



Rio Conventions' ECOSYSTEMS PAVILION

Linking biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land management

Pavilion News Digest, 25 October, 2010

The Rio Conventions' Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion is a collaborative outreach activity involving the Rio Convention secretariats, with the Global Environment Facility and other important partners

Land Day 3

Saturday, 23 October, Nagoya - Day 6

The drylands conundrum— They are home to one-third of the world's population. They make up 41 per cent of the Earth's land, they are a major reserve of agricultural biodiversity supporting, and one in every three crops under cultivation originated from or has ancestors still growing in drylands. At yet, the world is losing the productivity of about 12 million hectares of drylands per year. According to Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, land degradation threatens the continued provision of ecosystem services – this is an issue he described as one of serious concern for both the UNCCD and the CBD. Addressing this, he says, is also a responsibility for both processes. "The status and health of biodiversity reflects the status and health of the land."



Ambassador Tommy Koh, Luc Gnacadja, UNCCD and Ahmed Djoghlaif, SCBD

Drylands matter— Compared to the conventions on climate change and biodiversity, says Tommy Koh of Singapore, known for playing a key role in developing the Rio Conventions, desertification has the least support from the developed world. Maybe that's because about 90 per cent of the world's drylands are found in developing countries. "If we're serious about achieving the Millennium Development Goals we should care about the invisible one billion poorest people who live in the drylands. They are not in the limelight and they are treated as if they didn't exist."

Selling an ecosystem approach at home—While the world has sliced up issues to fit into nice neat compartment, real people don't make these distinctions, according to Sem Shikongo of Namibia. "We won't hear the local farmer talk about climate change, biodiversity

and desertification separately. For them it's just one issue." The key, he says, is to promote environmental management in an integrated manner that involves high-level politicians and stakeholders. "If we do not pay attention on how we work-or not work-together, we can end up in overlaps activities with waste of human and financial resources," he says.

Convention "egoism"—Too often, a common approach remains elusive, says Luc Gnacadja, UNCCD Executive Secretary. Fragmentation of the issues exists not only at the global level, but even at the national level. "Parties are not living up to their commitments." Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif says a joint liaison group is strongly needed at the national level for the three conventions. "Strategic plans of the countries should be mandatory for three partners but should also be comprehensive and complementary." Involving head of states will ensure that all relevant sectors of activity from finances to agriculture will be committed, " he added.

Overcoming fragmentation of environmental issues — Fragmentation is difficult to overcome, says Kabir Bavikatte, from Natural Justice in South Africa. To face this challenge, he says that it is necessary, rather than building the capacity of communities in different sectoral laws, to start bottom-up and to identify, which issues are of most concern for the communities and then address the respective law and accordingly reinforce the related rights and laws.

Remember the small farmer—Often overlooked are the 500 million small-holder farmer that support the two billion people who live in the drylands, says Ukiko Omura from the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Because these people often lack legal rights to the land, they are often unable to adopt a long-term vision to sustainably manage the land. All the financing that IFAD provides, she said, whether it is to help Bedouins in Syria to help make the land more climate resilient or to help with land tenure in the Philippines, must address climate and other environmental concerns.

Poverty and the drylands —There are no other regions like arid and semi-arid regions, where food-security, poverty-reduction and biodiversity conservation are as closely interlinked, says Harald Lossack from the German development agency GTZ. Agro-biodiversity in drylands, which form an important pool of genetic resource, is an issue, which relates to all three Rio-conventions.

Community stewardship of genetic resources— A critical prerequisite for commercialisation is the need for the local community to have legal rights to the benefits arising from the use of biodiversity, says Pierre du Plessis, from the Centre for Research Information Action in Africa, Southern African Development and Consulting. Otherwise, he says, the private sector using the genetic resources has no incentive to share the benefits. Accordingly, he says it is important to provide technical support and the formation of a resource management plan for the benefit of the whole community.

High expectations on genetic resource sharing?—A new protocol on access and benefit sharing might be driving expectations too high on what might ultimately be delivered. Dan Leskien from FAO says he is concerned that there exist a certain over-expectation with regards to a potential access and benefit sharing protocol and there may be no financial incentives for communities to act as stewards of biological diversity, including drylands, or clarify related land-tenure issues.



Dr. Abdul Raziq Kakar President of SAVES, Ms Gudrun Henne Viveka International, and Kabir Bavikatte

The role of the camel — The pastoral people of Pakistan, where 80 per cent of the territory are drylands, are the guardians of the genetic resources contained in the high livestock diversity and diversity of plant species in these areas, says Dr. Abdul Raziq Kakar, from the Society of Animal, Veterinary and Environmental Scientists (SAVES). For the tribal people, who did not contribute to the changing global climate, climatic change is already reality, and they have to rely on traditional tribal resources including plants and animals

for adaptation, with the camel as very adaptable animal playing a crucial role in those communities.



Vulnerable deserts— Desertification, salinization and mismanagement of grazing practices are the main factors of degradation of desert rangelands resources in Central Asia, says Dr Kristina Toderich from Samarkand Division of Uzbek's Academy of Science, Uzbekistan. Strategies for conservation, restoration and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity should be promoted, such as: local community participatory approach to monitor endemic and endangered species; in situ conservation of existing plants and animal diversity in different agro-ecological zones of the desert margins; promotion of wild pollinators and multifunctional/valuable species currently underutilized for soil fertility improvement, feed for animals, human use and income generation.

Gap analysis in biodiversity conservation in Mongolia — By 2015, Mongolia is committed to protect 30 per cent of its territory size –the size of France – says Badamjav Lkhavasuren, Conservation Director of WWF Programme Office in Mongolia. In this end, an ecological gap analysis has been undertaken and a number of gaps have been identified, such as the fact that Mongolia's system of protected areas does not cover properly the desert steppe vegetation – largely affected by human activities – as most of the parks are located in the most arid and mountainous places.

Aral Sea desertification — The case of the Aral Sea, one of the planet's worst environmental disasters caused by large-scale irrigation agriculture in arid region, is well known says Yukihiro Morimoto, Professor of landscape ecology and planning in Kyoto University, Japan. But overlooked, he says, is the integrity of the wetlands and riverine forests in the Aral Basin.

<http://ecosystemspavilion.org>



From commitment to action: Over US\$120 million announced for biodiversity and protected areas by key supporters at the CBD LifeWeb Initiative Dinner, 24 October, Nagoya, Japan. Further information at www.cbd.int/lifeweb/.

Ecosystems Pavilion Programme Overview

18 October, Monday	<i>The linkages between biodiversity, sustainable land management and climate change</i> With the European Commission and other partners	Evening Sessions – Reducing emissions from degradation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD) <i>With UNEP and other UN REDD members</i>
19 October, Tuesday	<i>Key role of protected areas in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies</i> With IUCN WCPA and other partners	Session 1: Inter-linkages of biodiversity, carbon and economics
20 October, Wednesday	<i>Indigenous peoples and communities – benefits and livelihoods</i> With UNDP, Conservation International and other partners	Session 2: Traditional knowledge in conserving biodiversity and carbon
21 October, Thursday	<i>Forest biodiversity: mitigation and adaptation – the linked benefits provided by forests</i> With members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other partners	Session 3: Environmental safeguards and REDD
22 October, Friday	<i>Water, Ecosystems and Climate Change</i> With SCBD and other partners	Session 4: Measuring and monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services within REDD
23 October, Saturday	<i>UNCCD Land Day 3</i>	Session 5 (11am -1:30 pm): Empowerment of the biodiversity constituency in REDD processes
		Evening Sessions – Commitments and international cooperation for financing synergies, in partnership with CBD’s LifeWeb
25 October, Monday	<i>Economics of ecosystem services and biodiversity, climate change and land management</i> With TEEB and other partners	Session 1: Mesoamerican financing synergies through protected area solutions, featuring Costa Rica Forever and other national initiatives
26 October, Tuesday	<i>Ecosystem-based approaches for adaptation</i> With IUCN, ICLEI and other partners	Session 2: Caribbean and Micronesian financing synergies through protected-area solutions
27 October, Wednesday	<i>Promoting synergies for sustainable development and poverty reduction</i> With UNDP and other partners	Session 3: South American financing synergies through protected area solutions, featuring the Pan-Amazonian Vision
28 October, Thursday	<i>Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion Summit: Moving Towards Rio+20</i>	Session 4: West African Coastal and Marine financing synergies through protected area solutions

Prepared by the Ecosystems Pavilion Team @Nagoya. Editor: Anne-Marie Wilson, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; Writers: Dan Shepard, UN DPI, Amelie Nappert, Simone Schiele, Sarah Benabou, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; secretariat@cbd.int



<http://ecosystemspavilion.org>

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in the activities of the Ecosystems Pavilion do not necessarily reflect those of the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC secretariats, the Parties to the Rio Conventions or other Pavilion partner organization.

