

Opening of the meeting

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlafl, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, opened the meeting welcoming all participants (see annex 1 for the list of participants). In opening the meeting, Mr. Djoghlafl informed participants that the Secretary General's meeting on biodiversity clearly revealed how important the three Rio Conventions are to all countries. Mr. Djoghlafl also informed participants that enhanced collaboration is at the top of many agendas and that a number of countries have expressed support for a joint work programme or action plan.

As the host of the meeting, Mr. Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, welcomed participants to New York and offered the use of the UNCCD offices to all Executive Secretaries when visiting New York.

Finally, Mr. Djoghlafl officially welcomed Ms. Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) and congratulated her on her recent appointment noting the vision of the UNFCCC in establishing the JLG in 2001 as a vehicle for further collaboration.

Ms. Figueres thanked Mr. Djoghlafl and Mr. Gnacadja for the welcome and emphasized the need to ensure that cooperation between the Secretariats can deliver real benefits on the ground.

1. Tour de table on issues of relevance on recent meetings and any implications of these and preparations of upcoming Conferences of the Parties

UNFCCC

Ms Figueres informed the meeting that the UNFCCC Secretariat is already preparing for Cancun under the realization that the process of negotiation under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol will be a long one that may require incremental steps towards the new climate change regime. Ms. Figueres did, however, inform the meeting that there is already a clear understanding of the cornerstones for the new climate regime even if there remains a huge amount of work to be done. For Cancun, it is important to achieve concrete steps forward but expectations need to be realistic. In that regard, the secretariat is focusing its full attention on preparing for the Cancun meetings although there will be a greater scope for other efforts towards enhanced collaboration once Cancun is concluded. In this regard, the update and revision of the JLG brochures on the themes of adaptation and forests will have to wait until after Cancun.

Ms. Figueres confirmed that she will be attending the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Nagoya. In response Mr. Djoghlafl invited Ms. Figueres and Mr. Gnacadja to convene a high level dialogue between the three Executive Secretaries and the Secretary General in Nagoya. Accordingly, Mr. Djoghlafl requested that the other Executive Secretaries indicate a convenient time for such a dialogue.

CBD

Mr. Djoghlafl informed the meeting of the proposal under the CBD for a joint work programme between the three Rio Conventions and the proposal to have an extraordinary meeting of the Rio Convention Conferences of the Parties. Mr. Djoghlafl confirmed that there are a number of Parties to the CBD who have expressed support for further joint activities and highlighted the importance of moving forward with such activities in a transparent manner with clearly defined objectives and expected outcomes.

In terms of the process, some Parties to the CBD are suggesting a joint expert group meeting between the three Rio Conventions followed by consideration of the process and content at the COPs of each of the three Conventions.

Mr. Djoghlaif further reminded the meeting of the joint work programme with the UNCCD which was adopted by both processes as guidelines for implementation. With regards to a Rio Conventions joint work programme, there are potential synergies including on REDD+ and on ecosystem- based approaches for adaptation.

Ms. Figueres expressed concern about how a joint COP could be convened, both in terms of logistics and in terms of the scope of such a meeting. She also noted that the mandate of the UNFCCC secretariat is focused on servicing negotiations not in supporting implementation.

Mr. Gnacadja emphasized the need to work through the many existing provisions that already exist such as the Nairobi Work Programme. The JLG could contribute through expanding the list of proposed actions in a way that could be better implemented by Parties in response to the many calls for enhanced synergies. A joint work programme (or framework for joint activities) could provide inputs and guidance to national implementation.

Ms. Figueres expressed concern over the issue of REDD+ as being a new and precarious issue under the UNFCCC – as such, it is best to wait until a decision is adopted. There is a similar concern regarding adaptation which is still under active negotiation as the Nairobi work programme is reaching its completion and it is unclear what the next iteration will entail.

Finally, Mr. Djoghlaif informed the meeting that the bureaus of the CBD COP and Subsidiary Body of Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) have requested joint bureau meetings among the three Rio Conventions. Mr. Gnacadja informed the meeting as well that at the last COP bureau meeting of the UNCCD, the bureau requested additional information on what would be discussed at such a meeting. Ms. Figueres noted that no such suggestion had been raised in the Bureau of the UNFCCC COP, and Mr. Kinley noted that the UNFCCC Bureau did not play a role on outstanding matters.

2. The Rio Conventions' Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion*

Mr. Djoghlaif briefed the meeting on the Pavilion based on the background document prepared for this agenda item including providing an overview of the budget, programme and key partners. Mr. Djoghlaif also informed the meeting that the Pavilion in Nagoya and Cancun will be covered by a dedicated staff member who will develop a Pavilion Daily Bulletin as well as a consultant team who will provide video coverage. Mr. Djoghlaif also informed the meeting that Dan Shepherd has been appointed as the spokesperson for the Pavilion. Mr. Djoghlaif also committed to providing French interpretation for the Land Day component of the Pavilion in Nagoya recognizing the importance of the issues to be discussed to francophone countries.

With regards to the UNFCCC COP in Cancun, the UNFCCC Secretariat will explore how to best support the Pavilion through the daily programme. Ms. Figueres will see how to participate. With regards to a joint reception, it could be feasible within the framework of the Rio Conventions calendar launch, but final arrangements need to be confirmed.

With regards to the UNCCD COP in Changwon, Republic of Korea, the UNCCD will take the lead with regards to identifying priority themes although the CBD will provide the main logistic

and organizational support.

The meeting agreed to update and refine the background document based on input and views from the Secretariats of UNCCD and UNFCCC.

3. Joint Implementation of the NAPs and NAPAs on a pilot basis

Mr. Gnacadja informed the meeting that the joint collaboration issue for NAPs and NAPAs has been on the agenda of many discussions, however, implementation has been difficult. Mr. Gnacadja then passed the floor to Mr. Zelaya who informed the meeting that there is now support available for pilot countries for joint implementation (currently only Mali). Furthermore, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) supports the promotion of synergy between adaptation and sustainable land management during the implementation of the NAPAs and NAPs. Mr. Gnacadja emphasized that the role of the Secretariat is to support country readiness and the implementation of national plans that, in some cases, have considerable overlap.

Mr. Gnacadja informed the meeting that NAPs are currently being reviewed and revised based on new performance and impact indicators and being aligned with the Ten-Year Strategic Programme with report to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). Mr. Djoghlafl revealed that the UNCCD CRIC will coincide with the revision of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and suggested that the two processes be coordinated.

As a result, the CBD will send the other Secretariats a list of regional workshops for NBSAP revision and capacity building to identify how the processes can be coordinated. Mr. Djoghlafl requested the UNFCCC to contribute input and expertise to support the workshops. Mr. Kinley, on behalf of Ms. Figueres, agreed that the UNFCCC secretariat could provide some support for planning but will have to check with regards to the capacity available to support such meetings. Mr. Gnacadja emphasized that such a process could help focus attention on the common drivers of loss. Mr. Djoghlafl suggested that the GEF Secretariat could also be involved.

Mr. Kinley, speaking on behalf of Ms. Figueres, emphasized that the UNFCCC Secretariat is ready to examine additional pilot projects under the direction of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group.

Mr. Djoghlafl offered to provide further input to add NBSAPs to the pilot in Mali and suggested to hold a joint meeting with the minister from Mali in Nagoya to identify ways forward. Furthermore, Mr. Djoghlafl informed the meeting that the Government of Japan has established a trust fund for the updating and finalization of NBSAPs and that this process could be aligned with the NAP updates and further work on adaptation planning both through updates and revisions to the NAPAs and through other mechanisms that may be established under the UNFCCC.

4. Preparation of Rio+20 Earth Summit

Mr. Djoghlafl suggested to the meeting that the objective of collaboration with regards to preparation of the Rio+20 Earth Summit could be to provide support / facilitation to encourage discussions between different ministries for the enhanced implementation of the three Rio Conventions. To do this, the JLG would need to look at commonalities between mandates and activities. In this regard, it is important to make sure that the wills of the government, as expressed through decisions of the respective COPs, are a priority for all UN processes both in UN policy development and in the implementation of UN programmes.

Mr. Djoghlahf made a proposal for a meeting of the Chief Executives Board (CEB) on how the UN system can support implementation of the decisions adopted by the COPs of the Rio Conventions. Mr. Djoghlahf also suggested a joint event around the arrival of Mr. Jean Lemire in Rio.

Mr. Gnacadja informed the meeting that the Preparatory Committee for Rio+20 will be held in New York on 7-8 March, 2011. There has also been an invitation extended for 4 November for a half day meeting EC-ESA Principals and Heads of other relevant UN system entities on Rio+20. Mr. Djoghlahf indicated that he will attend the meeting which he sees as being very important to ensure that the Rio Conventions provide the input required to shift the UN architecture towards the post-Rio world. Mr. Gnacadja has conflicting commitments and will need to consider the possibility of attending.

5. Celebration of International Year on Forests – presentation by UNFF

Mr. Djoghlahf welcomed Ms. Jan McAlpine, Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, to the meeting. Ms. McAlpine provided the meeting with a presentation on Forests 2011 (the international year of forests) under the theme of 'Forest for People'. The objective of Forests 2011 is to create awareness of forests and their importance. Ms. McAlpine explained that the UNFF is the focal point for the year but will work actively with a number of partners to mount activities and celebrations.

Ms. McAlpine expressed a need to bring in the needs and views of the Rio Conventions when celebrating the year and implementing communication objectives. Particular areas for closer collaboration include the valuation of forest goods and services and the building of connections with other ministries and sectors and the identification of key messages that would resonate with each Conventions' delegates.

Ms McAlpine informed the meeting that the Conventions can use the logo which is available in all official UN languages and can be provided in any other language as long as the translated text is provided. Finally, Ms. McAlpine identified some common events such as the closing ceremony for the International Year of Biodiversity, which will bridge to Forests 2011.

Mr. Djoghlahf congratulated Ms. McAlpine and the team for their excellent work in preparing for the year.

Mr. Kinley, on behalf of Ms. Figueres, committed to conferring with the substantive and communication teams of UNFCCC to see how they can reinforce the objectives of the year. Ms. McAlpine will extend an invitation to the communication teams of each of the secretariats of the Rio Conventions to a joint meeting on communication in Rome.

Mr. Djoghlahf emphasized the importance of forests to the CBD and reminded the meeting of the strengthened collaboration with UNFF including a Memorandum of Understanding, proposed joint staff in New York and the assignment of the CBD forest expert to Bonn (subject to the agreement of the COP), as well as joint activities with national and provincial governments in Japan, and the voyage of Mr. Jean Lemire. Mr. Djoghlahf also informed the meeting that the theme for the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) in 2011 will be 'forest biodiversity' and that the international year will be fully integrated into the Green Wave events in 2011. Other opportunities for collaboration include the proposed(?) UN Decade on Biodiversity (has it been adopted already?) and the US forum on urban forests.

Mr. Gnacadja expressed his commitment to provide input through the UNCCD communication team to the key messages not only on forests but also on climate and soil. Mr. Gnacadja is also interested to explore how joint activities in 2011 can contribute to the celebration of the UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification. Ms. McAlpine welcomed the offer and suggested that additional themes could include finance issues in dry forests.

6. Expectations and main lines of a successful cooperation within the JLG context

Mr. Kinley, on behalf of Ms. Figueres, expressed the view that focusing on specific topics can move the synergies agenda forward – the NAP, NAPA, NBSAP issue may be one way to promote such synergies.

Mr. Gnacadja emphasized that for the next JLG, an effort should be taken to identify those topics and themes that lend themselves to closer collaboration. In this regard, the JLG needs to build on annex 1 to the JLG 7 report and see how it can be implemented. This should be looked at in more detail following Cancun when there is more clarity regarding the Nairobi Work Programme, and REDD+.

With regards to enhanced collaboration, the participants concluded that there may be scope for NAPAs to act as planning tools for joint activities at the national level for the implementation of the three Rio Conventions however there has not yet been a strong call from Parties for NAPAs to act in such a capacity. It was also noted that the targeted inter-sectoral cooperation on relevant key issues is useful, with the main responsibility resting at the national level.

7. Other matters

Mr. Gnacadja called the attention of the JLG to the International Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification for which the UNCCD Secretariat has been mandated to coordinate. Mr. Gnacadja requested the other Secretariats to support collaboration among the communication teams to explore ways in which to support the celebrations. Mr. Djoghlafl indicated that after 2012, the UNCCD can request the theme of deserts and combating desertification for any of the International Days for Biological Diversity. Mr. Gnacadja indicated that Ms. Yukie Hori, Coordinator of the Awareness Raising, Communication and Education Unit of UNCCD, will follow up with counterparts in the other Secretariats.

8. Closing and next meeting

With regards to the next meeting, Mr. Djoghlafl proposed 2-3 February, 2011 to coincide with the launch of the international year on forests, however, there is a need to confirm agendas of the 3 Conventions. If this meeting cannot be convened then, there may be a possibility to have a meeting in Bonn in January, 2011. As the Chair, the UNCCD will develop a draft agenda and coordinate for the timing.

Annex 1: List of Participants

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif
Ms. Jaime Webbe

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

Mr. Luc Gnacadja
Mr. Melchiade Bukuru
Mr. Sergio Zelaya

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Ms. Christiana Figueres
Mr. Richard Kinley
Mr. Henning Wuester
Ms. Karen Smith