

SUMMARY OF THE UNFF EXPERT GROUP ON THE NON-LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT: 11-15 DECEMBER 2006

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) *ad hoc* expert group on the consideration of the content of the non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) on all types of forests convened from 11-15 December 2006, at UN headquarters in New York. Over 300 participants, including government-designated experts from member states and representatives of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), intergovernmental organizations and Major Groups, completed a first reading of a draft composite text of the NLBI. This will be forwarded to UNFF-7 for consideration, along with a revised and consolidated version prepared by the Secretariat which could serve as the basis for negotiations at UNFF-7 in April 2007.

This meeting completed an essential first step in developing an NLBI on all types of forests. Leading up to the meeting, it was accepted by most participants that the best-case scenario outcome would be to have all views expressed and consolidated into options contained in bracketed text, ready for negotiation at UNFF-7. The week started off well, with tensions perhaps eased by having the forest convention debate out of the way, and with no expectation of attaining consensus by the end of the week. While it was technically an “expert group” meeting, from the outset it was clear that experts approached this as a working group as originally proposed at UNFF-6, delving into detailed textual modifications and revisiting familiar country positions. However, the meeting exceeded all expectations in that it not only finished a first reading of the text, it did so ahead of the time allotted, a rarity within multilateral environmental negotiations.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNFF

The UNFF followed a five-year period (1995-2000) of forest policy dialogue facilitated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). In October 2000, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), in Resolution E/2000/35, established the UNFF as a subsidiary body, with the main objective of promoting the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

To achieve its main objective, principal functions were identified for UNFF, namely to: facilitate implementation of forest-related agreements and foster a common understanding on sustainable forest management (SFM); provide for continued policy development and dialogue among governments, international organizations, and Major Groups, as identified in Agenda 21, as well as address forest issues and emerging areas of concern in a holistic, comprehensive and integrated manner; enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues; foster international cooperation and monitor, assess and report on progress; and strengthen political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

The earlier IPF/IFF processes had produced more than 270 proposals for action towards SFM; these form the basis for the UNFF Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) and Plan of Action, which have been discussed at annual sessions. Country- and organization-led initiatives have also contributed to UNFF’s work.

ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION: The UNFF organizational session and informal consultations on the MYPOW took place from 12-16 February 2001, at UN headquarters in New York.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the UNFF	1
UNFF Expert Group Report	2
Panel Discussion on Legal and Financial Matters . . .	3
Consideration of the Draft Composite Text on the NLBI	3
Closing Plenary	9
A Brief Analysis of the Meeting	9
Upcoming Meetings	11
Glossary	12

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Delegates agreed that the UNFF Secretariat would be located in New York and discussed progress towards the establishment of the CPF, a partnership of 14 major forest-related international organizations, institutions and convention secretariats.

UNFF-1: The first session of UNFF took place from 11-23 June 2001, at UN headquarters in New York. Delegates discussed and adopted decisions on UNFF's MYPOW, a Plan of Action for the implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, and UNFF's work with the CPF. Delegates also recommended establishing three *ad hoc* expert groups to provide technical advice to UNFF on: approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR); finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs); and consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests.

UNFF-2: The second session of UNFF took place from 4-15 March 2002, at UN headquarters in New York. Delegates adopted a Ministerial Declaration and Message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Delegates also adopted decisions on, *inter alia*, proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for 2002-2005 and the format for voluntary reporting, and resolutions on: combating deforestation and forest degradation; forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems; rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover; the promotion of natural and planted forests; and specific criteria for the review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests (IAF).

UNFF-3: UNFF-3 met in Geneva, Switzerland, from 26 May-6 June 2003. UNFF-3 adopted six resolutions on: enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination; forest health and productivity; economic aspects of forests; maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs; the UNFF Trust Fund; and strengthening the Secretariat. Terms of reference were adopted for the voluntary reporting format, and three *ad hoc* expert groups designed to consider: monitoring and reporting; finance and transfer of technologies; and "consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests."

UNFF-4: UNFF-4 convened in Geneva, Switzerland, from 3-14 May 2004. UNFF-4 adopted five resolutions on: forest-related scientific knowledge; social and cultural aspects of forests; MAR and criteria and indicators; review of the effectiveness of the IAF; and finance and transfer of ESTs. UNFF-4 attempted to but could not reach agreement on resolutions on traditional forest-related knowledge and enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination.

UNFF-5: UNFF-5 took place from 16-27 May 2005, at UN headquarters in New York, with the goal of reviewing the effectiveness of the IAF. However, participants were unable to reach agreement on strengthening the IAF and did not produce either a ministerial statement or a negotiated outcome. They did agree, *ad referendum*, to four global goals on: significantly increasing the area of protected forests and sustainably managed forests worldwide; reversing the decline in official development assistance (ODA) for SFM; reversing the loss of forest cover; and enhancing forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits. They also agreed in principle to negotiate, at some future date, the terms of reference for a voluntary code or

international understanding on forests, as well as means of implementation. Delegates decided to forward the draft negotiating text to UNFF-6.

UNFF-6: UNFF-6 took place from 13-24 February 2006, at UN headquarters in New York. Negotiators reached agreement on how to proceed with reconstituting the IAF. Delegates generated a negotiating text containing new language on the function of the IAF, a commitment to convene UNFF biennially after 2007, and a request that UNFF-7 (16-27 April 2007) adopt an NLBI on all types of forests. UNFF-6 also set four global objectives for the IAF: reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through SFM, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation; enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits and the contribution of forests to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals; increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests; and reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM.

UNFF EXPERT GROUP REPORT

Pekka Patosaari, Director, UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat, opened the meeting on Monday, noting that the current period of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) reform presents an opportunity for UNFF to increase its profile. Delegates agreed that the UNFF-7 Bureau should act as bureau for this meeting, including: Hans Hoogeveen (the Netherlands) as Chair; and André-Jules Madingou (Gabon), Arvids Ozols (Latvia), Hamidon Ali (Malaysia), and Christian Maquieira (Chile) as Vice-Chairs. Chair Hoogeveen said that UNFF is at a critical juncture and ready for a great leap forward. He made an appeal to not reopen previously agreed language, and said that although this was an expert group meeting, participants should approach it as a negotiating session.

Jan Haino, Forestry Department of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), on behalf of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, reiterated the CPF's strong commitment to the international arrangement on forests (IAF), and expressed hope that the outcome of the *ad hoc* expert group (AHEG) would set the stage for the adoption of a non-legally binding instrument at UNFF-7.

Finland, for the EU, noted divergent views within the proposals, on: financial resources; subscription to the instrument; the relationship between the MYPOW and the instrument; and a facilitative process proposed by the EU. Canada preferred to begin negotiations of the instrument at UNFF-7, and explained that some elements of Canada's submitted proposal were taken out of context, as they had originally related to a legally binding instrument (LBI). India and China supported the creation of a global forest fund, and China highlighted priority issues including poverty reduction, means of implementation and illegal logging.

New Zealand expressed support for a strong UNFF that is capable of coordinating activity in support of sustainable forest management (SFM), and suggested using the seven thematic elements on SFM as a basis for discussion. Iran encouraged

cooperation and recognition of stakeholder contributions. Pakistan urged experts to focus on the root causes of deforestation.

The US noted the language used in the instrument will dictate how binding it would be, and encouraged adherence to a voluntary approach. She supported a strong, concise document that will add value to the existing process and cautioned against creating additional bureaucracy.

Australia emphasized the need for agreement on the purpose of the NLBI and for the instrument to include emerging issues. The Russian Federation said that there was a need for tangible and practical results and that this process should enhance international consensus. Mexico underscored that the document should reflect the high level of political commitment to SFM and promote the enhancement of domestic forest policies.

Major Groups issued a joint statement on their key concerns on the NLBI, including that: national sovereignty clauses recognize traditional rights as supported by other international agreements; governments ensure that markets and trade support SFM; traditional knowledge be protected; and financing mechanisms not be diverted from existing funding. A representative of the Small Forest Landowners group suggested removing “non-legally binding” from the title of the instrument, explaining that this, along with weak language in the text, undermines the agreement.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Delegates adopted the provisional agenda (E/CN.18/AC.1/2006/1) without amendment. Chair Hoogeveen outlined the Bureau’s proposal that work be undertaken as a single body in plenary, as simultaneous interpretation was only available for one room, and noted that interpretation in Chinese, Russian and Arabic would not be available throughout the week.

Patsaari introduced: a background paper, “Elements or proposals for an NLBI,” which contains proposals and comments submitted by member states and other groups on the NLBI; a composite draft text prepared by the Secretariat and incorporating all proposals; and a note by the Secretariat on developing an NLBI on all types of forests (E/CN.18/AC.1.2006/2). The Secretariat noted that 50 percent of the composite draft text was taken from previously agreed language. Delegates agreed to base the week’s discussions on the composite draft text.

Chair Hoogeveen clarified that the text, with all country proposals, would be forwarded to UNFF-7 as a reference document, and that the Secretariat would also provide a consolidated text taking into account proposals from the expert group, which could be used as a basis for negotiations at UNFF-7.

Throughout the week, participants convened in plenary to consider the draft composite text on the NLBI. On Monday a panel discussion on legal and financial matters was convened and on Friday the meeting concluded with adoption of the report of the expert group.

PANEL DISCUSSION ON LEGAL AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

This panel discussion was held on Monday and was facilitated by Daniela Simioni, Office of the UN Secretary-General. Francisco Rezek, former judge, International Court of Justice, outlined the historical context of non-binding agreements and clarified the legal aspects of an NLBI. He said that due to the non-obligatory language in the text, there would be no difference in outcome if the text were adopted as a treaty or as an NLBI. Charles di Leva, World Bank, highlighted the importance of clarity of terms, credibility, commitment and continuity of the proposed NLBI. He noted that subscription was not necessary to represent the global community’s commitment to an NLBI. Markku Simula, forest expert, discussed SFM financing, highlighting the important role of private sector investment. He pointed to existing financing mechanisms, and said that increasing development lending is dependent on recipient countries’ willingness to borrow for and prioritize forest-related activities.

Panelists then answered questions from participants on: the efficacy of NLBIs, subscription, dispute settlement, building capacity for NLBI implementation in developing countries, attracting additional financing for forests, and the potential legal implications of an NLBI.

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT COMPOSITE TEXT ON THE NLBI

Participants proceeded through a first reading of the draft composite text on the NLBI in plenary throughout the week. Delegates agreed not to address the preamble at this meeting. On Thursday, the structure of the NLBI was debated, with participants making proposals on the order of the different sections. Several participants preferred further consolidating sections in the draft text. Mexico and Chile suggested that it was premature to elaborate a detailed structure.

PRINCIPLES: The principles of the NLBI were discussed on Tuesday. Discussion focused on: the NLBI’s relationship to the Rio Declaration and the Forest Principles and to international law; national responsibilities; international cooperation; the role of Major Groups; and the inclusion of the seven thematic elements of SFM.

On the relationship of the NLBI to the Rio Declaration and Forest Principles, the EU preferred that these form “the basis of the instrument” instead of “the basis for the principles of the instrument.” Costa Rica suggested adding that they “are an integral part of this instrument.” The Russian Federation, supported by the US, said the most important message to convey was that this document intends to build upon the Rio Declaration and Forest Principles.

Regarding text stating that nothing in the instrument is intended to affect international legal obligations, proposals were forwarded to move the text to the end of the document or combine it with the subparagraph stating the voluntary and open nature of the instrument. Mexico proposed text reflecting that nothing in the instrument would prejudice the rights, jurisdictions and duties of states under international law. Brazil commented that the retention of this paragraph will depend on whether the instrument will require subscription.

On the responsibility of each country for sustainable management of its forests and the enforcement of its forest laws, the EU, supported by New Zealand, Japan, Norway, Switzerland and Mexico, proposed adding reference to promoting good governance. Colombia, Pakistan, Senegal, India, Mauritania and Nigeria, for the African Group, suggested deleting the paragraph, with Senegal noting that the means of enforcing forest law had not been addressed. Switzerland, Japan and the EU noted that the paragraph was an important addition to the Forest Principles and requested its retention. The African Group, supported by Pakistan, proposed adding a reference to the provision of adequate financial resources if the paragraph were to be retained. On sovereignty over forest resources, Switzerland recalled that national sovereignty is already included in the preamble and proposed deleting reference to it in the principles. The US, supported by Guatemala and India, requested that the reference be retained.

On the role of international cooperation in improving the management of forests in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, Iran, supported by Canada and the US, noted the importance of the international community and proposed adding reference to the efforts of all countries. Pakistan, supported by Cuba, the African Group, Venezuela and Guinea, proposed reference to international cooperation and financial support, with China adding capacity building and technology transfer.

On participation of Major Groups in forest decision making, Australia, supported by Brazil, Iran and the Russian Federation, proposed referring to Major Groups as identified by Agenda 21, while the US, Norway, Guatemala and Chile preferred listing specific groups. Pakistan, with the African Group, said Major Group involvement should be according to each member state's forest policies. The US said this would undermine the nature of the principle.

Australia, supported by Colombia, Brazil, China and the African Group, suggested deleting a subparagraph on the seven thematic elements of SFM, noting these are addressed in a separate section of the text. The EU, the US and New Zealand preferred retaining the text, with New Zealand adding that the thematic elements provide both an indicative set of criteria and a common framework for SFM. Argentina, Venezuela, India and Cuba argued that thematic elements are not principles and should not be included in this section. Brazil opposed referring to the thematic elements as "an indicative set of global criteria." The Russian Federation suggested that "consideration should be given to" the thematic elements.

USE OF TERMS: On Tuesday, delegates briefly discussed the need to include a section on use of terms but did not embark on substantial discussions of the terms themselves. Delegates noted that it would be a time-consuming process, and that defining certain terms, such as "forest," would be difficult, as definitions vary by country. Australia, Brazil and the EU stressed the importance of defining SFM. Canada and the Russian Federation said the full text must be finalized in order to determine which terms need definition.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the NLBI was discussed on Monday. Noting the complexity of the text, Norway, supported by Australia, Malaysia, China, Brazil and New Zealand,

recommended stating instead that the purpose of this instrument is to strengthen political commitment and actions to effectively implement SFM and to achieve the global objectives on forests. Mexico noted that raising political commitment is not the purpose of the NLBI. Australia suggested including reference to enhanced cooperation and Malaysia proposed adding "on all types of forests and to provide a global platform." The US questioned the need to elaborate a purpose in the document.

GLOBAL OBJECTIVES ON FORESTS: The section on global objectives was discussed on Monday. The EU and Indonesia preferred deleting text on the overarching objective of the instrument. Indonesia also suggested deleting language on deciding to set the Global Objectives and work to achieve progress towards their achievement by 2015. Pakistan, Cuba and Chile objected, noting that commitment to the Global Objectives should not be ignored, and preferred retaining the language until text on the NLBI's purpose is agreed.

SCOPE: The scope of the instrument was briefly discussed on Monday. The Russian Federation proposed adding that the instrument relate to all types of forests "regardless of the form of their ownership." The US questioned the need for a section on scope.

NATIONAL MEASURES, POLICIES, ACTIONS OR GOALS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GLOBAL OBJECTIVES:

On Tuesday and Wednesday, experts considered the section on national measures. Discussions focused on, *inter alia*: voluntary and quantifiable targets; proposals for action (PfA) under the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum (IPF/IFF); enhanced cooperation; national forest programmes; networks of protected areas; environmental impact assessments (EIAs); enabling environments; voluntary instruments; and monitoring and assessing forest conditions.

Switzerland clarified its proposed language on voluntary quantifiable timebound national targets of voluntary national measures. The EU, Costa Rica, Mexico and Guatemala supported the idea of such targets, and Uruguay noted the added value of such an inclusion, but cautioned that attaining agreement on such language would be challenging. An informal group was formed to draft text on voluntary national targets. The text produced was submitted to the Secretariat for inclusion in the revised draft text, for consideration at UNFF-7.

The US, supported by the Russian Federation, Brazil, Indonesia, India, Australia, China, Colombia and the African Group, proposed language on "resolving," rather than "making all efforts," to contribute to the shared Global Objectives while taking national sovereignty, practices and conditions into account.

On implementing the IPF/IFF PfAs and UNFF resolutions, the US and Australia expressed concern that the text exceeded the scope of national measures and policies. Australia suggested specifying that programmes, plans and strategies be relevant to national circumstances, while the African Group suggested they be in accordance with national circumstances.

Indonesia suggested that language on enhanced cooperation be integrated with the section on cooperation and cross-sectoral policy coordination. The US and Australia emphasized that cross-sectoral cooperation is important at both the national and international levels.

India, the US, Morocco, Venezuela and Pakistan requested deletion of a subparagraph on maintaining permanent forest estates, noting that it is not applicable to all states. Fiji clarified the importance of the term for countries with communal land tenure.

On safeguarding forests from threats, the US, supported by Australia, India and Brazil, proposed to specify threats from fire, insects, diseases, pollution and “invasive” alien species. New Zealand, supported by Brazil, proposed replacing reference to invasive alien species and insects with “pests.”

On requiring environmental impact assessments (EIAs) for projects with likely adverse effects, Brazil, supported by Colombia and the African Group, said EIA use should be “promoted,” rather than “required,” and added “according to national legislation.” The US, supported by the African Group, preferred promoting use of EIAs for projects with potentially significant impacts. Uruguay supported reference to other tools including codes of good forest practices and criteria and indicators (C&I) for SFM. Noting language in the Forest Principles stating that EIAs should be carried out, Mexico said “promoting” EIAs was weaker than language previously agreed to in the Forest Principles.

On enabling environments for investment, the EU proposed deleting language limiting stakeholder involvement. On involving stakeholders in forest decision making, the EU, supported by Australia, proposed moving this paragraph to the section on principles. The US objected, noting its importance as a national commitment. Switzerland provided alternative text on promoting active participation and empowerment of Major Groups in developing, implementing and evaluating SFM policies and programmes at all levels.

On developing, promoting and implementing voluntary instruments, participants debated, *inter alia*, whether to single out certification. After protracted debate, the original text was retained, which specifies “including certification.”

On monitoring and assessing forest conditions, Brazil requested deletion of a reference to agreed C&I. The African Group, Indonesia and Malaysia recommended replacing “agreed” C&I with “national” C&I. China, supported by Pakistan, the African Group and India, said actions should be taken on a voluntary basis. Cuba proposed text reflecting that actions depend on national capacities and conditions. The Russian Federation proposed “using C&I of SFM based on national priorities and taking into account internationally agreed C&I.”

Japan proposed a new subparagraph on promoting forest law enforcement and governance to eradicate illegal practices. The US proposed five new subparagraphs on: scientific and technological innovations for SFM; sharing and use of best practices; promoting implementation of national forest programmes, C&I and good business practices through public-private partnerships; strengthening forest law enforcement and combating illegal logging and corruption; and creating transparent and effective markets for products and services.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER INSTRUMENTS: On Wednesday, experts considered the relationship of the NLBI to the work of existing LBIs and the need to strengthen interaction with these instruments for SFM. In the ensuing discussions, the EU sought clarification on who would undertake the task of increasing interaction with other instruments and, with support from the Russian Federation, India, Cuba, Malaysia and Morocco, suggested moving the paragraph to the section on enhanced cooperation. The US, questioning whether the NLBI could provide direction to the UNFF, preferred deleting the paragraph.

SEVEN THEMATIC ELEMENTS OF SFM AND IPF/IFF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION: This section was discussed on Wednesday. The Secretariat reported on ongoing work on clustering and simplifying the IPF/IFF PfAs and relevant UNFF and ECOSOC resolutions under the seven thematic elements of SFM, with a view to assisting national SFM implementation and monitoring and reporting of progress towards achieving SFM. He explained that this section of the text requested the development of annexes to this end. Debate ensued on whether this was an appropriate activity under the instrument.

New Zealand supported the idea of developing such annexes as part of the MYPOW. Brazil, Costa Rica, the EU, Australia and the US expressed doubts on the appropriateness of this clustering activity within the instrument. Costa Rica, the EU and Australia noted this activity would be more appropriate under the MYPOW. However, many participants agreed that the seven thematic elements should be part of the conceptual framework behind the instrument.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN FOREST PRODUCTS: On Wednesday, experts considered the issue of international trade in forest products. Discussions focused on: encouraging trade in sustainable forest products; the relationship between trade and the environment; forest law enforcement and governance; voluntary certification; internalizing environmental and social costs of forest products; public procurement policies; and addressing illegal trade through cooperation.

The US, supported by many, proposed language on encouraging trade in forest products and investment in the forest sector by removing trade barriers and by developing and implementing open and predictable and non-discriminatory international rules for trade and investment. Indonesia agreed, adding text on further promoting market access for products from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests.

The US, supported by the Russian Federation, the EU and Norway, suggested replacing several similar paragraphs with text promoting a mutually supportive relationship between trade and the environment and facilitating trade in legally harvested products. Canada noted the importance of ensuring that these products are also legally traded and Brazil suggested referring to illegal “trade” instead of “harvest.” The African Group preferred taking actions to prohibit trade in illegally harvested forest products.

On cooperation on forest law enforcement and governance, the US proposed revised language on combating illegal harvesting of, and associated trade in, timber, wildlife and non-

timber products. China, supported by Malaysia and opposed by India, the US, Senegal and Iran, proposed deleting reference to wildlife.

Japan, supported by the EU, suggested deleting language on operation of voluntary certification and labeling schemes in accordance with national legislation. The US, supported by New Zealand, proposed replacing national legislation with international obligations. Australia, supported by New Zealand, proposed that voluntary certification and labeling schemes not be used as “unjustified discrimination or disguised restrictions” rather than as “disguised protectionism,” and Malaysia proposed “non-tariff barriers” as an alternative.

On promoting valuation systems that internalize environmental and social costs of forest products, the US, supported by Canada, Mexico and India, but opposed by Iran and Switzerland, argued this was not related to trade and should be moved to another section.

The EU proposed a new subparagraph on public procurement policies and Australia, on assessing forest certification schemes. The Russian Federation, the US, Malaysia, the African Group and India expressed reservations about both proposals.

On a paragraph on addressing illegal forest-related practices through greater information sharing and international cooperation, New Zealand, China and Iran recommended deleting language directing the UNFF to carry this out. The US and the African Group favored deleting the paragraph.

Major Groups called for: addressing poverty reduction as impacted by international trade; highlighting economic development that benefits forest dependent people; and discouraging trade in timber products from areas where land tenure issues remain unresolved.

RESEARCH: The expert group discussed research on Wednesday. The International Union of Forest Research Organizations highlighted a joint initiative on science and technology to be launched at UNFF-7, which would support the work of the UNFF and other forest-related intergovernmental processes, and achievement of the Global Objectives.

Iran proposed that the title of the section be modified to Research and Scientific Activities, while the EU preferred Technical and Scientific Cooperation.

Experts discussed a subparagraph on the role of science and research in SFM, with the US suggesting text on states resolving to strengthen the contributions of science and research. The EU suggested text on the promotion of international cooperation, including through South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, and, where necessary, through appropriate international, national and regional institutions. The EU also proposed language referring to scientific and technological innovations for SFM, including those that help indigenous and local communities undertake SFM. Pakistan proposed undertaking collaborative research and development with technical and financial support from developed countries.

Experts also discussed a subparagraph on encouraging states to strengthen linkages between science and policy, with Iran calling for an additional paragraph on enhancing research and scientific forest-related capacities in developing countries specifically.

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION: The expert group discussed this section on Wednesday. Singapore proposed replacing the entire section with text on resolving to promote and encourage understanding of, and the measures required for, the sustainable management of forests, including through: enhancement of forest education capacity; the media and the inclusion of these topics in education and awareness programmes; cooperation with other state and international organizations in developing such programmes; and supporting such programmes amongst Major Groups.

Major Groups proposed text on promoting and encouraging universal access to formal and informal education, and extension and training programmes. On supporting education and public awareness on SFM among youth, women and Major Groups, various proposals were put forward to include indigenous peoples, local communities, and forest-dependent communities.

ENHANCED COOPERATION AND CROSS-SECTORAL POLICY AND PROGRAMME COORDINATION, AND INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL PROCESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS: Noting that issues in these sections had been addressed while discussing other sections, on Friday Chair Hooqveen proposed, and delegates agreed, that the AHEG did not need to consider these sections. He said much of the text would be streamlined as suggested by proposals made in other sections, and that discussion of regional processes and organizations should only occur after the MYPOW meeting in February in Indonesia.

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION: The expert group discussed Means of Implementation on Thursday, and heard a related statement from the World Bank on Friday. Delegates considered three subsections on finance, incentives, and capacity building and transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs).

Finance: Delegates addressed paragraphs related to, *inter alia*, securing political will to strengthen means of implementation, reversing the decline in ODA for SFM, new and additional resources for SFM, funding options, innovative financial mechanisms, and market mechanisms.

As an alternative to a subparagraph on securing sustained political commitment to strengthen means of implementation, the US, with Australia, proposed text linking means of implementation to assisting countries to meet the Global Objectives by cooperating bilaterally, regionally and globally. Norway proposed linking this to national targets. China, the African Group, India and Pakistan supported retaining a subparagraph on mobilizing and providing significant new and additional resources for SFM, and with the EU, a subparagraph on reversing the decline in ODA. To a subparagraph on mobilizing and providing new and additional resources for SFM, the EU added language on supporting national forest programmes and integrating forest issues in national development programmes and, where appropriate, poverty reduction strategies.

One of the more contentious issues discussed was whether to have a new global forest fund or to assess and review current funding mechanisms. Regarding the two alternative options presented in the composite draft text, China, Pakistan, Cuba, Malaysia, the African Group, Venezuela, Mexico and Iran

supported the option on establishing a new global forest fund/financing mechanism/forest development fund. Canada, the EU and Switzerland preferred the option on assessing and reviewing current funding mechanisms. Iran said use of existing funds may adversely impact financing in other areas, such as combating desertification, but that improving, strengthening and giving new mandates to existing funds could also be considered. The US preferred discussing this issue under the MYPOW.

Experts also discussed subparagraphs on: inviting CPF members to support countries in accessing additional funding, which Iran and India proposed deleting; inviting the GEF to consider support for SFM, which the US favored deleting and India, the African Group, the EU and Pakistan preferred to retain; and inviting international financial institutions to consider ways to generate access to resources, which the US opposed and Iran, Pakistan, China, India and the African Group supported.

On developing innovative financial mechanisms for generating revenue for SFM, the African Group, China, India and others opposed proposals to add reference to: debt reduction mechanisms (US); generating carbon emissions reduction credits through forest cover maintenance and recovery (Costa Rica); and payments for ecosystem services (Switzerland).

On creating financial measures to support small land owners or users, Major Groups, supported by the EU, Mexico, Switzerland and the African Group, provided an alternative subparagraph on financial mechanisms supporting forestry-related rural development for the benefit of forest-dependent local peoples, particularly in developing countries.

There was some debate over inclusion of a subparagraph on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), with India, Malaysia, Venezuela and China supporting its deletion. Pakistan proposed text requesting financial institutions to allocate CDM funds for afforestation and reforestation projects. Mexico, Cambodia and Guatemala proposed text on developing CDM strategies for participation of developing countries in market-based mechanisms.

Experts also discussed subparagraphs on, *inter alia*: creating an enabling environment for investment by the private sector in SFM and for involvement of and investment by local communities; and initiating and strengthening public-private partnerships to promote implementation of national forest measures. There were proposals to move subparagraphs on, *inter alia*, fostering access to forest resources and markets, and supporting livelihoods and income diversification, to the section on national measures.

The US proposed moving from another section a subparagraph on improving regional and international coordination for inclusion under Means of Implementation. Brazil proposed a new subparagraph on developing a mechanism of positive incentives to finance developing country efforts to reduce the loss of forests and implement SFM.

Incentives: Delegates debated whether to include a separate subsection on incentives. On adopting measures to act as incentives for SFM, Japan, Iran, New Zealand and Australia, opposed referring to incentives, suggesting the NLBI in itself should be an incentive. The Major Groups suggested broader analysis of incentives through the MYPOW.

Regarding a subparagraph calling on member states to encourage remunerative returns from sustainably managed forests, Australia said government intervention in this matter was impractical and that only the market can determine returns. Japan, the US, New Zealand and Australia, opposed by Malaysia, suggested deleting the paragraph. Australia preferred moving the content of this subsection to another location in the text.

Capacity building and transfer of ESTs: Under this subsection the expert group discussed subparagraphs on, *inter alia*: enhancing capacity to increase production of forest products from sustainably managed forests; promoting technology transfer and capacity building to facilitate implementation of national policies and measures; sharing and use of best practices in SFM; enhancing transfer of ESTs on favorable terms; promoting scientific and technological innovations for SFM; and international technical and scientific cooperation.

There were proposals to move to the section on National Measures subparagraphs on, *inter alia*: promoting participation and empowerment of forest-related stakeholders; promoting protection, use and benefit-sharing of traditional knowledge; and developing voluntary instruments to adopt good business practices and improve market transparency.

Contentious discussions revolved around subparagraphs related to, *inter alia*, addressing illegal practices and illegal international trade and combating wildlife poaching and related trafficking.

The US proposed merging several paragraphs in this subsection into one paragraph promoting capacity building, technical assistance and access to and transfer of ESTs to enable countries to implement national policies and measures aimed at reversing the loss of forest cover and increasing the area of protected and sustainably managed forests. Many developing countries supported maintaining a separate subparagraph on promoting transfer of technology to and capacity building in developing countries.

Egypt, India and Mexico supported retaining a paragraph on strengthening capacity to address illegal practices and illegal international trade in forest products. Noting sensitivities on the part of some to over-referencing illegal international trade, the US suggested referring to illegal logging, or illegal practices, “and associated trade.”

China opposed including a subparagraph on combating wildlife poaching and related trafficking, while India and Norway supported its retention. There were suggestions that this be done in accordance with national legislation and policies (Pakistan), and in adherence to international obligations (Chile). Brazil proposed that, if retained, reference to trafficking of forest-related biological resources be included. The US pointed to potential difficulties with this proposal.

On promoting effective protection, use and related benefit sharing of traditional knowledge, Brazil requested this be done according to national legislation. Brazil also proposed a new subparagraph on promoting the development of freeware-based technology in promoting SFM implementation.

On Friday, Gerhard Dieterle, World Bank, informed the expert group that a background document on means of implementation was being developed in partnership with the UNFF Secretariat and the CPF, which will contribute to UNFF-7 discussions. He

said the paper would assess and provide further information on various means of implementation specified at UNFF-6, in order to provide an update on the current state of discussions on the proposed means of implementation and highlight any trends and emerging options likely to influence forest sector finance. He said a first draft will be circulated at the country-led initiative to be held in Bali in February 2007, and the final paper would be made available at UNFF-7.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Promoting provision of technical assistance to states was discussed on Thursday. Iran, supported by Pakistan, Cuba and the African Group, noted that technical assistance should be provided specifically to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, with the EU preferring that all states practice technical cooperation. Noting that technical assistance is one modality of ODA, the US said this issue had been adequately addressed elsewhere in the text. Mexico called for a reference to providing technical assistance based on recipient country priorities.

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING:

This section was discussed on Thursday and Friday. Participants focused on: monitoring progress in implementation; submitting national reports on a voluntary basis; peer review of national reports; and a proposal by the EU on a facilitative process.

Australia, supported by Egypt, the EU, Switzerland, Mexico and Pakistan, proposed merging two paragraphs on monitoring progress in implementation of national measures toward achieving the Global Objectives, and utilizing C&I. Iran, supported by the EU, the African Group, Switzerland, Mexico and Pakistan, proposed adding reference to achieving national goals and targets.

On Friday, the US proposed that states submit, on a voluntary basis, reports on implementation of national measures, and provide these reports to CPF member organizations where relevant. Mexico noted that reporting should be on implementation of the whole instrument rather than just on national measures. Noting that some countries would have difficulties with reporting, Iran, supported by India and Pakistan, suggested that the Secretariat be requested to support developing country efforts to enhance national capacities for MAR.

Iran proposed alternative text on requesting the Secretariat to prepare synthesis reports on the state of implementation of the instrument based on national reports. Australia and the US questioned whether preparing synthesis reports should be part of the instrument, and the EU stressed its importance within the instrument.

Peer review of national reports: India, Colombia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and the African Group requested deletion of a paragraph on a voluntary peer review process of national reports. Switzerland cited the usefulness for developing countries of a demand-driven, voluntary process under the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). Mexico noted this process could clarify areas where financial or technical assistance may be needed.

Facilitative process: Regarding an EU-proposed facilitative process to establish a committee of experts to promote and facilitate implementation of the instrument, Mexico, supported by Brazil and Argentina, said most of the proposed work of the committee could be done through existing bodies, and asked

what the committee would do that the CPF is not already doing. Colombia, China and Iran suggested this be considered under the section on institutional and working modalities. China, supported by India, said a subsidiary body providing scientific and technical advice to the UNFF could be considered. Brazil said it was not appropriate or helpful to create new structures.

While very supportive of facilitation, Switzerland said this should be done under the UNFF. Australia said the proposal was too detailed, suggesting more general language be used, and working out the details later under the UNFF. In addition to equitable geographic representation, Pakistan suggested balance between common interest groups. Cuba said that: it was premature to discuss establishing a committee under the NLBI; any process should be organized and implemented by the UNFF, taking advantage of the CPF; and the relationship between UNFF and the new instrument needed first to be determined. The African Group requested an explanation as to the role of the CPF in this proposed committee. Supporting the EU proposal, Major Groups asked to be involved in any committee that is established.

Responding to some of the interventions, the EU said they intended this to be a stand alone section, not placed under Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting. She said new ideas were needed in the instrument, CPF members could be included in the committee, and country-specific discussions should not be undertaken by the UNFF.

INSTITUTIONAL AND WORKING MODALITIES:

On Friday, participants discussed institutional and working modalities, including subsections on, *inter alia*, governing body, meetings, MYPOW, the UNFF Secretariat, the UNFF Trust Fund and review of progress.

Governing body: Experts considered whether the UNFF would serve as the governing body for the NLBI. The EU favored reference to the “intergovernmental forum” rather than the “governing body” of the instrument. The EU, opposed by New Zealand, suggested deleting reference to the MYPOW in a paragraph on functions of the UNFF in monitoring and promoting the full implementation of the NLBI by adopting plans and programmes.

Meetings: Experts considered language on the UNFF assessing progress in implementation of the NLBI and deciding on priorities for the NLBI. The US suggested the UNFF should not guide the instrument and, with Senegal, suggested deleting reference to this. Cuba noted the importance of the paragraph, the need for a close relationship between the UNFF and the NLBI, and the need for the UNFF to debate, analyze and negotiate priorities. New Zealand and Australia suggested the NLBI would be static until the Forum decides to renegotiate it, and stressed the importance of the UNFF taking decisions on implementation in the interim.

On the UNFF considering inputs from forest-related regional and subregional bodies and from country-led initiatives in implementing the NLBI, New Zealand, supported by the EU, said the regional element is a priority and suggested further discussion at the MYPOW meeting in Bali. Switzerland explained they did not foresee additional meetings under the NLBI and that work could be completed during regular meetings of the UNFF. Norway suggested discussing this at UNFF-7.

Subsidiary bodies: Mexico, Cuba, Costa Rica and Argentina underscored that only expert and *ad hoc* groups could be established by the Forum, noting that scientific and technical advisory bodies are normally associated with binding agreements, and favored deleting reference to scientific and technical advisory bodies.

Stakeholder participation: Noting the importance of this issue, Mexico requested stronger language. The US, the EU, Pakistan and Iran suggested that stakeholder participation be addressed under Principles, instead of under this section on institutional and working modalities.

Multi-year programme of work: Chair Hoozeven suggested, and experts agreed, that the MYPOW subsection in the instrument not be addressed until the MYPOW itself is discussed in February.

UNFF Secretariat: The Russian Federation proposed adding a clause requesting the Secretariat to fulfill any other duties that may be required by the Forum. The EU recommended deleting a paragraph on considering ways to strengthen the Secretariat, citing the language was appropriate for an ECOSOC resolution and not this instrument.

UNFF Trust Fund: The EU said language on the importance of the Trust Fund for supporting participants from developing countries was not necessary for the instrument. The Russian Federation noted that, if retained, the text should note the importance of the Trust Fund for the effective operation of the UNFF.

Review of progress achieved in 2015: On reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and the NLBI in 2015, the US proposed that the effectiveness of the instrument “and progress made in its implementation” be assessed in 2015. Mexico, Argentina, Costa Rica and Cuba preferred that the review of the NLBI’s implementation be done in 2011, since the consideration of an LBI will take place in 2015. Indonesia and India suggested that the review of the NLBI be done “no later than” 2015. The EU said the effectiveness of the NLBI should be reviewed in 2015 in the context of the overall review of the IAF.

ADOPTION/SUBSCRIPTION: On Friday, experts debated the relative merits of either universally adopting the instrument with an ECOSOC resolution, or requiring individual countries to subscribe to it.

The EU, supported by Egypt and Iran, supported subscription, suggesting that this would raise the instrument’s profile and strengthen commitments, but noted this would be contingent on the content of the instrument’s added value over existing voluntary agreements. Cuba said that if the group could not agree on at least adopting the instrument, there is no point in holding UNFF-7; others argued this does not need to be included in the text, as adoption will occur via an ECOSOC resolution.

The Russian Federation cautioned that requiring subscription may delay the introduction of the instrument. The African Group cautioned against discussing adoption and subscription until after the substance of the NLBI is further defined. Mexico disagreed, noting that as a voluntary instrument, no minimum number of participants is required for the agreement to take effect. Senegal suggested that the paragraph on subscription be removed for now, as terminology and vision are not agreed upon, and noted

that accession would be governed by the UN Law of Treaties. Pakistan suggested following the approach most commonly used for other voluntary UN agreements.

The US noted that universal adoption could achieve higher profile by obtaining both ECOSOC and General Assembly approval, and that although subscription would raise the profile of the instrument, it would require further diplomatic channels. She suggested convening a panel of experts to discuss the relative merits of each option at the beginning of UNFF-7.

Switzerland, New Zealand China and India expressed a strong preference for universal adoption. Brazil concurred, adding that requiring subscription would be inconsistent with the universal membership of the UNFF.

AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS: This section was discussed on Friday. The US, supported by Brazil, India and New Zealand, stated this is not appropriate for an NLBI and proposed deleting language on the possibility of the UNFF amending or modifying the NLBI. Cuba, the EU and Mexico preferred retaining the language.

ADOPTION OF ANNEXES AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUMENTS: On Friday, the US, opposed by Cuba, recommended deleting this section.

AUTHENTIC TEXTS: On Friday, the US requested deleting the section on authenticity of the text, stating that it is not appropriate for an NLBI.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday, Patosaari presented the report of the meeting. Indonesia proposed, and delegates agreed on, the addition of text under Other Matters that noted the country-led initiative on the MYPOW, to be held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2007. On matters for consideration by the UNFF, Australia underscored the need to begin negotiations based on the revised composite text at UNFF-7, and Cuba noted that the AHEG does not have the mandate to direct the work of the Forum. Delegates adopted the AHEG report with minor amendment.

Many delegates thanked the Chair and the Secretariat and noted their enthusiasm for concluding the instrument at UNFF-7. The African Group announced that a regional consultation will be held in March to prepare a unified position prior to UNFF-7. UNFF Director Patosaari said the discussion on the instrument’s structure provided clarity for the Secretariat and thanked the Chair, CPF member organizations and Major Groups. Chair Hoozeven thanked all participants and gavelled the meeting to a close at 4:43 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

NLBI: THE FIRST STEP FORWARD

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) *ad hoc* expert group completed an essential first step in developing a non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) on all types of forests. In order to understand why many people viewed this meeting as a success, one must consider why it was held, and what participants expected to achieve during this first round of discussions. The NLBI was conceived as a way forward for international forest policy after years of quagmire over the creation of a legally binding forest convention. Going into the meeting, it was accepted by most participants that the best-case

scenario outcome would be to have all views expressed and consolidated into options contained in bracketed text, ready for negotiation at UNFF-7.

With tensions perhaps eased by having the forest convention debate out of the way, and with no expectation of attaining consensus by the end of the week, the week started off well. While it was technically an “expert group” meeting, from the outset it was clear that experts approached this as a working group, as originally proposed at UNFF-6, delving into detailed textual modifications and revisiting familiar country positions. However, the meeting exceeded all expectations in that it not only finished a first reading of the text, it did so ahead of the time allotted, a rarity within multilateral negotiations.

IN SEARCH OF ADDED VALUE

Perspectives on the potential for the NLBI to be an effective component of international forest policy still vary. Perhaps most importantly, one’s view largely depends on how much one believes in the power of voluntary “soft law,” as opposed to legally binding “hard law.” This was discussed during the expert panel-led discussion on the first day, which sparked a useful and interesting dialogue on the relative merits of each. This discussion highlighted that voluntary agreements can potentially have as much influence and encourage compliance as much as legally-binding ones, and one panelist cited several examples of agreements that had evolved into legally binding ones, such as those on plant genetic resources and prior informed consent in the international trade of hazardous chemicals. This appeared to bring a sense of increased importance to the proceedings and to the instrument being developed.

Whether as a result of this or not, many delegations were extremely cautious in the language they supported throughout the week. Countries frequently insisted on inserting discretionary clauses within individual paragraphs, despite the voluntary nature of the entire document. On the first day, the US indicated that in their view, it is the agreement’s content, not just its label, which will determine its legal status. In line with this view, the US requested that terms such as “adoption,” “will,” “shall,” and “ensure” be removed, indicating these are generally associated with legally binding instruments (LBIs). Others objected, suggesting that the fact that the agreement is non-binding should provide more leeway for stronger language.

Much of the week was spent struggling to define the NLBI’s “raison d’être” among so many well-established forest-related instruments, many of which were written during an era when forest issues were given considerably greater political priority and public attention. Several times during protracted debate, interventions were made recalling that greater commitments than those proposed here had already been agreed to under other agreements, such as the Rio Declaration and Forest Principles. One example was a watering down of previously-agreed language on requiring environmental impact assessments.

Other concerns, particularly for donor countries seeking additional certainty prior to committing greater funding, are the numerous battlefronts from previous UNFF sessions that remain largely the same. On the first day, one delegate questioned what greater assurance the NLBI could provide regarding whether forest products are sourced from legally harvested, sustainable sources, given that consumers are increasingly scrutinizing where

their goods are coming from, as evident through the increased popularity of certification; this question remains unanswered. The issue of establishing national measures and targets to support sustainable forest management (SFM) was taken up by a small working group, who will propose text, including reference to time-bound and quantifiable targets, prior to UNFF-7. The issue of requiring national reporting remains undecided, with many proposed options on the table. Several developed countries suggested that including text on promoting good governance was one of the main ways that the NLBI could go beyond what is already stated within the Forest Principles, but many developing countries opposed its inclusion unless it contained reference to provision of adequate financial resources. Although mentioned briefly by the EU, the issue of linking national targets with the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals received much less attention than in other meetings, despite the fact that this has been identified as a promising source of garnering political will and funding for forest-related development.

Developing countries also questioned whether there will be greater financial commitments on the part of donor countries under the NLBI, as much is yet undecided. As always, developing countries are pursuing new, additional and adequate funding, and many advocate the development of a global forest fund. The counter-argument remains that the establishment of a new fund will involve more transaction costs through administration and not necessarily bring new funding; furthermore, the coffers of existing sources desperately need replenishing. Related to this last point, several developing countries have noted that the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, the use of which is promoted by developed countries, do not cover a Global Objective important to the developing world, namely, reversing the decline in ODA for SFM, and should not be referred to as “an indicative set of global criteria.”

Thus, the answer to the question “what’s the added value of this agreement?” namely, stronger commitments to both SFM and the means to implement it, remains bracketed for now.

THE ROLE OF UNFF AND OTHER PLAYERS

Another question remaining is whether the UNFF’s mandate will be expanded. It is unclear how this instrument relates to the multi-year programme of work, discussion of which has been deferred until the country-led initiative to be held in Indonesia in February 2007. The UNFF’s relationship with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and its ability to coordinate the forest-related policy of its members remain somewhat contested, as was evident through conflicting interventions during discussion of the NLBI’s relationship to other instruments. Delegates were quick to point out that not all UNFF members are signatories to each agreement, yet there is a strong need for coordination to avoid overlap and conflicts between the requirements of the instruments. Similarly, the UNFF’s role vis-à-vis the NLBI itself remains undecided, with some countries objecting to both Forum oversight of the NLBI’s implementation as well as the creation of additional bureaucracies.

A potentially positive development came in the form of a proposal by the EU to develop an expert committee under the NLBI, composed of UNFF and CPF members as well as Major Groups, which would provide advice and assistance to promote

and facilitate implementation of the NLBI. Serviced by the Secretariat, this may empower the Secretariat's role within the agreement. However, some countries have questioned the need for such an additional body.

A surprise development was the reintroduction of participation by Major Groups, who participated actively in plenary and made several interventions to be considered along with the rest of the bracketed text. Representing a wide range of interests, they produced a consensus document describing their vision for the NLBI and secured the support of several countries to act as champions for their cause. This could well be considered "added value" for the process, and may help lure back influential non-state actors that originally drove this issue into the international spotlight.

THE ROAD TO UNFF-7

In plenary, a Major Group representative likened UN negotiations to a traditional Cameroonian dance whereby dancers take one step forward, then two steps back. The key question for participants to consider as they head into UNFF-7 is how to ensure that ground gained this week is not lost when discussions resume in April 2007. A successful first reading and an early finish may bode well for UNFF-7 negotiations, but they have yet to seek consensus on the most difficult issues. With participants having expressed confidence in the abilities of Chair Hans Hoogeveen, he should be able to build on the strong momentum and relationships developed during this first round of discussion. However, what the final document will contribute over and above existing forest-related instruments has yet to be determined.

International soft law on forests to date, such as the Forest Principles, has not "evolved" into a convention. If the development of an NLBI is in fact the next step, the steps are being taken at a glacial pace. It is now apparent that there is no sharp division between soft and hard law, and where the NLBI will lie along the continuum between these two will hopefully be determined at the next UNFF session. The first step forward has been taken.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON FOREST LAW

ENFORCEMENT IN CENTRAL AFRICA: This workshop will take place from 9-11 January 2007, in Libreville, Gabon. It is jointly organized by the Central Africa Forests Commission (COMIFAC), FAO and ITTO and will be attended by representatives of governments, NGOs and the private forest sector of the 10 member countries of COMIFAC (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, and Sao Tome and Principe), as well as regional and international organizations. For more information, contact: Eva Müller, FAO; tel: +39-06-57054628; fax: +39-06-57055514; e-mail: Eva.Muller@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/34448/en/page.jsp>

MOBILIZING WOOD RESOURCES WORKSHOP:

The UN Economic Commission for Europe and the FAO are organizing this workshop, "Mobilizing Wood Resources – Can Europe's Forests Satisfy the Increasing Demand for Raw

Material and Energy under SFM?," which will take place from 11-12 January 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland. The workshop will explore ways in which the interests of all stakeholders in the forestry sector can be reconciled to achieve a truly sustainable outcome, against the evolving backdrop – and new emerging dilemmas – of higher energy prices and policy support for renewables. For more information, contact: Cynthia de Castro, UNECE/FAO Timber Section; tel: +41-22-917-1286; fax: +41-22-917-0041; e-mail: cynthia.de.castro@unece.org; internet: <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/workshops/2007/wmw/mobilisingwood.htm>

PAYMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES - ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE AND PRO-POOR: This workshop will be held from 25-26 January 2007, in Lombok, Indonesia. This workshop will bring together practitioners, support or intermediary organizations, donors and resource people to explore emerging experiences, issues and lessons in payments for environmental services (PES). It will review cross-cutting issues related to the economic and institutional feasibility of PES, as well as key social issues that affect the extent to which PES may offer a pathway for poverty reduction. It also aims to identify opportunities for future collaboration and action in Asia. For more information, contact: Beria Leimona, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF); tel: +62-251 625415; fax: +62-251-625416; e-mail: L.Beria@cgiar.org; internet: <http://www.worldagroforestry.org/sea/Default.aspx?alias=www.worldagroforestry.org/sea/rupees>

COUNTRY-LED INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF THE MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE UNFF: CHARTING THE WAY FORWARD 2015:

This country-led initiative will be held from 13-16 February 2007, in Bali, Indonesia. This meeting is intended to provide an opportunity to explore, elaborate and develop a broader understanding of the possible concepts and elements to be included in the new MYPOW of the UNFF. Expected outputs of the meeting include recommendations to UNFF-7 regarding the structure and substance of the MYPOW; interlinkages between the MYPOW and the NLBI on forests; strengthening the regional dimension in the work of the IAF through the MYPOW; and possible approaches to accomplishing the Global Objectives on forests and the new principal functions of the UNFF. For more information, contact: Tri Tharyat, Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the UN; tel: +1-212-972-8333; fax: +1-212-972-9780; e-mail: tri_tharyat@yahoo.com; internet: http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/cli/cli_bali-mypow130207.pdf

THIRD FOREST VEGETATION SIMULATOR

CONFERENCE: This meeting will be held from 13-15 February 2007, in Fort Collins, US. The Forest Management Service Center, together with the Rocky Mountain Research Station, is organizing a conference to bring together users and developers of the Forest Vegetation Simulator (FVS) model. The objective is to synthesize the knowledge gained from over thirty years of using FVS for project-level planning, landscape analysis, forest health assessments, forest plan revision, inventory updates, habitat evaluation and all other purposes. For more information, contact: Robert Havis; tel: +1-970-295-5768; e-mail: rhavis@fs.fed.us; internet: http://www.fs.fed.us/fmsc/fvs/fvs_conference.shtml

FINANCING OF FOREST CONSERVATION:**PAYMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES IN THE**

TROPICS: This conference will be held from 2-3 March 2007, at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, New Haven, US. The conference will serve as a forum to discuss the various types of PES and the successes and failures to date. The discussion will be driven by questions such as: Can PES mechanisms lead to conservation? Can such mechanisms be as economically viable as other uses? How can these methods be integrated into conservation and management plans? What are the potential negative consequences from the standpoints of conservation, local livelihoods and economic optimization? How can active trading markets for ecosystem services be developed? And, are payments for avoided deforestation and reduced carbon emissions feasible? For more information contact: the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies; e-mail: istf@yale.edu; internet: <http://www.yale.edu/istf/>

EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE FAO COMMITTEE

ON FORESTRY: The 18th biennial session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) will convene at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 12-16 March 2007. COFO-18 will bring together heads of forest services and other senior government officials to identify emerging policy and technical issues and advise FAO and others on appropriate action. For more information, contact: Douglas Kneeland, FAO Forestry Department; tel: +39-06-5705-3925; fax: +39-06-5705-5137; e-mail: douglas.kneeland@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/forestry>

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

FORUM ON FORESTS: UNFF-7 will be held from 16-27 April 2007, at UN headquarters in New York. For more information, contact: UNFF Secretariat; tel: +1-212-963-3160; fax: +1-917-367-3186; e-mail: unff@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests>

GLOSSARY

AHEG	<i>Ad hoc</i> expert group
C&I	Criteria and indicators
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CLI	Country-led initiative
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
EIAs	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESTs	Environmentally Sound Technologies
IAF	International Arrangement on Forests
IFF	International Forum on Forests
IPF	Intergovernmental Forum on Forests
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
MAR	Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting
MYPOW	Multi-year programme of work
NLBI	Non-legally binding instrument
PES	Payment for environmental services
PfAs	Proposals for Action
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management

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