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HIGHLIGHTS FROM IPF-3 MONDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 1996

At the sixth day of the third session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, Working Groups I and II met in morning sessions for the first round of discussion on draft texts for negotiation. Working Group I considered programme element I.1 (national forest and land use plans) and Working Group II considered programme element II (international cooperation on financial assistance and technology transfer). A Joint Working Group session convened in the afternoon to discuss the organization of work for the remainder of the IPF-3.

WORKING GROUP I

Working Group I took up draft text on programme element I.1, national forest and land plans. The G-77/CHINA, supported by MALI, COLOMBIA and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, recommended that: NFPs be developed in the context of each country's socioeconomic, cultural and political situation; decentralized planning be undertaken only when applicable; inputs from local communities be recognized and respected; and the effects of trade and market forces be considered in NFP implementation. He proposed adding a new paragraph urging donor countries to provide new and additional resources for the development and implementation of NFPs. With INDIA and IUCN, he also proposed replacing a reference to "sustainable forest management" (SFM) with "conservation, management and sustainable development of all types of forests." The EU, supported by AUSTRIA, said: a broad multi-sectoral approach should be undertaken in devising NFPs; governments and relevant agencies should develop consensus on the content of NFPs; and environmental and conservation issues should be fully integrated with wider economic and land-use plans. He preferred a continuing forum for international consultations over the establishment of a consultative body and encouraged governments to form partnership arrangements.

The US emphasized that NFPs are only one approach to achieving SFM. All planning should address the unique circumstances of each country, including its history, land tenure systems and land-use laws. He urged that references to NFPs be replaced with references to SFM and that countries with NFPs give priority to conservation and SFM in order to better attract funding from national and international sources. NEW ZEALAND suggested that all conclusions and proposals for action be consolidated and sought to replace references in the text to "the conservation and sustainable development of forests" with "sustainable forest management."

MALI noted that NFPs are often inspired by national forest policies. JAPAN noted that it was agreed recently that "SFM" covers a broad range of conservation, use and development of forests. He called for further development of the concept of forest partnership agreements (FPA) as a mechanism for international partnerships. He stressed the importance of developing and testing pilot programs in order to promote confidence in NFPs among different communities. INDIA, supported by IUCN, emphasized: incorporation of a broad spectrum of forest-dependent communities into NFPs and proposals for action; recognition of the existing rights of these communities; and FPAs as vehicles for implementing SFM.

UKRAINE asked for language emphasizing capacity building for LDCs and economies in transition. CANADA proposed language stressing linkages to the CBD's work on biodiversity and forests, particularly CBD COP technical advice on integrating biodiversity conservation into forest and land use plans. FINLAND differentiated between formal and indicative land use plans and called for monitoring of NFPs.

The CHAIR clarified that programme element V.1, on international organization and multilateral institutions, judges existing international institutions, while V.2, on legal mechanisms, encompasses any new international structures. SWITZERLAND called for an intersectoral approach to the development of NFPs and stressed local traditional forest-based knowledge in a section on technology transfer.

COLOMBIA emphasized the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. The FAO asked for clarification of terms, noting that the UNCED terminology recalled here by the G-77/China was adopted as a compromise between emphasizing the objective of development of societies and emphasizing the means of obtaining such development. When forest objectives *per se* are referred to, the correct term is "management."

AUSTRIA emphasized that the goals of NFPs include conservation of biodiversity, soil, water and fragile forest ecosystems. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA stressed participatory approaches at local levels and ensured benefit sharing. The CHAIR asked for all changes in writing and announced the compilation of a composite text, with all amendments highlighted and origin indicated in abbreviated form, for the next discussion of this programme element. If a negotiated text cannot be agreed, the output of discussion on this element may be elaborated in a Chair's summary. The EU proposed adding an annex with definitions of terms used. The CHAIR agreed, providing that authoritative definitions of words agreed to within the UN context could be found and accepted by all.

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WORKING GROUP II

The Chair introduced a draft text for negotiation on programme element II, international cooperation on financial assistance and technology transfer. The report specifies proposals for action on public finance, private sector investment, technology transfer, coordination and information systems. The PHILIPPINES, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, said the report overemphasizes private sector financing and domestic funding. She suggested adjusting the report to better reflect international cooperation aspects and said the proposals for action should be more "action-oriented." The EU called for a glossary of definitions and for complete references from the Forest Principles. He said international cooperation must complement domestic finance efforts. The US proposed condensing the document to three sections and using the term sustainable forest management (SFM) throughout. She said conclusions on codes of conduct are premature. JAPAN characterized the list of actions as duplicative and overlapping.

MEXICO called for references acknowledging the importance of national forest programmes (NFPs). With COLOMBIA, she suggested more extensive references to the work of multilateral organizations. SWITZERLAND underscored the need for priority setting in the report and for a balanced treatment of multilateral cooperation and financial assistance. The GLOBAL FOREST POLICY PROJECT proposed amendments to the report's private sector investment provisions that, *inter alia*, define a role for codes of conduct and invite developing countries to encourage only those investments that promote SFM. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed using the FAO as a depository for information on SFM technologies. CANADA called for a holistic examination of the issue and said he will propose references to the CBD and other conventions to ensure a wider context.

CAMEROON said the report should emphasize that NFPs are the only framework under which forest planning should take place. The section on public finance should consider the special conditions of countries undergoing structural adjustment. AUSTRALIA, supported by UGANDA, noted that the document does not embody the concepts of shared responsibility and a shared vision of SFM emphasized during last week's discussions.

UKRAINE asserted that technology transfer does not guarantee the solution of problems in the forestry sector. She called for inclusion of educational technologies and training in forest-related sectors as priorities in technology transfer and capacity building. BRAZIL noted that the proposals for action on technology transfer do not contain all of the recommendations highlighted during Plenary. UGANDA said that actions on public finance are required by both donor and recipient countries. Proposals for action should not be limited to technology transfer but should also encourage technology development and exchange.

JOINT WORKING GROUP SESSION

Delegates convened in a Joint Working Group session during the afternoon to discuss the operational aspects of their work. Co-Chair Holdgate opened the meeting by reminding delegates that the objective of IPF-3 is to produce a document that will be used in preparing the Panel's final report to the CSD. He circulated a note from the co-Chairs regarding the further work of the Panel for the remainder of IPF-3. The first round of discussions, wherein delegations provide their views and amendments on the given text, will continue through Wednesday morning in both Working Groups. The Secretariat will incorporate all amendments into a second draft as soon as possible. Delegates will negotiate the text paragraph by paragraph during the second round of discussions Wednesday afternoon and Thursday in the two Working Groups. The aim will be to reach preliminary agreement on less contentious issues

and to identify the more controversial elements that will have to be bracketed. The Chair emphasized, however, that the entire document will go to IPF-4 in brackets, so all issues will remain open for discussion at IPF-4.

The Chair briefly summarized the work plan for IPF-4. The Panel will: continue and finalize negotiations on the text of its report to the CSD, using the document resulting from IPF-3 as its basis; integrate into the text additional proposals and inputs, including results from intersessional activities, as well as proposals for action on programme elements V.1 (international organizations and multilateral institutions) and V.2 (legal mechanisms); and, if necessary, rationalize the structure of the final report.

The EU requested clarification on whether the current format and existing programme elements would be forwarded to IPF-4. The Chair responded that these programme elements and long lists of options for action would not likely be condensed by the end of this session. He suggested that there might be two documents for IPF-4, one incorporating the recommendations from IPF-3 and the other a tentative Chair's draft that would illustrate how the former might be condensed. JAPAN suggested that the text be accompanied by recommendations to the CSD regarding specific actions to be taken for the Special Session of the General Assembly. He emphasized that unless there are additional inputs to agreed text during IPF-4, "easy" portions of the document should be finalized as much as possible at IPF-3. The UK appealed to delegates to bear in mind the bigger picture of IPF and what they want its overall message to be. The outcome of IPF-3 should note that a great deal of activity on forests has occurred since Rio, and it should highlight the areas on which there has been significant progress, such as criteria and indicators. There must be a continuation of work on forestry after IPF-4 and some type of mechanism for periodic review.

The INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES reported progress made since the announcement of an intersessional meeting on traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK) to be sponsored by Denmark and Colombia. A steering committee has been formed and has determined the date and venue for the meeting. The meeting will take place in Laticia, Colombia from 9-13 December 1996. He called for inclusion of the meeting's findings in the IPF's final report.

The Joint Working Group session adjourned at 4:00 pm and delegations and regional groups broke into informal consultations.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Many delegates expressed confusion at the state of play of IPF on Monday. One observer said that the delay in distribution of new texts exacerbated an already pressed schedule. An NGO representative questioned the IPF's ability to sort out the overlapping and cross-cutting items on its agenda by Friday. Another observer optimistically noted that such seeming disarray is common to negotiations, and expressed gratitude for the Chair's organizational proposals on the remainder of the work for the session.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

Working Group I: Working Group I will meet at 10:00 am in Room XIX and is expected to continue discussions on programme element I.3, traditional forest-related knowledge.

Working Group II: Working Group II will meet at 10:00 am in Room XX and is expected to continue discussions on programme element IV, trade and environment.