

Tuesday 30 May 2017

16:30 – 18:00

Joint meeting of the Chairs of the CEPA Oversight Panel (OP) and the Working Group on CEPA Implementation (WG)

Summary

Present: Australia (Chair OP) and South Africa (Chair WG)
plus Kenya, Republic of Congo, Romania, Senegal, Uruguay, United States of America

The Chair of the WG recalled that the WG was established as the mechanism referred to in Res. XII.9.paragraph 9 to guide the communication activities of the Secretariat, including setting priorities and guiding the design of the secretariat's CEPA Action Plan, monitor the effectiveness of the Plan, and report to the Management Working Group at each of its meetings, and develop with advice of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) a new approach for advising and supporting CEPA in the Convention to be submitted to the 13th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP13). The modified Action Plan was approved by SC52. The WG has now completed most of its tasks except that monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan, and reporting to the Management Working Group at each of its meetings seem to be continuous tasks. Also the task of developing with advice of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) a new approach for advising and supporting CEPA in the Convention to be submitted to the 13th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP13) is yet to be accomplished. She acknowledged that the Secretariat is now better equipped to implement the Action Plan with a new SG and dedicated communications staff.

The Chair of the OP reported that four issues emerged from the OP's discussion today:

- 1) the desirability for COP13 to revisit main CEPA governance as part of its consideration of the advice of the Working Group and so determine the future role and responsibilities of the Oversight Panel (should it persist);
- 2) the continuing need to be mindful of the limited resources available to the Secretariat and to match the CPs' ambitions to this, noting also it is fundamental that the CPs ensure the work of Secretariat adds value in assisting the CPs meet their obligations;
- 3) in that regard the need to specify what outcomes the CPs want to secure from CEPA, and ensuring a focus on engagement and participation as well as communication;
- 4) the need to consider whether there were opportunities for the OP and WG to work collaboratively up to COP13.

The Chair of OP advised that the OP would provide advice to the WG prior to COP13 on the question of a future approach on supporting CEPA (consistent with Res XIII.9)

The United States of America stated that Res. XII.9. para.9 reflects the CPs' dissatisfaction at the time and the mechanism to establish a WG was distinct and intended to tackle a specific problem – developing a CEPA Action Plan – that was solved since, and that the interest in monitoring implementation was likewise a response to an expectation that under the

previous situation the Plan would need monitoring by CPs. In this situation, the Parties did much work that otherwise the Secretariat would do to develop the Action Plan, and that she expects the Secretariat to prepare a new CEPA Resolution and Action Plan for the next triennium that CPs would find satisfactory. She also noted that the development of a new approach with the STRP need not be complicated and indeed appeared to already be happening and could be quite simple.

Kenya said WG is not necessarily permanent and called to identify the differences between the two groups.

Senegal said both groups are subsidiary. Which of them has a clear mandate: Res. XII.9.9 has to report to COP13, the OP does not specifically report to COP13. Both should work closer to develop a common CEPA approach under Ramsar.

Romania said the creation of the WG was no mistake, because it is a useful mechanism. But now the WG has less to do and leave the greater part of the job to the Secretariat.

Congo said structures are in place and called for a roadmap to the next COP.

The two Chairs agreed that the OP could contribute to the thinking of the WG and so would provide some advice. We are today trying to identify the important questions, being interested in the outcomes. SC53 has now an opportunity to establish priorities for the current Action Plan and drop unrealistic proposals from the plan. The new CEPA Resolution should focus on what can be reasonably achieved in the coming triennium.

The Legal Adviser stressed that Res. XII.9. para.9 did only address a “mechanism” but not specifically require the establishment of a WG. Therefore SC would have the opportunity to conclude that the WG did achieve most of its tasks and that this mechanism could therefore be absorbed by the OP as long as its long-term functions would be maintained. This does not need a new COP decision.