

INTERLAKEN CONFERENCE ON ANGR: THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2007

On Thursday, delegates concluded their negotiations on the Global Plan of Action and the Interlaken Declaration, after focusing their efforts on the sections relating to financing and implementation.

GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION: INTRODUCTION

Chair Bötsch invited delegates to resume discussions on the introductory text of the Global Plan (ITC- AnGR/07/3, Annex 1).

On the paragraph dealing with key features of AnGR (paragraph 9) delegates discussed elements of the subparagraphs. A footnote on limiting the legal implications of the term “transboundary breeds” led to protracted discussions on language, and delegates eventually agreed to the FAO Legal Counsel drafting appropriate text.

In the afternoon, Chair Bötsch introduced text stating that “it is intended that the use of the term transboundary breeds does not affect the sovereign rights of countries within their national jurisdictions,” which delegates accepted. Delegates also agreed to delete language requesting the FAO to further develop this terminology.

The SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC proposed, and delegates agreed to, additional text calling on the FAO to develop technical terminology. Regarding a reference to “policies,” the ERG, supported by NORTH AMERICA, suggested replacing it with “breeding programmes” to reflect the fact that not all countries have policies on AnGR. Delegates decided to keep references to both policies and breeding programmes. ASIA’s suggestion to include “buffalo” as a sixth species in the list of “main livestock” species was not accepted. Reference to the traditional “rights” of livestock keepers was altered by the ERG to “roles” and after some discussion delegates agreed to the new formulation. Delegates broadly supported reference to traditional and customary rights, but views differed on reference to rights under national legislation. LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN and AFRICA supported inclusion of reference to national legislation, while ASIA and PERU noted the absence of national legislation addressing livestock keepers’ rights in many countries. KENYA questioned whether such rights could exist in the absence of legislation. After a lengthy discussion, Chair Bötsch proposed text recognizing the important role of livestock keepers, pastoralists and local communities in the utilization and development of livestock resources, noting that in some

countries, livestock keepers have specific rights in accordance with national legislation, or traditional rights, to such resources. Delegates accepted this proposed text.

Regarding a paragraph on drawing attention to supporting efforts and resources for sustainable use, development and conservation of AnGR (paragraph 12), NORTH AMERICA’s suggestions to replace “an agreed basis” with “inspire,” and “mobilize” with “stimulate” were rejected, and delegates agreed to language stating the Global Plan will “provide a framework agreed by the international community.”

On structure and organization of the Global Plan (paragraph 16), the ERG introduced a proposal for structuring the Global Plan into three parts: the Introduction, Strategic Priorities, and Implementation and Financing. Although delegates agreed to the structure, they observed that it was premature to enter into discussions until substantive matters had been finalized. After substantive discussions had been concluded, delegates approved the structure of the report later in the day.

GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Chair Bötsch invited delegates to consider outstanding matters under the Strategic Priorities for Action.

On providing and catalyzing incentives for producers and consumers to support conservation (Strategic Priority 7), the reference to “at risk” in relation to measures targeting AnGR elicited a lengthy debate. AFRICA and ASIA favored deletion of “at risk” while the NEAR EAST, NORTH AMERICA and the SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC preferred to maintain the reference. NORTH AMERICA drew attention to the glossary of risk status classification in the *State of the World Report for Animal Genetic Resources*, which he said had a broad set of criteria in terms of providing incentives for conservation, and could help delegates move forward on the definition of “at risk.” Differences persisted over whether to include the term “at risk,” with the SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC and others seeking to retain this term, while NORTH AMERICA noted FAO criteria and the use of terms such as “critical” and “endangered.” However, not all groups supported a reference to FAO criteria, or to removing reference to “at risk.” After lengthy discussions, delegates agreed to retain the reference to AnGR “at risk,” qualifying that this should be “as evaluated by individual countries” and consistent with existing international agreements.

FINANCING

Delegates devoted considerable time on Thursday to discussing text on financing contained in two separate texts: Strategic Priority 23 in Section II of the Global Plan, and a separate text (formerly Annex II), which was adopted as Section III of the Global Plan and addresses implementation and financing. These related texts were discussed both in plenary and in a small informal group involving representatives from all the regional groups.

In plenary, Chair Bötsch asked delegates to consider Strategic Priority 23 on strengthening efforts to mobilize resources, including financing. The NEAR EAST preferred retaining the text while the ERG supported deletion on the grounds that financial issues would be addressed under implementation and financing in Section III of the Global Plan. ASIA disagreed, observing that the Strategic Priority 23 identified needs, while Section III concerned implementation. NORTH AMERICA drew attention to financial issues in Section III and the Interlaken Declaration, and called for financial matters to be consolidated to avoid duplication. Chair Bötsch established an informal group, chaired by the US, to propose a way forward on the consideration of financial matters.

On Thursday evening, Chair Bötsch introduced text developed by the informal group. He noted significant progress and agreement on most of the text for these two related parts of the Global Plan, and invited the US to brief participants.

The US thanked delegates for the positive spirit to discussions, noting that the group had identified three pillars that the text should address, namely technology transfer, capacity building, and financing and resources. He explained that the Global Plan's Strategy Priority 23 and Section III reflected two elements of the same issue and that textual changes had been kept to a minimum wherever possible, although some regrouping and amendment of text had been required to make the text flow, and for consistency. Finally, he explained that the text had been agreed and cleared of brackets, with the exception of one reference in Section III to "new and additional" financial resources.

Chair Bötsch invited participants to approve the text forwarded from the group. Delegates quickly approved the text for Strategic Priority 23. Regarding the bracketed text on new and additional resources in Section III, NORTH AMERICA, NEAR EAST, AFRICA and other groups indicated that they could agree to its deletion. However, LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN continued to support its retention. After further discussion, PERU suggested deleting "new" but retaining "additional," and the compromise was approved by all participants. Delegates then quickly approved the remainder of Section III without further amendment.

INTERLAKEN DECLARATION

Regarding text acknowledging that provision of new and additional resources can increase the world's ability to address sustainable use (paragraph 17), delegates addressed remaining brackets around "new" resources, "strongly" recommend, and a "significant" increase in resources. BRAZIL stated that its agreement to delete "new" in other parts of the text had been contingent on the term being retained in this paragraph, but agreed to delete "strongly." The US suggested a "substantial" increase in finances, but the SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC preferred "adequate." Delegates agreed on "new," "adequate" and the deletion of "strongly."

At 8.09pm, Chair Bötsch announced the text was clear and that the Interlaken Declaration was agreed. He congratulated

delegates on their spirit of compromise and announced that the closing session to adopt the Global Plan and Interlaken Declaration would begin at 1:00 pm Friday.

CIVIL SOCIETY PRESENTATION

Maryam Rahmanian, Centre for Sustainable Development and Environment, Iran, presented the Wilderswil Declaration on Livestock Diversity on behalf of representatives of 30 organizations of pastoralists, indigenous peoples, smallholder farmers and NGOs who had met in parallel to the Interlaken Conference at the "Livestock Diversity Forum: Defending food sovereignty and livestock keepers' rights." Rahmanian described the global livestock crisis caused by the imposition of industrial livestock breeding and production systems, and highlighted the consequences for local communities, including: loss of small and family-based production, smallholder bankruptcies and suicides, and economic dependency. She affirmed the Livestock Diversity Forum's commitment to fighting for the rights of livestock keepers, including land, water, culture, education and training, rights and access to local markets. Rahmanian commended the analysis in the *State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* report of the key causes leading to the destruction of biodiversity and highlighted that it identified industrial livestock systems as a primary cause. However, she said the Global Plan fails to address these causes. Rahmanian said it is unacceptable for governments to agree on a plan that does not challenge policies that lead to biodiversity loss, adding that civil society organizations have no interest in a plan that provides "weak support for a collapsing livestock production system." She reaffirmed civil society's commitment to organizing itself in order to save livestock diversity and concluded that "defending livestock diversity is not a matter of genes, but of collective rights."

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates were celebrating on Thursday evening after successfully completing their negotiations on both the Global Plan of Action and the Interlaken Declaration. After the progress made on many substantive issues on Wednesday, some had feared that a difficult day lay ahead on Thursday, as delegates turned to the "tricky" task of making the various outputs and texts fit together, particularly the language on financing contained in Strategic Priority 23 of the Global Plan, and in a separate section on implementation and financing. However, despite some disagreement, delegates in the contact group emerged jubilant, with several reporting "genuine goodwill" and that "simple misunderstandings" had led to earlier disputes. Observers praised donor countries for their willingness to compromise on language on financing and resources, and developing countries for their "flexibility at key moments." With only the formal adoption left for Friday afternoon, some were already looking beyond the meeting to what the decision might mean: "I believe we have achieved something quite special here," claimed one cheerful veteran.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: *The Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the Interlaken Conference will be available on Monday, 10 September 2007, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/angr/>