; and regional and international cooperation. All abstracts from the working groups, presentations made by participants, and the list of participants can be found on the UNFCCC web site (<http://unfccc.int>).

#### **IV. Summary of discussions and conclusions by thematic area**

##### **A. Public awareness, communication and public participation, and access to information**

9. The session was chaired by Mr. Benrageb and featured three presentations each followed by an animated discussion. The President of the Gambia Press Union, Mr. Demba Jawo, spoke about how the climate change community can work more effectively with journalists. Mr. Christophe Djossou Gbemiga of the Agency for Young Reporters on Environment and Health in Benin (AYOREB) described a range of communication tools that can be used for climate change outreach. And Mr. Joseph McGann of the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism summarized the progress that the Government of Namibia has made on implementing activities under Article 6.

10. Also highlighted in this session, were the following issues and conclusions:

- (a) Respondents to a pre-workshop survey of 48 African countries ranked the issue of public awareness as the region's top priority, ahead of education and training. Many workshop participants emphasized their commitment to developing sustainable, long-term public awareness strategies for engaging all stakeholders. Such strategies could draw on the experiences gained during outreach efforts for other issues and in other countries and regions;
- (b) The workshop identified policy makers, the general public and youth as key target audiences. Policy makers are a priority because officials responsible for national climate change programmes often find that their colleagues in other ministries and departments are not fully engaged or interested. Because climate change is a cross-cutting issue, climate change policy makers need the active engagement of their other colleagues in order to develop effective policies;
- (c) To be effective, messages must be crafted for the particular target audience and avoid jargon and highly technical terms. Most messages should emphasize vulnerability and adaptation, as these are the most important climate change issues for the African region. Where possible, links should be made to related concerns, such as those dealt with under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to boost the relevance and impact of the message;
- (d) The most effective public outreach campaigns will establish a "human face" for the issue. This involves linking climate change directly to citizens' day-to-day concerns. In particular, climate change should be tied to issues that affect how people earn their living. This can help to motivate people to take action themselves and to pressure their government to respond to climate change. Outreach messages can also focus on encouraging support for certain projects or public expenditures;
- (e) The media is a particularly vital channel for reaching out to the public and to key stakeholders. In many parts of Africa, however, journalists can face serious constraints. Many would like to receive more professional training, including in specialized topics such as climate change. Journalists sometimes observe that government regulations and

practices can inhibit fruitful exchanges between civil servants and the press; they argue that government officials could communicate on climate change more effectively by proactively seeking positive relationships with journalists;

- (f) Outreach strategies should exploit the advantages of each type of media. For example, newspapers and magazines tend to be considered more authoritative, are read by decision makers and allow a more detailed explanation. On the other hand, they reach only the literate and are often concentrated in capital cities, so distribution outside urban areas can be poor. Radio stations that transmit in local languages can be particularly effective for outreach. Radio's strengths are that it is relatively inexpensive, reaches many people and does not require a literate audience;
- (g) In addition to media, other channels for reaching the public can include channelling messages via sports and music celebrities, theatre performances, brochures in local languages, agricultural extension systems and other professional networks, religious groups, and United Nations special days such as World Environment Day and eventually perhaps a United Nations Climate Change Day. Messages can be conveyed through text, drama, song, comedy, contests (such as posters, essays or paintings), publicity events (book launches and debates), on-line chat groups and public meetings. Cultural activities, workshops and seminars, site visits and partnerships with advertisers and NGOs all offer innovative possibilities;
- (h) Promoting public participation in climate change decision-making and public access to information can also play a critical role. Efforts could focus on ensuring that libraries and educational institutions offer a full range of relevant materials, from national communications and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Third Assessment Report (TAR) to videos and popularized brochures. Also essential is a proactive effort to ensure that people are informed about how this climate change information can be accessed;
- (i) Barriers to implementing the above ideas include lack of funding, technical skills and political support. High illiteracy rates and competing national priorities can also undermine outreach efforts. Possible solutions include building partnerships with other ministries, the media and civil society organizations; raising funds and other support from international partners in order to build capacity and leverage national resources; and linking climate change concerns to other priority issues, such as poverty, desertification, agriculture and health.

## **B. Education**

11. Mr. Bai Mass Taal of UNEP chaired the session. The first presenter, Ms. Sukai Bojang of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), described UNESCO programme areas and a number of training opportunities and fellowship programmes sponsored by the United States of America and Japan. Mr. Ebou Kah of the Department of State for Education of the Gambia spoke about formal and non-formal education on climate change. Ms. Barbara DeRosa-Joynt of the United States State Department reviewed United States domestic and international education programmes aimed at raising awareness of climate change. Ms. Ndey Sireng Bakurin of the National Environment Agency of the Gambia presented the agency's environmental education programme with an emphasis on the workshop themes. The four presentations were followed by a group discussion.

12. Conclusions highlighted in this section of the workshop included the following:
- (a) Basic education is the foundation for all communications and awareness raising. Mass public education can promote environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, as well as the skills and behaviour needed to contribute to sustainable development. Although climate change awareness is not the main reason for promoting universal basic education and improving national literacy levels, it will certainly be one of the beneficiaries;
  - (b) One country in the region defines environmental education as a process aimed at developing a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the total environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, motivation and commitment to work individually and collectively towards solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones;
  - (c) Climate change should be included in national curricula at university, secondary and even primary levels. At the higher educational levels, the curriculum needs to be demand-driven, based on an assessment of needs. Developing or reforming curricula must be a continuous process aimed at meeting the changing needs of society. If they have not done so already, universities should consider establishing environmental departments that take a multidisciplinary approach;
  - (d) Schools offer many opportunities for educating students about climate change outside the formal curriculum. For example, some schools organize competitions at primary and secondary levels and present the winners with awards. Other innovations can be based on sports activities, award systems, environmental clubs and Internet web sites. Such strategies could also be applied to the non-formal education sector;
  - (e) Networking among educational institutions should be encouraged. It may be possible and attractive to develop a curriculum at the regional level and then adapt it to the national level. Countries should consider developing and sharing replicable templates and success stories in the field of climate change education;
  - (f) Constructive approaches can include engaging education ministers in the climate change issue, engaging climate change experts in the education process, initiating pilot programmes for elaborating educational materials, instituting a national scientific committee to promote climate education, engaging NGOs, and seeking international support;
  - (g) Environmental education activities spearheaded or facilitated by international agencies may be based on short-term projects and thus not be sustainable. Short-term projects may not allow for the sustained input of local participants who are central to maintaining the programme's effectiveness into the long term. How to ensure that programmes are sustainable is a matter that applies to all areas of Article 6;
  - (h) Participants recognized that the issue of climate change is not given the attention it deserves in the African region. To this end, emphasis should be given to educating experts in the fields of media and journalism, as well as within the clergy, on environmental issues in general, and climate change in particular, to enable them to effectively convey awareness of the risks and impacts of climate change on the general public and economies.

### C. Training

13. This session was chaired by Ms. Madeleine Diouf of Senegal. Mr. Damian Ihedioha of the Nigerian Environmental Study Action Team, spoke on the issue of awareness raising in Africa. Mr. Etienne Sarr of the Aghrymet Regional Centre/Comité permanent inter etats de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS) described the capacity-building and training opportunities offered by this organization relating to climate change and related disciplines. Ms. Amel Bida of the Tunisian National Agency for Renewable Energy presented her country's experience in developing training activities on climate change.

14. Within the context of training, the following issues and conclusions were raised:

- (a) Mr. Andreas Schoenefeld of the International Trypanotolerance<sup>1</sup> Centre (ITC) described what his organization has learned about effective approaches to training in Africa;
- (b) Some workshop participants noted that of the main elements of Article 6, training (and research) may be the most suited to a regional approach. In particular, those regional institutions with competitive advantages in specific fields should receive stronger support. Such support can create positive feedback; the more an institution's capacities are used, the stronger they will become, and the more regional and international support the institution will deserve;
- (c) Governments could consider working together actively to formulate regional strategies on training in full collaboration with national and regional institutions. Government and university training departments could network among themselves more actively. Together they can set priorities (these will probably include vulnerability, adaptation and technology transfer). Funding will be vital, both from national budgets and from international partners. NGOs and civil society may also be able to contribute to developing a regional approach to climate change training;
- (d) The menu of effective approaches to training can include individual and group training, short-term attachments to other organizations or governments in the region, training outside the region, assisting individuals who are seeking advanced academic degrees, organizing workshops and seminars, producing publications and web sites, establishing training departments within government offices, building local expertise and capacity, facilitating the exchange of expertise in the region, and taking advantage of Internet training.

### D. International and regional cooperation

15. Chaired by Mr. Peter Tarfa of Nigeria, this session opened with a presentation by Mr. Alexander Alusa of UNEP on possible opportunities for implementing and funding Article 6 activities through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its Environment Initiative's Action Plan. Mr. Lars Haltbrekken of UNEP-GRID Arendal spoke about how the United Nations system can contribute to international cooperation on Article 6. Mr. Momodou Sarr of the host country's National Environment Agency described the activities of the Gambia's Global Environment Facility (GEF) National Committee and explained why good internal coordination is vital

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<sup>1</sup> **Trypanosomiasis** is a disease of cattle transmitted by the tsetse fly. The exploitation of genetic resistance to trypanosomiasis through the use of indigenous **trypanotolerant** breeds of cattle is one approach to the control of the disease.

for developing effective international partnerships. Mr. Abdou Fall of the ITC described his organization's current role and potential for fostering international cooperation.

16. The following conclusions were drawn from the discussions:
- (a) Existing subregional and regional cooperation on Article 6 is often weak, although there are some encouraging examples. Barriers to regional cooperation include the linguistic divide between anglophone and francophone Africa, differing priorities and capacities, and the lack of existing networks and resources for this work;
  - (b) The benefits of regional cooperation can include reduced operational costs, increased efficiency in resource use, and access to technical assistance and experts. Cooperation could be further strengthened through exchange visits, increased networking and collaboration on projects, improved information and communications infrastructure, increased inflows of financial resources, and language training and the promotion of multilingualism;
  - (c) Specific proposals for strengthening regional cooperation include sharing information products and translations, sharing experiences and ideas, building networks of university research programmes and other under-utilized regional capacities, establishing partnerships with businesses and NGOs, launching a regional strategy on education and training, and establishing a regional network on Article 6. Regional and subregional initiatives, such as CILSS/AGRYMET, the African Development Bank and NEPAD, can also be exploited. It was observed that regional cooperation can complement but not replace efforts at the national level;
  - (d) Particular note was taken of the opportunities for regional cooperation that could arise under NEPAD. A capacity-building programme for implementing the NEPAD Environment Initiative's Action Plan has been developed by UNEP. Specific activities will include strengthening the capacity of African countries to implement global and regional environmental agreements (including the UNFCCC) and supporting African centres of excellence (these centres could undertake work under Article 6 of the Convention). For the implementation of Article 6 in the context of the NEPAD, national focal points need to contact their subregional economic communities, which could become effective and supportive vehicles for awareness raising and capacity-building within their regions;
  - (e) At the international level, cooperation and partnerships can lead to vital financial and technical assistance. As stated in the New Delhi work programme, governments should pursue funding opportunities with the GEF and other bilateral and multilateral sources. They can also explore how to take advantage of international initiatives from the United Nations system and bilateral partners;
  - (f) The workshop strongly supported the development of the UNFCCC Article 6 clearing house, perhaps with a special portal for Africa. Priority contents for the clearing house should include examples of activities, best practices and lessons learned, and directories of Parties, NGOs, IGOs, experts, donors and projects;
  - (g) Opportunities for international cooperation could arise from collaboration with the education, training and public information initiatives under the CBD and the UNCCD.



## V. National experiences

17. Representatives of 12 governments (Benin, Guinea, Madagascar, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia and the Gambia) made presentations on their national activities relating to Article 6. Some key points revealed during these presentations are outlined below.

### A. Institutional arrangements

18. A consistent theme was the importance of establishing a national climate change committee. By drawing together officials from a broad range of ministries and departments, such a committee can help to engage the entire government more fully in the multi-sectoral issue of climate change. One country has targeted all of the members of its committee for training in key climate issues. Another described how its committee contributed to developing and supporting Article 6 activities.

19. A national climate change committee can help to communicate the climate change message to a full spectrum of national policymakers, but a dedicated climate change unit or division may be a practical necessity for ensuring that Article 6 activities occur in a timely manner. For example, one presenter described how such a unit has taken responsibility for ensuring that books on climate change, research papers, popular articles, UNFCCC documentation, IPCC publications, compact discs and other sources of relevant information are available at his ministry's resource centre.

### B. Activities

20. Most countries in the region do not yet have in place a formal implementation plan for Article 6. However, many activities relating to Article 6 are being implemented in the framework of other national environmental projects. The activities that were described during the national presentations included:

- (a) Organization of participatory workshops in all national regions for sensitizing stakeholders such as fishermen, woodcutters, blacksmiths and palm wine tappers;
- (b) Active encouragement of higher-level educational institutions to undertake climate change research and to develop appropriate technologies for capacity-building;
- (c) Launch of a school competition aimed at grades five and six in order to raise awareness of global climate change issues;
- (d) Publication of a teacher's resource guide to enable teachers to explore some of the key questions relating to climate change, including the causes and effects of climate change and the available response options;
- (e) Organization of a workshop on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change for officials from government departments and other institutions with the aim of raising awareness about pending national issues;
- (f) Development of a national strategy document on implementing the Convention and its to inform and sensitize representatives of ministries and NGOs about the Convention;
- (g) Publication of popularized brochures explaining climate change to the general public;
- (h) Identification of and publicizing useful technologies for addressing climate change in the country's particular circumstances;
- (i) Training of some 300 automobile mechanics in maintaining engines in peak condition to reduce emissions;

- (j) Publication of articles on climate change in the Ministry's publications;
- (k) Identification of possible impacts at the national level and publication of a detailed description of national risks and potential solutions;
- (l) Development of a public awareness program involving the use of a climate change booklet and poster translated into local languages;
- (m) An outreach campaign based on meteorological extremes actually suffered by the country;
- (n) Celebration of World Environment Day (5 June) by focusing on climate change issues and promoting the synergy between the three Rio conventions;
- (o) A national outreach campaign based on a formal needs assessment of what could be done to address climate change in that country.

### **C. Constraints and barriers**

21. The following are some of the key constraints and barriers discussed during the national presentations:

- (a) The multiplicity of local languages and the regional divide between English and French;
- (b) In some countries, the rapid turnover of policy makers requires educating new officials on a regular basis;
- (c) Inadequate funding is a universal concern;
- (d) Inadequate expertise and staff was frequently cited;
- (e) Bureaucratic resistance and difficulties of coordination can impede the efficient implementation of Article 6 activities;
- (f) International support can often come with heavy and time-consuming reporting procedures attached;
- (g) Government officials and the general public may ignore climate change messages because they are more focused on other priorities, such as poverty and AIDS;
- (h) Practical limitation on communications, from slow Internet to illiteracy to limited distribution of newspapers, can be serious barriers.

## **VI. Conclusions and issues for further consideration**

22. The SBSTA Chair, Mr. Abdullatif Benrageb, distributed and presented an informal two-page note highlighting some of the key themes and conclusions that he had noted as emerging from the workshop. This was followed by a brief discussion in which participants mentioned the following key issues as possible areas for further consideration:

- (a) Providing support to regional institutions with competitive advantages in specific fields of education, training and public awareness may be the most suitable and effective way to initiate action in these areas in Africa;

- (b) There is a need to identify specific opportunities for regional cooperation, for example, in launching a regional strategy on education and training, or in establishing a regional network on Article 6. Such initiatives could be explored through the establishment of partnerships with businesses and NGOs, as well as by strengthening existing regional and subregional efforts such as those developed by CILSS/AGRYMET and the African Development Bank;
- (c) In the areas of awareness raising and capacity-building activities for the implementation of Article 6, the NEPAD initiative provides an important channel through which the capacity of African countries to implement global and regional environmental agreements (including UNFCCC) can be strengthened. To this end, national focal points could explore how to benefit from this initiative in formulating their national programmes for implementing Article 6 activities;
- (d) Given that the media is a vital channel for reaching the public and key stakeholders, conducting briefings and seminars on climate change (national, subregional and/or regional) to enhance the relationship between government officials and journalists and to keep journalists abreast of the issues, could assist in raising the profile of climate change in Africa;
- (e) Countries could also consider developing and sharing replicable templates of activities and success stories in the field of climate change. One possible channel could be through the development of regional curricula for education on climate change at primary and secondary school levels. These templates can then be adapted to local and national needs, as appropriate;
- (f) Governments could consider collaborating actively with national and regional institutions, including universities, as well as with NGOs, to formulate regional strategies for climate change training, including setting priorities in such important areas as vulnerability, adaptation and technology transfer. Access to funding, both from national budgets and from international partners, will be vital;
- (g) Priority in implementing work under the New Delhi work programme on Article 6 could be given to strengthening regional cooperation through sharing information products and translations, sharing experiences and ideas, building networks of university research programmes and other under-utilized regional capacities;
- (h) Synergy with other environmental conventions could be promoted especially when initiating pilot programmes for elaborating educational materials, instituting national scientific committees to promote climate education, engaging NGOs, and seeking international support.

23. The workshop was closed by Mr. Momodou A. Cham, Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Fisheries, Natural Resources and the Environment of the Gambia.

### **In memoriam**

During the workshop the organizers and host government were informed that Mr. Pierre Boyou, the participant from Congo Brazzaville, had been killed in an automobile accident while travelling to Banjul. The SBSTA Chair, Mr. Abdulatief Benrageb paid tribute to this widely appreciated colleague for his dedication, hard work and friendliness. A letter from UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Ms. Joke Waller Hunter, to the Government of Congo Brazzaville was read out. The participants held a minute of silence in memory of Mr. Boyou.

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