



UNFF-1 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 13 JUNE 2001

On the third day of UNFF-1, delegates met in Plenary to discuss the multi-year programme of work (MYPOW), the plan of action (PoA), and the initiation of work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

PLENARY

MYPOW: The FOREST ALLIANCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA stressed the need for a legally-binding instrument, and supported establishing an *ad hoc* working group at UNFF-2 to this end. ECUADOR reported progress in its national forest policy, including a legal framework for SFM based on accepted criteria and indicators (C&I). He expressed hope for achieving greater coordination among countries and organizations, and stressed the importance of parallel actions at the national, regional and international levels. SUDAN reiterated the special needs of the approximately seventy low forest-cover countries (LFCCs), noting that they are populated by more than 400 million people. He suggested addressing human resource development and capacity building as early as UNFF-2, and stressed the relevance of non-timber forest products for food security. He called for lifting unilateral sanctions imposed on Sudan, as they degrade its ability to manage forests and fight poverty.

ARGENTINA proposed making the issue of trade a thematic focus, and holding an expert group meeting on finance and technology transfer. He said that a ministerial segment should approve the PoA during UNFF-2, and expressed satisfaction with forest-related work within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). CUBA emphasized the interconnectedness of forest conservation, biodiversity and climate change, and called for a holistic approach and a flexible MYPOW. Regarding national and regional implementation, he noted the different achievements and needs of developing and developed countries.

COSTA RICA stressed the importance of reaching agreement on the MYPOW and the PoA at UNFF-1. He emphasized the need to establish criteria to measure progress, and supported using existing experience and monitoring systems to develop them. He supported holding a ministerial segment at UNFF-2.

GHANA said the MYPOW should focus on implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, particularly removal of impediments to national forest programme (NFP) implementation. He stressed that the PoA should have clear objectives and strategies for intergovernmental work, mechanisms to facilitate national implementation, strategic targets, and financial provisions, particularly at the national level. Regarding cooperation between the UNFF and the CPF, he stressed the need for joint programming based on identification of priority issues most in need of synergy.

VENEZUELA said UNFF-1 should help developing countries develop and implement NFPs with provision of financial, technological and human resources. JAPAN supported a thematic approach for each session. He proposed that the UNFF-2 theme be harmonization of forest conservation and utilization of forest resources, protected areas and environmental services, and include policy tools such as NFPs, C&I, and principles of SFM as topics. He recommended that the theme for UNFF-3 be trade, investment and environment, and include illegal logging. He suggested that the second half of UNFF-4 be allocated to reviewing country reports and considering future action.

VIETNAM stressed the importance of ensuring that international support is based on the need and ability of countries to implement NFPs, and outlined national efforts to promote SFM. CHINA stated that the MYPOW must be clearly focused but not confined to themes, and include sufficient time to discuss implementation. He supported holding a high-level ministerial segment at UNFF-2. He expressed hope that the CPF would focus coordination to realize the UNFF's objectives. He recommended building on existing reporting mechanisms.

The INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDIGENOUS AND TRIBAL PEOPLES OF TROPICAL FORESTS called for full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, NGOs and civil society in forest discussions at the international level. He lamented the inflexibility of ECOSOC rules, and called for participation of indigenous peoples in the CPF.

INITIATION OF WORK WITH THE CPF: The CBD reported that its upcoming COP will address forest biodiversity and noted the establishment of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on Forest Biodiversity, in which the CPF participated. He said the CPF would be asked to contribute to the upcoming CBD's pilot assessment on the interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity.

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The CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL FOREST RESEARCH (CIFOR) noted its membership in the CPF and highlighted its role in providing objective scientific input to governments. He emphasized CIFOR's involvement in researching, *inter alia*: C&I, the economics and silviculture of SFM, cross-sectoral impacts and forest fires. He said participation in the CPF provides an opportunity to receive guidance from the UNFF on research priorities.

The UN DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (DESA) underscored its full commitment to fostering synergies with the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and developing synergies with other UN functional commissions.

The FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) drew attention to its role in data collection, analysis and dissemination, and highlighted the new National Forest Programme Facility, which is designed to supply catalytic inputs to support developing countries' efforts in implementing NFPs. He said the FAO intends to second a staff member to support the UNFF Secretariat.

The GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY (GEF) accepted the invitation to participate in the UNFF's work through membership in the CPF. She said that of its total funding for biodiversity, the forest operational programme has the largest number of projects and GEF allocation: 81 projects with a GEF allocation of US\$505.92 million, with co-financing of over US\$1.03 billion.

The INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANISATION (ITTO) noted a recent decision by its governing body in support of the ITTO's involvement in the UNFF and CPF that authorizes the ITTO's co-sponsorship of UNFF country-led initiatives and the secondment of a professional to the UNFF Secretariat. He noted that the ITTO served as the lead agency for the IFF programme element on trade and environment.

The UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) recalled that as an ITFF member it took the lead in supporting intergovernmental deliberations on financing SFM, and noted that the UNDP Programme on Forests (PROFOR) will soon be reestablished as a collaborative arrangement between the FAO, the World Bank, bilateral cooperation agencies and NGOs to be hosted administratively by the World Bank.

The UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) highlighted its work as the lead agency on: underlying causes of deforestation; forest conservation and protected areas; and the needs and requirements of LFCCs. He noted that its support to implement the PoA will focus on these areas. The WORLD BANK noted that its new forest strategy will emphasize: harnessing forests for reducing poverty; integrating forests into sustainable development; and protecting global forest values.

The EU said CPF membership should remain limited to organizations with the capacity to contribute through their programmes and substantive resources to facilitate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. He requested the CPF to reconsider its mission statement to better reflect as a priority the need to enhance cooperation and coordination among international organizations, institutions and instruments. He stressed two-way interaction between the CPF and UNFF, and said CPF members should act as lead agencies for specific elements of the MYPOW.

The UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO) informed delegates of the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on the World Heritage Convention. The MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE (MCPFE) encouraged collaboration between MCPFE and the UNFF.

PLAN OF ACTION: The EU reiterated that the PoA should work through existing instruments, as the UNFF does not have an operational mandate. He emphasized that countries must set priorities

through systematic assessments, pledged continued financial support to developing countries within existing development programmes, and emphasized individual financing strategies that facilitate private sector involvement. He said that reporting and evaluation should be based on voluntary reports and targets set by individual actors, and suggested that five years may be insufficient for the PoA's implementation.

UGANDA described five years as a "painfully short lifespan" for implementation of the PoA, and suggested that evaluation be based on assessment of forest conditions rather than the level of policy activity.

GHANA stressed the need to give due consideration to the financial resources required to implement the PoA. Acknowledging the need to generate adequate financial resources domestically, he also encouraged international support. He proposed that targets and timetables be developed with the guidance of CPF members based on the experiences of existing forest programmes, and that CPF members take the lead in developing harmonized reporting requirements. He suggested that the CPF also identify mechanisms to coordinate donor support in the forestry sector.

SWITZERLAND stated that progress toward SFM is a long-term process, and stressed the need for a realistic and pragmatic PoA for the next five years. He urged the adoption of the PoA as early as possible while also ensuring its quality and effectiveness. He reiterated that PoA implementation is largely the responsibility of countries, but acknowledged the need for human and financial resources, particularly for the least developed countries. He recommended that reporting be voluntary, but that the UNFF set targets and timetables, and said the MYPOW should include reporting and review as early as possible. He stated that the PoA should promote NFPs to facilitate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

JAPAN suggested that the PoA not attempt to cover all the IPF/IFF proposals for action but focus on a more limited number of essential subjects. He recommended categorizing the 16 elements discussed at IFF-4, and said the PoA should not include issues on which the IFF reached no consensus. He proposed that monitoring, assessment and reporting consist of the elements of the PoA and include both implementation of agreed proposals and progress toward SFM.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Chair Mubarak informed delegates that the draft decision on the MYPOW would be available by 9:00 pm on Wednesday, and that negotiations on this draft would take place in the working group to be established. He said the draft decision on the PoA would be available before the end of Friday's afternoon session and that negotiations on this draft would begin in a second working group on Monday. He reminded delegates that the deadline for submitting written proposals for the PoA to the Bureau is 10:00 am Thursday, and urged delegates to submit written proposals on the CPF by a deadline of 10:00 am on Friday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Indigenous peoples and some NGOs have expressed frustration over being "shut out" of the CPF and uninvited to make contributions to its work. However, many delegates maintain that the CPF should be of limited size in order to fulfill its objectives of enhancing cooperation and coordination among UNFF members and facilitating implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and that broad participation would defuse its focus and result in "another talk shop."

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Delegates will convene in a brief Plenary in Conference Room 1 at 11:30 am to establish the working group on the MYPOW.

MYPOW WORKING GROUP: Immediately following Plenary, the MYPOW working group will convene to begin consideration of the draft decision on the MYPOW.