
BIODIVERSITY

Volume 1 Issue 1

August 1996

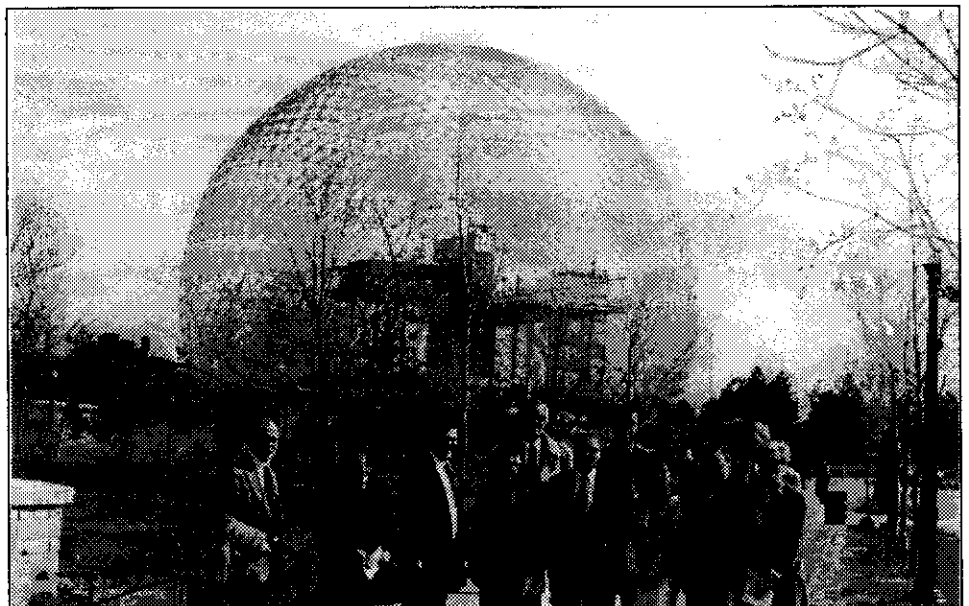
A NEWSLETTER OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

New staff take up reins at Secretariat

After a start-up period in Geneva, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity moved into its Montreal headquarters last February. Under the leadership of the Executive Secretary Calestous Juma, its newly hired permanent staff, along with several employees on temporary contracts, have already arranged the successful Biosafety meeting in Aarhus, Denmark (July 22-26). Staff are also now at work preparing for the upcoming SBSTTA meeting in Montreal (Sept. 2-6) and the third COP meeting in Buenos Aires (Nov. 4-15).

The Secretariat headquarters was officially inaugurated in Montreal at a ceremony on May 6, 1996 attended by the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Quebec, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Indonesian President of the second COP meeting.

The Secretariat's work load for this year, along with



Some CBD staff along with COP II and SBSTTA Bureau members before Montreal's Biosphere at the official inauguration (For names see back page)

organising the Convention's regular annual meetings, includes

elaborating the Jakarta Mandate on
(Cont'd on next page)

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SECRETARIAT SHOP TALK

Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity and setting up the 'clearing-house mechanism' information and technical system, which is designed to help make technical and scientific co-operation easier.

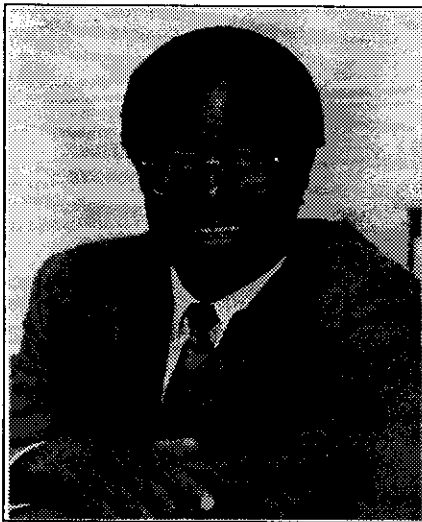
As well, the Secretariat will co-operate more strongly with Biodiversity-related conventions and institutions, promote the participation of the private sector in implementing the Convention and prepare to publish the first issue of the "Global Biodiversity Outlook", dealing with forests, in 1997.

It has already begun to prepare a roster of experts on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity and signed agreements of cooperation with the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species.

A similar agreement is also being negotiated between the Secretariat and the FAO following a meeting between the FAO Director General Jacques Diouf and Dr. Juma.

Who's who in Montreal?

Staffing of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity continues with a number of positions already filled and others still in the process of being filled.



Dr. Calestous Juma

Claude-Georges Ducret (Switzerland) is Principal Officer for Intergovernmental Affairs. He came to the Secretariat from the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berne. He has a PhD in molecular biology and had previously worked for the UN at the Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva, UNEP in Nairobi and the UNDP in New York.

The finance and administration system has been set up by **Luis F. Guerrero**, chief of the Fund Management Programme at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, who has been seconded to the Secretariat since February and whose replacement is expected to arrive later this summer.

The Programme Officer for Financial Resources and Instruments is **Sam Johnston** (Australia) who acts as liaison to the Global Environment Facility. He was a research fellow in international environmental law at

Cambridge University in England before joining the Secretariat.

Charlotte Bastien (Canada) has been named special assistant to the Executive Secretary, **Calestous Juma**. She joined the Secretariat from the Canadian Department of the Environment where her duties included environmental effects monitoring. Her academic background is agricultural engineering.

The newly appointed Associate Programme Officer for intergovernmental affairs **Tanyse MacLeod** (USA) also has previous experience at the Canadian Department of the Environment. She studied marine biology.

The position of Principal Officer for Scientific, Technical and Technological affairs is being re-advertised. Other positions in this area will be filled by staff seconded by UNESCO and the FAO. Recruitment is under way for a Programme Officer in charge of Indigenous Knowledge.

Ina Pronata (Indonesia) has been named Programme Officer responsible for Conservation Ecology.

Junior programme officer, **K. Stendahl-Rehardt** (Finland), will arrive in September. Helping out with research are locally-hired **Anna Albovias** and **Denis Hamel**.

In Communications, **Beatriz Torres** (Peru) will take over as Associate Programme Officer for Information.

Denise Miller and **Ingrid Tudor** keep the office running smoothly. **Michel Lambert** and **Henri-Paul Blanchard**, both seconded by the Quebec government, provide much-needed back-up.

Progress made on Biosafety

By Michael Williams

In response to the COP's decision last November to launch negotiations for a biosafety protocol, the Government of Denmark hosted the first meeting of the Open-Ended Ad hoc Working Group from 22-26 July. The meeting was held at the recently built Scandinavian Congress Center in Aarhus, Denmark's handsome second city. Some 250 delegates representing over 90 countries participated in the talks, as did several dozen observers from non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

The delegates elected Veit Koester from Denmark's National Forest and Nature Agency as the Chairman. Other bureau members were elected from Argentina, Ethiopia, Hungary, Jamaica, Korea, Mauritius, New Zealand, the Philippines and Russia.

The Working Group's mandate is to draft a protocol for the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological

diversity. The conclusion of this meeting will be reported back to the COP at its third session in Buenos Aires next November. The protocol negotiators will meet again next year and should conclude their discussions in 1998.

As at the start of any new negotiation, delegates focused on defining the key terms and concepts they will need to work with. This early phase of sharing ideas and establishing ground rules is absolutely vital to the success of the negotiation's later stages.

Delegates also discussed how to structure the main elements and articles of the protocol. A number of countries offered concrete proposals, but the meeting was unable to agree on a single approach. A document will be forwarded to the next meeting listing those items included in all the proposals and those included in at least one, along with the terms proposed for definition. Governments are also asked to forward their comments on the existing proposals to the

Secretariat.

Some of the proposals tabled include such elements as objective, jurisdictional scope, advance informed agreement and notification procedures, mechanisms for risk assessment and risk management, capacity building, and the sharing of technical information. While these elements seem to be acceptable to most governments, others such as socio-economic considerations and liability and compensation, are more controversial.

The ambience of the meeting was helped by the beautiful summer weather and the three receptions organized by Denmark's Minister of the Environment, the Mayor of Aarhus, and the Executive Secretary of the CBD. The next sessions of the working group are provisionally scheduled for 12-16 May and 13-17 October 1997.

Michael Williams works with the Information Unit for Conventions in Geneva.

New Parties to the CBD

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 138. Syrian Arabic Rep. (4.1.96) | 147 Ireland (22.3.96) |
| 139. Suriname (12.1.96) | 148. Bulgaria (17.4.96) |
| 140. Poland (18.1.96) | 149. Rwanda (29.5.96)) |
| 141. Lithuania (1.2.96) | 150. Saint Vincent and the
Grenadines (3.6.96) |
| 142. Yemen (21.2.96) | 151. Slovenia (9.7.96) |
| 143. Niue (27.2.96) | 152. Cyprus (10.7.96) |
| 144. Madagascar (4.3.96) | |
| 145. Rep. Of Tanzania (8.3.96) | |
| 146. Eritrea (21.3.96) | |

ON THE AGENDA

SBSTTA papers sent to participants

Documents and papers for next month's SBSSTA meeting (Sept. 2-6) in Montreal are now being distributed. The members of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will continue discussions begun at their first meeting one year earlier. The subject matter includes:

- assessing the effectiveness of measures taken under the CBD
- options for implementing identification and monitoring programs
- the taxonomist shortage
- Agricultural biodiversity and sustainable use of its components
- Forests and biological diversity
- Economic valuation of Biodiversity
- Options for a work programme to conserve and sustainably use coastal and marine biological diversity
- Bioprospecting of deep sea-bed genetic resources
- Facilitating access to, transfer and development of biotechnology

- Role of the CBD clearing-house mechanism in promoting technical and
- scientific cooperation in research and development
- knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous people relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity

Ideas forum

The fourth session of the Global Biodiversity Forum will take place Aug. 31 to Sept. 1 also in Montreal. It will focus on four themes: Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, Forests Biodiversity, New Methods for Linking People and Protected Areas and Economic Incentives for Biodiversity.

Getting ready for COP III

Preparations are also well under way for the Conference of the Parties meeting to be hosted by Argentina (Nov. 4-15). Agendas

for this third COP meeting were made available at the Biosafety conference in Denmark. Regional meetings will take place before it.

Surf to the Secretariat On the Net

For CBD news, including the latest conference documents and communiqués, check <http://www.unep.ch/biodiv.html>. The Secretariat's new web page <http://www.biodiv.org> is still under construction but also contains valuable information.

Photo ID

Left to right: F. Mauro (Italy), Z. Belkhir (Tunisia), H. Casas (Colombia), V. Lichtschein (Argentina), P. Schei (Norway), C.-G. Ducret (Sec.), S. Johnston (Sec.), A. Albovias (Sec.), I. Baitulin (Kazakhstan), G. Nechay (Hungary), T. Macleod (Sec.)

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is produced periodically by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

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