

REFERENCES TO OTHER TOPICS

Report Addressing WTO Ethics

In a recent report entitled *A Sustainable Development Roadmap for the WTO*, written by Aaron Cosbey (available online at http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2009/sd_roadmap_wto.pdf), the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) stresses the importance of WTO action to address its 1994 goal relating



Courtesy: WTO

to sustainable development and the recognition of the needs of developing countries. WTO's Director General Pascal Lamy, while agreeing that the organisation's work has emphasised trade liberalisation, responded by noting that WTO's choices and priorities are driven by consensus of its members. He pointed out, however, that since the Doha round, the WTO has begun to address its development goals. (ATL)

Decrease in ODA Pledges Reported

Twenty-two UN Member States recently pledged approximately US\$58 million in support of the UN's development activities in 2010, a drop from last year's level of US\$65 million, pledged by 18 countries. This decrease is mirrored in the more general level of official development assistance (ODA), which is currently less than 80 percent of projections, more than US\$30 billion short of the level of country programme assistance in Africa needed to meet targets identified in the Development Assistance Committee's most recent analyses. The release also notes that the UN pledging mechanism has become an alternative channel for developing countries to promote South-South partnerships (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/dev2773.doc.htm>). (ATL)

Access and Benefit Sharing: Little Consensus

The on-going CBD process for the development of an "international regime on access and benefit sharing", dubbed the "ABS Working Group" or WGABS, converted itself into an intergovernmental negotiating committee in December, when its delegates, as well as its chairs and a statement from Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif all indicated, after five meetings of uncertainty, that the group was in fact negotiating an "ABS Protocol" (rather than some other unspecified type of instrument or instruments). With only one WGABS meeting remaining before the deadline for protocol submission, the Group faces some difficult negotiations. The group finally adopted a single integrated negotiating text for the first time but the number of brackets in that text is estimated in the thousands (only a few dozen words and phrases are unbracketed). WGABS Chairs have announced plans for two informal meetings before the group's last formal meeting in April, 2010. Sensing a possible failure to agree on a final text, some European negotiators indicated that they would suggest submitting an unagreed text at the deadline as a means of continuing the negotiations until CBD COP-10 (Nagoya) despite a CBD provision which calls for "every effort to reach consensus" in the proposal of protocols.

Thirty Years of the Bern Convention

Parties to the European Council's Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)

met to celebrate the 30th anniversary of its signing. During this period, the Convention has grown to 48 Contracting Parties, including all 27 Member States of the European Community, the EC itself, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/nature/Bern/default_en.asp). (ATL)

World Tourism Organization Calls for "Green Economy"

The Ministers' Summit of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) noted that "tourism is one of the world's top job creators and can be a key driver of recovery and the transformation towards the Green Economy". As such, the Ministers requested governments to avoid fiscal measures that might add extra burdens on travel, and to maintain stimulus policies in support of tourism, as direct means to promote sustainable economic growth.

Preparations for CSD-18

The Bureau of the 18th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) discussed the possibility of organising a ministerial dialogue with the heads of governing bodies of UN system organisations, as well as a session on the implementation of CSD-17 decisions. The UN Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), in its capacity as Secretariat, will be conducting a capacity-building seminar series for delegates of the 2nd Committee of the General Assembly to enhance their understanding of the issues to be considered under the current thematic cluster. "SIDS Day" will also be held as a preparatory meeting for the upcoming five-year review of the 2005 Mauritius Strategy on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States (http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd18_buremeet_1st.shtml). (ATL)

2009 UN Treaty Event

The UN Office of Legal Affairs has reported the highest level of Member State participation since 2005. A total of 64 Member States took a total of 103 treaty actions in 37 treaties, including 57 signatures and 43 ratifications. The UN, as depository, provides information on the status of its treaties at <http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?lang=en> and the status of environmental treaties can also be found in the publication: *International Environmental Law* (Kluwer Law International). (ATL)

UNFF Considers Forest Financing

In a meeting convened solely to address forest financing, UNFF-9 adopted a decision on the means of implementation of international forest mandates (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/docs2/Agreed%20text%20on%20MOI-SFM%20-%202008%20October%202009.doc>). The decision launches two initiatives to catalyse funding for sustainable forest management (SFM), calling on the Forum to establish an intergovernmental process to conduct in-depth analysis with emphasis on the special needs of least developed countries and other countries that have faced a 20-year decline in forest financing. The first component of this facilitation project will focus on strengthening the capacity in SIDS and low forest cover countries to access SFM financing.

ITTC Holds its 45th Session

The International Tropical Timber Council and its four Com-mittees convened to address the "implementation of the Programme 2008–2009", and activities to be included under the Biennial Work Programme for 2010–2011; as well as the current status of implementation of thematic programmes, including Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation and Enhancing Environmental Services in Tropical Forests (REDDES), and Tropical Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (TFLEGT).

Recognition for Professors Voigt and Bosselmann

The IUCN Academy of Environmental Law has awarded its Annual Scholarship Prize to Professor Christina Voigt (University of Oslo, Norway) and Professor Klaus Bosselmann (New Zealand Centre for Environmental Law). In a ceremony held at the Academy's annual Colloquium in Wuhan, China, the two scholars were

lauded by Professor Willemien du Plessis (North-West University, South Africa), and Professor Rob Fowler for their originality, the intellectual influence and international significance of their scholarship, and the enhancement of research collaboration among scholars and persons from different institutions and regions.



Associate Professor David Grinlinton (left) accepted the prize on behalf of Professor Bosselmann from Professor Rob Fowler (Chair of the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law), and Professor Willemien du Plessis (Chair of the Scholarship Committee). Courtesy: University of Auckland

Forests for People

The UNFF's Country-Led Initiative (CLI) recently focused on the role of national forest programmes (NFPs) and the (non-legally binding) international forest instruments as tools to enhance sustainable forest management (SFM). The meeting described efforts by a number of different governmental and non-governmental organisations to facilitate stakeholder participation. The report will be produced as an input into UNFF-9.

USA/China Identify Climate Change Priorities

The joint statement issued by President Barack Obama and Chinese Premier Hu Jintao based on their discussions in Beijing, includes a section on "Climate Change, Energy and Environment"

in which they underscored that climate change is "one of the greatest challenges of our time", noting that they "are convinced of the need to address climate change in a manner that respects the priority of economic and social development in developing countries and are equally convinced that transitioning to a low-carbon economy is an opportunity to promote continued economic growth and sustainable development in all countries".

UNIDO Energy Forum Focuses on Renewables

The 2009 Global Renewable Energy Forum, co-sponsored by Mexico's Ministry of Energy and the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), focused on the goal of "Scaling up Renewable Energy", by strengthening inter-regional cooperation and encouraging innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships in Latin America and elsewhere.

Role of Biodiversity in Wealth Generation

A recent consultation organised by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) examined the social and other values of biodiversity (including ecosystems) in preparation of a new report on the role of biodiversity in wealth generation and support of wellbeing in the region. Participants discussed Venezuelan policies; identified key sectors for promoting investment in biodiversity and ecosystem services and barriers to such investments; examined insights from case studies from Paraguay and Indonesia; and recommended inputs to the regional report on principal arguments to use, ways to convince decision makers, and dissemination strategies.

Women and Climate Change

In his opening remarks to the Women's International Forum in New York, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted the fact that women are both the most affected by climate change and the principal agents whose actions and choices will enable countries to curb global warming and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. He noted that women are often the custodians of local knowledge of food rationing, water harvesting, and forest conservation – keys to climate adaptation, sustainable natural resource management and the family's wellbeing. His remarks stressed the need to ensure that women play a more active role as decision makers.

(All References written by TRY unless otherwise noted.) 

Correction to "Nordic Council, Environmental Cooperation" (Vol. 39 No. 4–5 at p. 235)

Due to a communication problem between the Editor and the authors of the article, some inaccuracies have found their way into the text.

1. The *Nordic Council* and the *Nordic Council of Ministers* are two different bodies, the first consisting of members of *Parliament*, the second consisting of members of *Government*, as is explained in the Introduction. It is the Nordic Council of Ministers which is the main operative body for carrying out policies, and who's work has been the main focus of the article. When discussing the Environmental Action Plan, Examples of Projects and Other Strategies Relevant to Environmental Cooperation, the author is referring to the work of the *Nordic Council of Ministers*. For the same reason, the title of the article should be "Nordic Environmental Cooperation", without the heading "Nordic Council".
2. The 2009 budgets for these two bodies have been as follows:
 - o The Nordic Council: around 30 million DKK (appr. 4 million EUR, or 5.5 USD),
 - o The Nordic Council of Ministers: around 910 million DKK, of which around 30 million DKK is used for environmental cooperation.
3. The Nordic Environmental Action Plan provides a framework for the Nordic cooperation within the EU and other international fora, but is not "directly applicable" to the EU or any other international forum.

The editor offers sincere apologies for any misunderstanding engendered by inaccurate information and takes entire responsibility. 