

Joint Liaison Group
of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the
UNFCCC, the UNCCD and the CBD

Fourth meeting
Bonn, 19 May 2003

SUMMARY

1. A meeting of the joint liaison group (JLG) was held in Bonn on 19 May 2003, chaired by Ms. Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); a list of participants is given in the annex. The primary purpose of the meeting was to exchange information on the sessions of each of the convention bodies and on plans for future events. There was strong agreement that enhancing cooperation at the national level is very important and that improving the exchange of information among conventions should be an important goal of the JLG.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

2. Mr. Biaou, Chair of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), reported on key thematic topics, conclusions and recommendations relating to linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and national development strategies, as adopted at CRIC 1 (November 2002). Mr. Brown, Chair of the Committee for Scientific and Technological Advice (CST), reported on a four-year work programme dealing with issues relating to the current state of knowledge on mitigation, policy adaptation, land degradation and land-use, poverty reduction and synergies. Mr. Ndiang'ui highlighted the three main objectives of the UNCCD national synergy workshops, namely to strengthen local coordination at national level, to facilitate donor dialogue and to explore joint work plans. Mr. Diallo, Executive Secretary, informed the group that it was likely that UNCCD and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) would organize a workshop in Italy on issues relating to forestry near the end of the year. He invited the UNFCCC secretariat to join in organizing this activity. Ms. Waller-Hunter indicated that she would bring this request to the attention of the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies at their next session.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

3. Mr. Zedan, Executive Secretary, reported on issues of relevance at SBSTTA 8 (March 2003) such as mountain biological diversity, land degradation and adaptation. He reported that no new work programmes are planned, with the exception of island biodiversity. At SBSTTA 9 (March 2004), the focus will be on such issues as technology transfer and cooperation, access and benefit sharing, dry and sub-humid lands and the CBD strategic plan. He stressed possible benefits in sharing the experience UNFCCC has gained in the field of technology transfer. He informed the group that a brainstorming meeting will take place in London to discuss how to address the 2010 biodiversity targets. Mr. Mulongoy informed the participants about the third Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) meeting on biodiversity and climate change which took place in Helsinki during the week of 12 May 2003. He mentioned that CBD would hold a side event on this topic during SBSTA 18 (June 2003). He also informed the meeting about activities relating to the clearing house mechanism and regional workshops on technical and scientific cooperation.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

4. Mr. Thorgeirsson, Chair of the SBSTA, reported on decisions and conclusions emerging from COP 8 and SBSTA17 (October 2002) including the Delhi Declaration and aspects of adaptation and sustainable development. He highlighted progress in the area of land use, land-use change and forestry, good practice guidance and Article 6 on education, training and public awareness. He stressed the importance of cooperation in cross-cutting areas such as the six themes for the SBSTA workshop on

/...

cooperation with other conventions. Ms. Stoycheva, Chair of the SBI, reported on cross-cutting issues under the SBI such as the special climate fund, the workshop on synergies under decision 5/CP.7 and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Mr. Pasztor added information on National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), the Least Developed Countries fund, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group and regional workshops.

Ramsar

5. Mr. Bridgewater, Secretary General designate, reported on recent developments at COP 8 (November 2002), mentioning key issues such as the important link between culture and wetlands, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel assessment, management of mangroves and coral reefs, and issues relating to education and outreach. While agreeing with the need for cooperation, he noted that because of the small size of his secretariat, work on synergies must be focused.

General issues

6. Ms. Waller-Hunter reported on the 22nd session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, including a proposal for an Intergovernmental Panel on Global Environmental Change on which consultations will be undertaken. She also updated the JLG on discussions held in the context of the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and distributed a table on the Multi-Year Programme of Work. Mr. Pasztor and Mr. Gomez-Echeverri reported on the outcome of the GEF Council, particularly on issues relating to capacity-building, adaptation and national communications. It was suggested that further thought be given to how to interact further with the GEF to achieve practical joint actions at the national level.
7. Mr. Kinley and Mr. Mulongoy reported on a synergy workshop in Rabat, organized by l'Institut de l'Energie et de l'Environnement de la Francophonie (IEPF). The workshop provided a forum to exchange information among representatives from francophone countries on synergies between the three conventions. Cross-cutting issues discussed included forestry/land degradation, education, NAPAs /national reporting, capacity-building and the clearing house mechanism.
8. Mr. Grose and Ms. Hoffmann summarized activities relating to the joint calendar, including activities underway to improve its maintenance. Mr. Grose also identified several possible options to enhance the exchange of information among Parties and the secretariats, including for example, the development of a portal for accessing all national communications. The JLG agreed to continue the calendar. The JLG requested Mr. Grose to cooperate further with colleagues in other secretariats to improve the calendar and to report to the next meeting on additional options to strengthen the sharing of information.
9. To further enhance cooperation, it was agreed that staff members from each convention would exchange information and explore concrete options initially relating to technology transfer, incentive measures and observational networks. It was noted that the forthcoming SBI and SBSTA workshops on synergies would be a good opportunity to further improve the spirit of cooperation among the conventions. Participants agreed that to ensure that the JLG remains focused and efficient, participants should be drawn from the three conventions, but that the experience of other organizations should be sought as needed.

Annex

List of Participants

- UNFCCC:** Joke Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary
Halldor Thorgeirsson, Chair of SBSTA
Daniela Stoycheva, Chair of SBI
Dennis Tirpak, Coordinator, Methods, Inventories and Science Programme
Luis Gomez-Echeverri, Coordinator, Implementation Programme
Janos Pasztor, Coordinator, Sustainable Development Programme
Richard Kinley, Coordinator, Intergovernmental and Conference Affairs Programme
Kevin Grose, Manager, Information Services
Hanna Hoffmann, Programme Officer, Methods, Inventories and Science Programme
Rocio Lichte, Programme Officer, Methods, Inventories and Science Programme
- CBD:** Hamdallah Zedan, Executive Secretary
Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Chair of SBSTTA
Jo Mulongoy, Principal Officer
- UNCCD:** Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary
Philbert Brown, Chair of CST
Rogatien Biaou, Chair of CRIC
Grégoire de Kalbermatten, Deputy Executive Secretary
Ndegwa Ndiang'ui, Senior Programme Officer
Ahmed Cissoko, Senior Environment Affairs Officer
Massimo Candelori, Coordinator
Mansur N'Diaye, Special Assistant to the Executive Secretary
- Ramsar:** Peter Bridgewater, Secretary General designate
