



IBSA ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP

1. Introduction

The IBSA Environment Working Group held its first meeting on 12 September 2008 in New Delhi, India. In addition, a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the Field of Environment was finalised during the 10th IBSA Focal Points' meeting on 10 October 2008 and signed by the three countries at the IBSA Summit that year in New Delhi.

2. Objectives

The objective of the MoU is to promote a common beneficial partnership among the three IBSA countries in the field of environmental management and sustainable development with particular focus on international climate change issues, biodiversity issues, land degradation and desertification as well as forestry.

3. Background

The MoU provides a framework for trilateral cooperation in the areas of common interest, namely:

- i) to promote dialogue and interaction among the three countries on global environmental issues, including Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and other environmental fora.
- ii) the MoU is intended to promote cooperation aimed at mutual transfer of knowledge, best practices
- iii) the promotion and development of clean technologies through joint research, projects, seminars, workshops in the field of environment.

The MoU also makes provision for the appointment of National Coordinators and the establishment of the IBSA Environment Working Group to coordinate the activities under the MoU. Therefore, the Environment MOU provides the ideal basis for the three parties to cooperate on environmental issues, share experiences and views amongst each other and develop common positions and approaches on key environment and sustainable development issues for COPs of important Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

4. Status to date

The Environment Working Group has met on three occasions since its inception, namely in New Delhi, India in September 2008, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in July 2009 and informally again in New Delhi in March 2011.

A draft implementation plan for the MoU was developed by South Africa and circulated to the environment counterparts in Brazil and India respectively.

Conclusion

IBSA is an important and unique South-South Cooperation forum which provides a platform to share lessons learnt and best practices, promote technology transfer and technology in research and development and exchange information and expertise. The trilateral MoU on cooperation in the field of environment was formulated to promote cooperative efforts of environmental protection and sustainable development and to promote collaboration and exchange between the three IBSA countries in the environmental field.