

# **Joint Liaison Group of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

## **Report of the Eighth meeting**

Madrid, 12 September 2007

### **I. Opening of the meeting**

1. The eighth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held on 12 September 2007 at the margins of the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD, at the 'Palacio de Congressos' in Madrid, Spain.

2. Mr. Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC chaired the meeting. A list of participants is contained in annex I. The Chair of the SBSTA to the UNFCCC, Mr. Kishan Kumarsingh, was excused as he was chairing a workshop under the UNFCCC's Nairobi work programme taking place at the same time. At the end of the meeting, the Executive Secretaries of the CBD and UNFCCC as well as the respective Chairs to the Conventions that were present at the meeting were introduced to the Executive Secretary-Designate of the UNCCD, Mr. Luc Gnacadja.

### **II. Adoption of the agenda**

3. The agenda was adopted as presented in annex II. The main objective of the meeting was to take stock of the activities agreed at the previous JLG meeting and to further define proposals for joint activities. Mr. de Boer suggested to focus on the activities for further action as discussed under the list of activities considered at the seventh meeting so as to identify possible next steps. Under 'other matters' the UNCCD had suggested to discuss the building blocks for a strengthened international environmental governance, in particular with regards to what relates to Multilateral Environmental Agreements, based on the co-chairs option paper on the informal consultative process on the institutional framework for the United Nations' environmental activities.

### **III. Reports and updates**

4. Mr. Djoghlafl and the upcoming SBSTTA Chair, Mr. Asghar Fazel, provided a brief report on the outcomes of the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SBSTTA held from 2 - 6 July 2007 in Paris, and made available recommendation XII/5, which addresses options for mutually supportive actions addressing climate change within the Rio conventions. SBSTTA 13 will present recommendations to the ninth meeting of COP to the CBD based on the outcomes of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> JLG meetings as well as views that Parties to the CBD will provide on this matter. They also reported on outcomes of SBSTTA's consideration of the issue of biofuels and the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands that are also of relevance to the UNCCD and UNFCCC.

5. Mr. de Kalbermatten provided a brief progress report on the negotiations taking place during the eighth session of the COP. The UNCCD is in the process of elaborating a 10-year strategic plan, which was the main focus of discussions during its COP. It is expected that this plan will also give strategic guidance to the UNCCD secretariat which may lead to some reconstruction of programmes; also the

availability for any resources, including for cooperative activities with the CBD and UNFCCC, would depend on the outcome of the discussions that were taking place under the COP.

6. Under the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) of the UNCCD, Parties also discussed ways in which synergies among the Rio conventions could be enhanced, in particular at the local and country level, as reported by Mr. Franklin Moore, Chair of the CRIC, and Mr. Ndiang'ui. In particular the relationship between National Action Programmes (NAPs) under the UNCCD and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) under the UNFCCC provides potential to increase synergy in the implementation of the Convention; in this regard, Parties to the UNCCD in their draft decisions invited the JLG to provide advise on how to strengthen the links between these two programmes. The group was also informed on the UNCCD's close collaboration with the CBD on the JWP on the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands.

7. The group was further informed that discussions in the CRIC and CST also touched upon the possibility of harmonizing reporting among the Conventions. In this context, participants shared information on a project on joint reporting by the GEF and the pilot projects there under. Although there is a common understanding that the possibilities of harmonizing reporting among the Conventions are limited given the different nature of reporting requirements including the different legal contexts, the group noted potential for harmonized reporting as regards the basic data and information that each Party provides under each Convention. This could be contained in country profiles that Parties are preparing in the context of national reports to the UNCCD. In addition, the NAPAs could also be seen as a common theme to work together in relation to reporting. Participants noted the paramount importance of national level cooperation, including in the area of reporting, which could be supported through the development of national databases that could, to a certain extent, serve multiple reporting requirements and hence facilitate reporting by Parties. The chair proposed to consider the possibility of developing a framework for joint reporting, taking into account that this would be possible for only certain reporting requirements as well as any legal context of those requirements (such framework could build upon common reporting requirements and identify those requirements that may have common elements, such as in the NAPAs and NAPs), and to discuss this issue at the next meeting of the JLG. To this end it was proposed that UNFCCC secretariat prepare a discussion note to be presented to the next meeting of the JLG.

#### **IV. Progress in the elaboration of the information notes on forests and adaptation**

8. As a first step to enhance collaboration in the area of forests and deforestation, the JLG agreed at its previous meeting that the three secretariats draft an information note on the interlinkages between forests, climate change, desertification and biodiversity. Similarly, the JLG had also agreed to draft an information note on adaptation activities, plans and programmes, adopted within the framework of each Convention. Both notes would be distributed at relevant meetings, starting with the thirteenth session of the COP to the UNFCCC (December 2007) and would also be made available to the ninth session of the COP to the CBD (May 2008).

9. The group considered the outlines of both notes and noted that the preparation of these notes is progressing in line with the agreed timetable. It also discussed the distribution of some tasks associated with the preparation of the notes. The CBD offered to prepare the introduction and to do the layout. As regards financing for the printing of the notes, it was suggested that the UNFCCC secretariat tries to find a donor to cover the costs.

## **V. Analysis of activities for cooperation at the level of secretariats based on the agreed list of activities contained in annex I to the JLG report of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting**

10. At its previous meeting, the JLG considered a number of possible activities at the level of the Secretariats to enhance cooperation on the basis of a proposal made by the CBD secretariat; these activities are listed in annex I of the report of the 7<sup>th</sup> JLG meeting. It was agreed that each secretariat undertake an analysis of each of those activities listed in that annex on the basis of its technical and logistical feasibility; and financial implications and staff capacity, and to consider this analysis at its next meeting.

11. A compilation of comments by the secretariats on the above-mentioned activities was made available to the participants of the group. On the basis of the comments received, the chair suggested to consider the activities in three categories, as follows, and to focus discussions at this meeting on those activities listed under paragraph (b) below:

- (a) Activities that are already on-going and hence do not require further action at this point; these would be continued as in the past, unless there is a need to provide feedback and/or additional guidance, which could be considered at future meetings; this type of activities include:
  - (i) Keep staff in other secretariats informed of discussions and decisions on relevant synergistic activities or programmes;
  - (ii) Continuing the sharing of experiences by secretariat staff in forums such as the CBD Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Technology Transfer and the UNFCCC Working Group in Technology Transfer or its successor;
  - (iii) Continue to provide inputs and views on forest issues and adaptation as requested by the subsidiary bodies of the Conventions;
  - (iv) Share experiences reported by Parties on communication, education and public awareness events.
- (b) Priority activities that the secretariats could start implementing in the short term; these activities would include:
  - (i) Draft and distribute, at least once per year, a newsletter on synergies between the Rio Conventions;
  - (ii) Ensure that Parties are kept informed of relevant activities on forests and climate change: A common web page on synergies (forests, adaptation and other topics);
  - (iii) Collaborate on the development of educational materials: start with a compilation of educational material being developed under each Convention and development of a proposal for discussion at next JLG;
  - (iv) Development of joint web based communication tools: a consultancy on information needs.
- (c) Activities that need further consideration before they can be implemented and should therefore be discussed at future meetings. These include the remainder of activities listed in annex I to the report of the 7<sup>th</sup> JLG meeting.

12. The group agreed to the above categorization of activities and to continue those activities that are already on-going, as listed under paragraph 11 (a) above. As regards activities that could be implemented soon, the group agreed to focus on the set of activities listed under 11 (b) for the near future. It was in principle also agreed to go forward with those activities; however, given the resource implications of some of those activities and the transitional phase that the UNCCD is undergoing, including the possible need to develop an information strategy under the new UNCCD's 10 year strategy, as well as associated resource uncertainties, it was agreed to wait for a formal confirmation from the UNCCD before starting implementation of those activities.

## **VI. Other matters**

13. After a suggestion by the UNCCD, the group shared information and views on the building blocks for a strengthened international environmental governance, in particular as it relates to Multilateral Environmental Agreements, based on the co-chairs option paper on the informal consultative process on the institutional framework for the United Nations' environmental activities.

14. The UNCCD also reported on the outcome of the International Forum on Soils, Society and Global Change, held in Iceland on from 31 August to 4 September 2007, in which the strong links between land degradation and GHG emissions were highlighted and discussed. The plan of action suggested at that meeting includes a proposal for the preparation of a special report by the IPCC on land degradation and climate change.

## **VII. Closure**

15. Mr. de Boer thanked participants for their active participation. The next formal meeting of the JLG will take place in May 2008 in Bonn at the margins of the ninth session of the COP to the CBD, and will be chaired by the CBD. In addition, it was agreed that those members of the group that would attend the UNFCCC sessions in Bali in December 2007, would meet in an informal way at the margins of the high level segment to share information and take stock of on-going activities.

## **VIII. Next steps**

16. The following next steps emerged from the discussions at this meeting:

- (d) Finalization of the information notes on forests and adaptation, as planned, and identification of sponsors for the printing by UNFCCC;
- (e) Formal confirmation from the UNCCD secretariat to the activities listed in paragraph 11 (b) above, upon which the three secretariats would start initial steps towards their implementation;
- (f) Arrange for an informal gathering of JLG participants at the margins of the UNFCCC sessions in Bali in December 2007;
- (g) Draft discussion note on harmonized reporting by the UNFCCC secretariat to be presented to the next formal meeting of the JLG (May 2008).

Annex I

**List of participants**

**Convention on Biological Diversity**

Mr. Asghar M. Fazel  
CBD/SBSTTA Chair

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif  
Executive Secretary of the CBD secretariat

**United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

Mr. Franklin C. Moore  
Chair of the CRIC  
Director, Office of Environment and Science Policy

Mr. Grégoire De Kalbermatten  
Officer- in-Charge of the UNCCD secretariat

Ms. Maria N.U. Rodriguez  
For the Chair of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST)

Ndegwa Ndiang'ui  
Senior Scientific Affairs Officer  
Committee on Science and Technology (CST)

Mr. Goodspeed Kopolo  
Senior Programme Officer

**United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Mr. Bagher Asadi  
Chair, Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Mr. Yvo de Boer  
Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC secretariat

Ms. Rocio Lichte  
Programme Officer Adaptation, Technology and Science Programme

Annex II

**Joint Liaison Group  
CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC**

**Eighth meeting**

**Wednesday, 12 September 2007, 10:00 am**

Palacio de Congressos, Madrid, Spain

*Chair: Yvo de Boer, UNFCCC*

Draft provisional agenda

1. Welcome and opening
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Reports and updates
  - a. Report on the Relevant Recommendations of the Twelfth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity
4. Progress on the elaboration of the information notes on forests and adaptation
5. Analysis of activities for cooperation at the level of secretariats, based on the agreed list of activities contained in Annex I to the JLG report of the 7th meeting
6. Other matters
7. Closing

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