



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

UNCCD'S CRIC CONVENES

The fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC-5) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 12-21 March 2007, to review implementation of the Convention in affected country Parties in regions other than Africa. Accordingly, the Committee discussed national reports and the results of regional meetings in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern Mediterranean and Central and Eastern



Romina Picolotti (Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina), Daniel Scioli (Vice-President of Argentina) and Franklin Moore (CRIC-5 Chair) on the opening day of CRIC-5.

Europe. Much of the meeting was devoted to panel presentations and discussions on selected topics, including the promotion of technology transfer and know-how, sustainable land management, early warning systems, financial resource mobilization, synergies with other conventions, and rehabilitation of degraded lands, including the promotion of new and renewable energy sources. The meeting also addressed how to improve information communication and national reporting, reviewed the 2006 International Year for Deserts and Desertification (IYDD),

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

WATERBIRDS AROUND THE WORLD

(The Stationery Office Limited, 2006) This global guide to conservation is an assessment comprising 264 papers and reviews relating to 614 waterbird species from 162 countries. It contains new data on 170 globally and near-threatened species and their habitats and documents examples of best practice from successful actions taken in many countries. The guide identifies three priorities for increased global action on flyways: taking action to safeguard wetlands and waterbirds; enhancing international collaboration; and improving the knowledge-base to underpin action. <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=3891>

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GUEST ARTICLE

Markets for Ecosystem Services: A Potential Tool for Multilateral Environmental Agreements

By Anantha Kumar Duraiappah, Chief, Analysis and Emerging Issues Unit, UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DEL/C), Former Director, Economic Policy, IISD

Abstract

Ecosystems provide many services from which people benefit that are not traditionally bought or sold in the marketplace, such as clean water and erosion control. Unfortunately government regulation has not been sufficient to protect these services.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

NEW TRENDS IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

(International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, February 2007) Authored by John H. Barton, this paper describes how technology is transferred to developing countries and the barriers that affect that transfer. It then identifies policy approaches that might overcome those barriers, addressing: the flow of human resources, as through international education; the flow of public sector technology support, as through research and licensing by international organizations; and the flow of private technology, as through the sale of consumer products (e.g. medicines) that may incorporate embodied technologies through licensing, and through foreign direct investment (<http://www.iprsonline.org/resources/docs/Barton%20-%20New%20Trends%20Technology%20Transfer%202007.pdf>).

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOREIGN POLICY: AN EXPLORATION OF OPTIONS FOR GREATER INTEGRATION

(IISD, 2007) This report was authored by John Drexhage, Deborah Murphy, Oli Brown, Aaron Cosbey, Peter Dickey, Jo-Ellen Parry and John Van Ham of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and Richard Tarasofsky and Beverley Darkin of Chatham House. It presents a series of recommendations on how foreign policy can foster international cooperation on climate change action and suggests that an integrated climate change-foreign policy approach has the potential to improve prospects for more effective efforts to address climate change at the national and international levels (http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2007/climate_foreign_policy.pdf).

COMPENDIUM: A GLOBAL DIRECTORY TO INDICATOR INITIATIVES

(IISD, 2007) This resource represents the second version of the Compendium of Sustainable Development Indicator Initiatives, a worldwide directory of who is doing what in the field of sustainability indicators. Indicator practitioners are invited to submit information on their own work and take ownership of their entries in the database (<http://www.iisd.org/measure/compendium/>).

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

Continued from page 1

and conducted a Global Interactive Dialogue with stakeholders on investments in rural areas in the context of combating land degradation and desertification. The CRIC adopted a report with recommendations for the eighth Conference of the Parties (COP-8), which a Bureau meeting on the sidelines of CRIC-5 agreed would convene from 3-14 September 2007 in Madrid, Spain. Two intersessional groups that were established during COP-7 in 2005 also convened on the sidelines of the CRIC. The Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group (IIWG) was established by COP-7 to develop a strategic plan for the Convention, among other agenda items. A closed session for this Group discussed the timing and mechanisms for further consultation, given that it is supposed to report to COP-8. The *Ad Hoc* Working Group on National Reporting (AHWG) held its first, closed meeting, during which Ramon Frutos (Belize) was elected as Chair and the group developed the structure for its report

and schedule for its preparation, with a view to presenting it to CRIC-6. Both groups received input during CRIC-5 and are expected to present results on their progress to COP-8 (<http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cric5/>).

UNFF E-FORUM DISCUSSES COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT

The latest online discussion hosted by the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) asked the question "What are the main benefits and challenges associated with community-based forest management?" This discussion forum sought to provide a platform for sharing experiences and knowledge in successful and failed activities, challenges and bottlenecks, and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness. Postings, which were accepted from 5-11 March 2007, addressed the main benefits and pressing challenges of community-based forest management, and are still available for viewing online (<http://esaconf.un.org/WB/?boardID=unff>).

► WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

NEW RAMSAR SITES DESIGNATED

The Ramsar Secretariat has announced the designation by Italy and Zambia of new Wetlands of International Importance. The Italian Environment Ministry has designated four sites that are Special Areas of Conservation under the European Habitats Directive and BirdLife International "Important Bird Areas:" the Lago di San Giuliano; the Pantano di Pignola; the Oasi del Sele-Serre Persano; and the Oasi di Castelvolturno o Variconi. All four sites are important for migratory and other birds as well as for other rare and threatened species (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.italy_4new.htm).

The Zambia Wildlife Authority has designated four new sites and extended two existing ones. All six sites are entirely or mostly parts of National Parks and Game Management Areas, and host an array of vulnerable and mostly endemic mammals, birds, and fish species. The new Wetlands of International Importance are: Busanga Swamps; Luangwa Flood Plains; Mweru wa Ntipa; and the Zambezi Floodplains. The extended sites are the Bangweulu Swamps and Kafue Flats Ramsar sites (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.zambia_4new.htm).



Pantano di Pignola (Photo courtesy of Ramsar)

ADVANCE REPORT ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA RELEASED, LITHUANIA ACCEDES TO FISH STOCKS AGREEMENT

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UN DOALOS) has released the advance and unedited report of the UN Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea. The Report will serve as a basis for discussion at the Eighth meeting of the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, which is scheduled to take place in New York, US, in June 2007 and address the topic of marine genetic resources (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/reference_files/new_developments_and_recent_adds.htm).

On 1 March 2007, Lithuania acceded to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Fish Stocks Agreement) (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_agreements.htm).



Lago di San Giuliano (Photo courtesy of Ramsar)

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

THE SPS AGREEMENT AND BIOSAFETY

(FAO, March 2007) Authored by Melvin Spreij, this legal paper includes a general introduction to the World Trade Organization (WTO), its objectives, functions and structure, and to the relevant WTO Agreements in the biosafety area, notably the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Agreement). It also presents the findings of the Panel Report in the recent biotech dispute and identifies some areas of potential conflict between the Biosafety Protocol and the SPS Agreement. The concluding remarks contain some practical considerations on drafting biosafety legislation (<http://www.fao.org/legal/prs-ol/lpo65.pdf>).

LABOUR AND THE ENVIRONMENT: A NATURAL SYNERGY

(UNEP, February 2007) This publication addresses the synergy between labor and the environment, linking the work of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization to the role workers can play in the implementation of environmentally sustainable development strategies (http://www.unep.org/labour_environment/PDFs/UNEP-labour-env-synergy.pdf).

WETLANDS: YOUR GUIDE TO CAPACITY BUILDING IN WETLAND MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION

(WetCap, 2007) This eight-page brochure was developed at the request of the Advisory Board on Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention and lists existing wetland capacity building and training programmes, courses, and online modules offered by the different WetCap and Ramsar-affiliated institutes.

http://portals.wi.wur.nl/files/docs/File/ICWMTOT/wetlandstraining_all_final.pdf

2007 AFRICAN ELEPHANT STATUS REPORT

(IUCN, February 2007) The African Elephant Status Report presents the latest information on elephant population estimates and range at the site, national, regional and continental levels (<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/sgs/afesg/aed/pdfs/aesr2007.pdf>).

▶ CHEMICALS AND WASTES

STOCKHOLM BUREAU HOLDS TELECONFERENCE, COP-3 DOCUMENTS POSTED

The Bureau for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) conducted a teleconference on 12 March 2007, during which participants noted that Senegal will take over the presidency of the Bureau at the opening of the third Conference of the Parties (COP-3) on 30 April 2007 in Dakar, Senegal. As a result, one of the two Bureau members elected by the Africa group will need to step aside for the duration of Senegal's term in office. Bureau members also discussed the anticipated organization of COP-3, considerations regarding the election of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, the status of preparation of COP-3 documents, the current Bureau Chair's expectations for COP-3 outcomes, the programme of work between COP-3 in 2007 and COP-4 in 2009, two meetings that have taken place on POPs Monitoring and Evaluation, progress to date on the text for a compliance mechanism, and the anticipated agenda for the first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Joint Working Group

on Enhanced Cooperation and Coordination between the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions (26-28 March 2007, Helsinki, Finland). The Bureau is expected to hold its next meeting the day before the opening of COP-3 (<http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/bureau/SC%20COP%20bureau%2012Mar07%20conf%20call%20report.pdf>).

The Stockholm Convention Secretariat has posted many documents for COP-3, including the annotated provisional agenda (http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/cop_3/meetingdocs/default.htm).



POPs COP-2 President Nicholas Kiddle (New Zealand) chaired the Bureau teleconference

▶ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNDESA POSTS CHAIR'S DRAFT NEGOTIATING TEXT, CONTRIBUTES TO WORKSHOP

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), which serves as the Secretariat for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), has posted the Chair's draft negotiating document that



JoAnne DiSano, Director, UN Division for Sustainable Development, offered opening remarks during the Workshop on Developing Sustainability Strategies in Asia.

was developed during the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting in preparation for the April-May CSD-15 session. The document identifies "Policy options and possible actions to expedite implementation in energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution /atmosphere and climate change," which are the CSD-15 agenda items (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd15/documents/csd_15IPM_chair_draft.pdf).

Also in preparation for CSD-15, the DSD has released a publication entitled "Multi Dimensional Issues in International Power Grid Interconnections." The publication examines technical, economic, legal, political, social and environmental issues associated with electricity interconnections (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/energy/interconnections.htm>).

In other news, UNDESA helped organize a workshop that was attended by over 100 high-level representatives from Asian and Pacific countries and the industrialized member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The two-day workshop took place in Bangkok, Thailand, from 8-9 March 2007 and was jointly organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), OECD and UNDESA. Participants reviewed national sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies in Asian and Pacific countries and options for better integration of these policies. In his opening remarks, UNESCAP Executive Secretary Kim Hak-Su highlighted that, while developing economies in Asia and the Pacific are projected to grow by 7.3 percent this year, such growth is driven by high consumption of resources and cannot be sustained long-term (<http://www.unescap.org/unis/press/2007/mar/g05.asp>; [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=21797&Cr=escap&Cr1=](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=21797&Cr=escap&Cr1=;); <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/workshopBangkok/index.htm>).

UNDESA is also busy drafting an Action Plan for 2008 International Year of Sanitation. The UN General Assembly established the International Year of Sanitation in December 2006 and requested UNDESA to serve as the focal point for the year. UNDESA has developed a tentative action plan and proposed an implementation schedule, for finalization at a meeting of the sanitation subgroup of UN-Water (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdis-sues/sanitation/iys.htm>).

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

An alternative policy approach is to create and develop market mechanisms that would improve the way these ecosystem services are used. These markets for ecosystem services (MES) are increasingly recognized as having an important role to play in the sustainable use of ecosystem services and, more recently, in reducing poverty. These instruments can generate financial resources, divert funds to environmentally-friendly technologies, create incentives for investment and increase the involvement of the private business sector in environmental management. In light of the deteriorating trend in ecosystems highlighted by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), MES can be expected to take on an increasing role in providing incentives for conservation and the sustainable use of ecosystem services. Furthermore, there is a potential for using MES to enhance the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Background

Although today's technology and knowledge can contribute to minimizing the human impact on ecosystems, their potential is unlikely to be deployed fully until ecosystem services cease to be perceived as free and limitless and their full value taken into account. There have been successes in pricing provisioning ecosystem services through the creation of markets. This is largely due to the fact that ownership of these services can be easily established through property rights. However, many of the prices for these services are still far from perfect because the damage caused to the environment, i.e., externalities, by the use of these services are still not internalized within pricing mechanisms.

Establishing prices for regulating, cultural and supporting ecosystem services raises a more serious challenge. Many of these services are public goods by definition. This means that these services are beyond the boundaries of private property rights. Can Market-Based Instruments (MBIs) such as transferable permits and auctions be used in this respect? Market-based approaches may not be feasible or even desirable for all ecosystem services, and when used their designs need to consider impacts on and information feedback loops from ecosystems and stakeholders.

Conclusions

The role of the public sector is critical for successful pro-poor MES. Governments have a role to play in facilitating and creating MES, managing transaction costs, and providing institutional struc-

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► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

BIO SAFETY PROTOCOL COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE MEETS; CBD DISCUSSES PARTNERSHIPS

The Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety held its third meeting from 5-7 March 2007, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The meeting was conducted in an open session and accordingly, the Third World Network attended as an observer. The Committee re-elected Veit Koester and Mary Fosi Mbatenkhu as its Chair and Vice-Chair respectively, for two-year terms. The Committee made a number of suggestions regarding completing and updating the document prepared by the Secretariat on repeated non-compliance (UNEP/CBD/BS/CC/3/2), and noted that no case of non-compliance was brought to its attention since it began its functions. It agreed to propose, for the consideration of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP), an indicative list of measures that may be taken in cases of repeated non-compliance, including measures such as suspension of trade, and/or suspension of rights or privileges. It further agreed that, in preparing its report on general issues of compliance as requested by the MOP, it would take into account only the information provided in national reports and in the Biosafety Clearing-House. The Committee agreed to conduct its fourth meeting in an open session during the first week of December 2007, in Montreal, Canada ([http://](http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/bs/bssc-03/official/bssc-03-03-en.doc)



Veit Koester and Mary Fosi Mbatenkhu were re-elected Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of the Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

WTO TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE RESUMES TALKS ON MEA RELATIONS

A meeting of the Special Session of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) was held from 1-2 March 2007, following the resumption of negotiations on the Doha round a month ago. Delegates considered a new submission by the US on procedures for information exchange between MEA Secretariats and relevant WTO committees, which proposes convening regular information sessions between MEAs and the CTE. The proposal also addresses the issue of MEA observer status in other WTO bod-

www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/bs/bssc-03/official/bssc-03-03-en.doc).

The Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitat (Bern Convention) agreed on the elements of an enhanced partnership, which will be formalized through a memorandum of cooperation to be signed at the 27th meeting of the Bern Convention's Standing Committee, on 26 November 2007, in Strasbourg, France. The CBD Secretariat also discussed signing a memorandum of understanding to enhance its cooperation with Countdown 2010, the network working towards achieving the 2010 biodiversity target (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-03-14-bern-en.pdf>; <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-03-16-countdown2010-en.pdf>).

CMS HOLDS CETACEAN CONSERVATION MEETINGS IN SAMOA

The first meeting of the Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands region, an agreement developed under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), was held from 5-9 March 2007, in Apia, Samoa. It was combined with the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) meeting to review their action plan on whale and dolphin conservation, an outreach workshop funded by Germany to discuss the possible contribution of CMS in the Pacific region with a focus on cetacean conservation, as well as an Australian-funded workshop on by-catch. During the week, the CMS Secretariat also released the Year of the Dolphin poster (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/03_Mar/pressRel_050307_yod.pdf; http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/03_Mar/pressRel_050307.pdf; http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/03_Mar/pressRel_060307.pdf).

ies, proposing that the CTE Special Session develop a non-exhaustive list of "indicative questions" to aid WTO bodies in making decisions on a case-by-case basis. Possible questions include whether a MEA contains specific trade obligations or other trade-related obligations and, if so, whether these are relevant to the particular WTO body's scope of work. The US also proposed that the CTE Special Session grant seven MEA secretariats permanent, rather than the current *ad hoc*, observer status for the remainder of the Doha round. The next CTE Special Session is scheduled for 2-3 May 2007, and an informal meeting is likely to convene on 30

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GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

tures so that these markets work efficiently and equitably. MEAs can also contribute towards the deployment of MBIs. As legally-binding instruments, they offer an appropriate institutional structure for supporting MBIs. Furthermore, MBIs can be useful mechanisms for mainstreaming MEAs within the broader sustainable development frameworks used in countries.

This abstract summarizes an IISD report of the same title. The full report can be accessed at: http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2007/economcs_markets_eco_services.pdf

Editor's note:
MEA Bulletin invites articles from practitioners, MEAs and academics on issues that are of interest across the MEA community. Please contact the Editor, lynn@iisd.org, for further information.

▶ TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

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March. (Sources: ICTSD Trade Bio Res, 16 March 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/index.htm>; Document symbol TN/TE/W/70, <http://docsonline.wto.org>).

In other WTO news, WTO Director General Pascal Lamy will brief NGOs on the state of play in the Doha Round on 27 March 2007 at WTO headquarters. A question-and-answer session will follow the briefing (http://www.wto.org/english/forums_e/ngo_e/ngo_briefing_e.htm).

IDB ANNUAL MEETING REVIEWS INVESTMENT IN ENVIRONMENT

The Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) held its 48th Annual Meeting in Guatemala City, Guatemala, from 16-20 March 2007, to review its lending programme and other activities. During the past year the IDB approved 19 environmental operations for a total of US\$538 million and approved and implemented a new environ-



Luis Alberto Moreno, President of the IDB, talks with Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands during the Special Governors' Meeting, which took place during the IDB 2007 Annual Meeting (Photo courtesy of IDB)

ment policy for all IDB-financed projects. Most of last year's environmental loans were in the areas of water and sanitation, disaster risk management, natural resource management and sustainable tourism. In addition, the Bank approved 82 grants totaling US\$20 million for projects in these same areas, as well as for strengthening environmental policy and institutions, coastal management and sustainable agriculture (<http://www.iadb.org/am/2007/index.cfm?language=en>).

▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UN DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL TALKS ON UN REFORM; UPDATED ENVIRONMENTAL REFORM DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE

At a meeting with EU Development Ministers in Bonn, Germany, on 13 March 2007, UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose



UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro (Photo courtesy of the UN)

Migiro outlined some of the Secretary-General's plans for proceeding on UN reform, including the implementation of proposals building on existing processes

and initiatives, such as: the "One UN" pilot programmes; the ongoing consultative process on UN environmental activities; and strengthening the coordination functions of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). She also said Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will submit a note to UN member States in the coming weeks outlining his views on how to implement the recommendations contained in the System-Wide Coherence report (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2007/dsgsm306.doc.htm>).

In other news pertaining to UN reform, Co-Chairs Berruga (Mexico) and Maurer (Switzerland) of the General Assembly informal consultations on UN environmental activities, in a letter dated 5 March 2007, informed UN member States that a summary of their attendance at the Paris Conference for Global Ecological Governance and the 24th session of the UNEP Governing Coun-

cil/Global Ministerial Environment Forum is available online. The letter also highlighted that the dedicated website had been updated with the talking points used for the Co-Chairs' presentation at the meetings in Paris and Nairobi, in addition to all available country statements made during the informal consultations in January 2007 (<http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/environment/Letter-Co-Chairs-20070305.pdf>; <http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/environmental-governance.shtml>).

UNEP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ATTENDS GEO LAUNCH IN BRAZIL, GOVERNING COUNCIL DECISIONS POSTED ONLINE

While visiting Brazil between 5 and 7 March 2007, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Achim Steiner spoke of Brazil's evolving water management initiatives at the launch of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) on Water Resources in Brazil Report (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=503&ArticleID=5531&I=en>). Steiner also attended the Conference and Debate on the Challenges of Global Sustainable Development and the Responses of the Multilateral System, held at the Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis (IBAMA), where he highlighted how Brazil has cut the rate of forest loss through, among other things, using advanced satellite monitoring, legislation, better enforcement, and the promotion of alternative livelihoods. Noting the request to UNEP to assist in finding ways to transfer this technology and know-how to developing countries, Steiner stressed the possible connections between this activity and the Bali Strategic Plan on Technology Support

and Capacity Building. He also emphasized the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) current efforts to address Access and Benefit Sharing and the key role that Brazil could play in resolving the impasse as part of its presidency of the CBD (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=503&ArticleID=5534&I=en>). Before leaving Brazil, Steiner spoke at the Brazilian stock exchange, BOVESPA, on the occasion of UNEP joining its Sustainability Index board, where he noted that the corporate world is currently making the explicit link to risks and opportunities emerging from, among others, climate change (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=503&ArticleID=5539&I=en>).

In addition, the decisions adopted by the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-24/GMEF) at its 24th session held from 5-9 February, in Nairobi, Kenya, have been posted on the GC/GMEF website (http://www.unep.org/gc/gc24/docs/GC24_decisions.pdf).

UNDP ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR BIODIVERSITY PRIZE

On 12 March 2007, the Equator Initiative, a partnership between the UN, civil society, business, governments and communities led by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), announced the finalists for its 2006 Equator Prize, honoring 25 efforts to conserve and sustainably use the equatorial region's biodiversity with a view to reducing poverty. The finalists' projects range from innovative ecotourism to sustainable crocodile-egg harvesting (http://content.unep.org/go/newsroom/march-2007/equator-initiative-20070312.en.jsessionid=a_1sMrCOVdj9).

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

MONTREAL PROTOCOL POSTS PROPOSALS TO ACCELERATE CHEMICAL PHASE-OUT

Six proposals have been put forward that would accelerate the phase-out of certain hydrofluorocarbons (HCFCs) under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol). HCFCs are chemicals that are used as coolants but that contribute both to ozone depletion and global warming. Of particular concern is the sharply increasing use of these refrigerants, particularly HCFC-22, in developing countries, where HCFCs are currently allowed to be produced for over 30 more years. The proposed adjustments, submitted by Argentina and Brazil, jointly, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, jointly, the US, Mauritius, Mauritania and the Federated States of Micronesia, are to be considered at the Twenty-Seventh Open-Ended Working Group of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in June 2007 (<http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/03/14/business/warming.php?page=1>; http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/oewg/27oewg/OEWG-27-8-Rv2E.pdf).

UNFCCC EVENTS AND SUBMISSIONS TARGET DEFORESTATION, ADAPTATION

A workshop on reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries has taken place in Cairns, Australia, from 7-9 March 2007. The event, which will be reported on at the upcoming session of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Scientific

and Technological Advice in May, sought to improve understanding of the issue and to encourage open dialogue on policy approaches, as well as on technical and methodological issues. According to the UNFCCC Secretariat, participants identified various areas of agreement while also recognizing that there are divergent points of view that still need to be resolved in order to make progress. Funding sources were discussed, including the use of market-based mechanisms such as emissions trading or project-based approaches, as well as the use of non-market based financial resources, such as ODA and voluntary contributions (http://unfccc.int/press/news_room/newsletter/in_focus/items/3944.php).

Meanwhile, an expert meeting on adaptation for small island developing States (SIDS) has been held in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat, the event focused on the needs of Pacific and Indian Ocean SIDS. Participants urged increased support for adaptation planning and implementation. The event took place from 26-28 February 2007, following an earlier event for SIDS in the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean at the start of February (http://unfccc.int/press/news_room/newsletter/in_focus/items/3943.php).

As well as these recent meetings, parties and institutions have also recently submitted their views on issues relating to deforestation and adaptation. On 13 March 2007, the UNFCCC Secretariat published a document containing a submission from the

Global Environment Facility (GEF) on managing the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol. The GEF's was the only submission on this topic. Parties and organizations also submitted input on deforestation, including in relation to the Clean Development Mechanism. Parties also recently submitted their views on the implementation of the New Delhi Work Programme for Article 6 of the UNFCCC, which deals with education, training and public awareness (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/misc02.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc01.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc02.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc03.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/misc03.pdf>).

IPCC PREPARATIONS CONTINUE

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Secretariat has recently posted the report on programme and budget issues for 2007-2010, which will be a topic of discussion at the IPCC's 26th session in Bangkok in early May (<http://www.ipcc.ch/meet/session26/Doc3.pdf>). Other documents for IPCC-26 and upcoming meetings of Working Groups II and III are also available on the IPCC website (<http://www.ipcc.ch/>).



Photo courtesy of IPCC

► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- As of 1 March 2007, the new **Director of the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UN DOALOS), Office of Legal Affairs**, is Václav Mikulka (Czech Republic), the former director of the Codification Division. He replaces Vladimir Golitsyn (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/reference_files/new_developments_and_recent_adds.htm).



Václav Mikulka
(Photo courtesy of the Council of Europe)



Vladimir Golitsyn

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- ROTTERDAM CONVENTION THIRD CHEMICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING:** 20-23 March 2007. Rome, Italy. <http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=b&id=134&sid=18&tid=42>
- MULTILATERAL FUND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 51ST MEETING:** 19-23 March 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.multilateralfund.org>
- AD HOC JOINT WORKING GROUP ON ENHANCED COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AMONG THE BASEL, STOCKHOLM AND ROTTERDAM CONVENTIONS:** 26-28 March 2007. Helsinki, Finland. <http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/>
- THE OSLO CONFERENCE ON GOOD GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY:** 28-30 March 2007. Oslo, Norway. <http://www.csr-oslo.org/>
- ECOSOC ANNUAL MINISTERIAL REVIEW GLOBAL PREPARATORY MEETING:** 2 April 2007. New York, US. <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/>
- EIGHTH SESSION OF IPCC WORKING GROUP II:** 2-5 April 2007. Brussels, Belgium. <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ipwg2/>