



**AFLEG MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE  
HIGHLIGHTS:  
TUESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2003**

On Tuesday, delegates to the Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (AFLEG) Ministerial Conference met in Plenary, Working Groups, closed negotiations and Open Sessions. The Plenary heard reports on the AFLEG preparatory meeting, and preparatory workshops. The Working Groups addressed: implications of illegal activities in the forest sector and institutional reforms and strategies; marketplace and trade issues; conflict timber; illegal trade in bushmeat; and tenure and related governance issues. The Open Sessions included a review of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP).

**PLENARY SESSION**

**STATEMENTS TO NEGOTIATING PARTIES:** Giuseppe Topa, World Bank, presented a summary of the AFLEG preparatory meeting held in Brazzaville, the Republic of Congo, in June 2002, recalling its main themes: information; legislative reform; law enforcement in armed conflict situations; and capacity building.

Robert Kofi Bamfo, Ghana, presented the outcomes of the Ghana National/Regional Workshop, highlighting its Declaration, which contains commitments to, *inter alia*: improve legal frameworks for resource ownership; implement market-based instruments to provide incentives for good governance, sustainable forest management (SFM) and value-added processing; improve transparency and accountability by revising ineffective governance structures and mechanisms; implement forest resource allocation systems based on competitive bidding and market-based instruments; and promote participatory multi-stakeholder approaches.

Mamadou Diallo, Senegalese Association of Friends of Nature, presented the results of the West Africa Civil Society Workshop. He said the Workshop's participants recommended: promoting alternative livelihoods; building capacities; fostering partnerships; actively deterring illegal practices; adopting best practices; expediting the decentralization process; promoting civil society participation; ensuring that timber trade complies with international conventions; and fostering trade in SFM products. He noted that a civil society task force will be established to follow up on these recommendations and the outcomes of the AFLEG Ministerial Conference.

Dominic Walubengo, Forest Action Network, presented the outcomes of the East Africa Civil Society Workshop, highlighting its recommendations on: revising forest laws; preparing or revising national forest management plans; preparing forest-specific management plans; building capacity; and establishing monitoring and evaluation systems.

Reporting on the Southern Africa Civil Society Workshop, Peter Gondu, Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources, said the Workshop's participants recommended: strengthening community rights; empowering local institutions; developing *sui generis* legislation to protect indigenous knowledge and fight biopiracy; respecting the rights to access to information and to participation; strengthening mechanisms for information collection and dissemination; establishing monitoring mechanisms; and adopting liability and punitive measures.

Marthe Minko Mapangou, Education for the Protection of the Environment and Nature, reported on the Central Africa Civil Society Workshop, highlighting recommendations on: transparency; legislative reforms, including the recognition of Pygmies' rights; good governance; and pro-active measures in consumer countries.

Daniel Ngantou, IUCN, reported on the Information and Monitoring Workshop, highlighting calls for harmonizing information systems, fostering partnerships for information gathering and dissemination, building capacities of public institutions, and updating reference maps.

Emmanuel Fochive, Forestry Sector Group in Cameroon, presented the conclusions of multi-stakeholder meetings, including those pertaining to: improving forestry legislation, through the revision of criteria for granting timber concessions; adopting tax incentives; defining criteria for legality; promoting good governance; improving policy coherence; adopting rules to identify conflict timber; and building the capacities of public institutions.

Mats Bååth, European Hardwood Federation, said illegal logging is a pressing issue that governments must address.

**BREAK-OUT WORKING GROUPS**

**IMPLICATIONS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN THE FOREST SECTOR, INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND IMMEDIATE STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT THEM:** Kauam Tekam, Cameroon, chaired the Working Group.

Steven Nsita, Uganda, outlined his country's reforms in the area of forest management. He drew attention to Uganda's forest product monitoring unit, which tracks timber from the forest to the market, and Uganda's forest product licensing system.

Providing an overview of fuelwood issues, Emmanuel Pouna, Cameroon, identified the need to reduce the environmental impacts and increase the efficiency of fuelwood consumption. He called for country-specific strategies and participatory approaches to address fuelwood problems and, noting the need to manage fuelwood supply and demand, he underscored the role of forestry governance.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS

Bihini Won wa Musiti, IUCN, discussed the importance of partnerships between NGOs and the public and private sectors. He noted that NGOs can contribute on-the-ground experience and low-cost responses, the public sector can facilitate access to information, and the private sector can contribute management and technical skills.

Mohammed Tchiwanou, Benin, outlined Benin's institutional frameworks related to fuelwood, drawing attention to the environmental implications of fuelwood exploitation, corruption issues, impacts on local communities and the rural poor, and the need to improve forestry legislation and strategies.

**MARKETPLACE AND TRADE ISSUES:** Emmanuel Ze Meka, International Tropical Timber Organization, chaired the session. He stressed the need to balance the positive and negative impacts of trade.

Duncan Brack, Royal Institute of International Affairs, highlighted options for international institutional mechanisms to address trade in illegally sourced timber, underlining legal measures that can be taken in consumer countries to discourage illegal logging.

Andy Roby, UK Timber Trade Association, reviewed how importers respond to market demands for legally produced timber, emphasizing the power of consumer preferences to influence production practices. Antoine de la Rochefordière, Société Générale de Surveillance, stressed the need for independent verification of the legality of timber production. Pierre Samson, Consultant, described technologies for log tracking.

**CONFLICT TIMBER:** James Gasana, Swiss Intercooperation, chaired the Working Group. He stressed the need to distinguish between internal and international conflicts, and noted conflict timber laundering as a cause for concern.

Silas Siakor, Save Our Future Foundation, spoke on timber conflict in the Liberian context, describing how logging companies and parties to a conflict often establish direct partnerships; and the effectiveness of official authorities and FLEG are reduced. He called for defining conflict timber, sanctioning logging companies that trade conflict timber, and establishing mechanisms to prevent conflict timber from entering consumer countries' markets.

Kanu Mbizi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, outlined his country's post-conflict reconstruction efforts, highlighting the adoption of emergency plans to revitalize the forestry sector through developing a legal framework, strengthening institutions, reforming the tax system, and adopting zoning plans.

Art Blundell, UN Security Council, addressed the role of UN sanctions in conflict situations, describing the 2001 boycott against Liberia. Noting that timber provides a source of revenue to buy arms and perpetuate conflict, he stressed the recent extension of the ban to all Liberian timber products. He said exemptions to the ban were not provided for because of monitoring difficulties, and noted that conditions for lifting the sanctions include a legitimate use of timber revenues.

**ISSUES OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN BUSHMEAT:** Liz Bennet, World Conservation Society (WCS), described the rising trends in bushmeat trade, noting that the trade accelerates the impoverishment of local peoples, and underlined the links between bushmeat trade and timber extraction.

Paul Elkan, WCS, spoke on bushmeat trade issues in the Republic of Congo, describing its wildlife law, and highlighting the benefits of wildlife management.

Adam Matthews, The Bushmeat Campaign, stressed the need to integrate bushmeat issues in AFLEG discussions and wildlife considerations in forest management policies. Jeanne-Marie Mindja, Groupe des Amis de l'UNESCO et de l'Environnement, underlined the need for awareness raising and training. Georges Mouncharou, Cameroon, emphasized the value of information exchange, experience-sharing and poverty reduction activities. Bonaventure Ebayi, Lusaka Agreement Task Force, stressed the need to prevent bushmeat from entering international markets and to provide alternative sources of food for local peoples.

**TENURE AND RELATED GOVERNANCE ISSUES:** Liz Alden Wily, UK, discussed forest governance and lessons learned from Eastern and Southern Africa. Highlighting the emergence of community-based governance models, she said community forestry is leading the way in forestry governance, and advocated community forestry management over joint forest management, which is often more expensive and disempowering.

Tshepo Malatji, South Africa, described South Africa's 1998 National Forests Act, which promotes community forestry. He highlighted enforcement challenges, such as lack of capacity to train forest officers. He said regulations and systems for administration and enforcement were needed, and legislation must be applied fairly.

Wale Adeleke, WWF, discussed co-management and forest governance, stating that governments find it increasingly difficult to manage forests themselves. He said challenges of co-management include a lack of political will to give responsibility to communities.

Dominic Walubengo, Forest Action Network, briefly discussed the impacts of recent changes in the Kenyan Government and its new constitution on the forest sector. He said a proposed forest bill provides for extensive stakeholder participation in forest management, including forest management by NGOs.

### OPEN SESSION

**CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP:** Henri Djombo, Minister of Forestry and the Environment of the Republic of Congo, chaired the session. David Kaeper, US, highlighted progress made since the launch of the CBFP, including the adoption of the Sub-regional Convergence Plan by the Conference of Ministers in Charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC).

Massudi Mayan'kenda, COMIFAC, noted that COMIFAC is a high-level forum for cooperation and decision making on forest management in Central Africa, which coordinates sub-regional forest strategies and monitors the implementation of international instruments relevant to the Congo Basin.

Pape Djiby Koné, FAO, outlined technical support provided by the FAO to the Convergence Plan. Jacqueline Van de Pol, Global Forest Watch, presented the CBFP website, outlining its content, including a calendar of events and a list of partners and activities.

Noting the development of an inventory of projects underway in the Congo Basin, Kaeper highlighted projects related to capacity building, protected areas, community-based forest programmes, SFM, and forest policy and governance. Minister Djombo said the CBFP website will help partners to acquire information and share knowledge.

During the ensuing discussion, one delegate, *inter alia*, lamented the lack of gender balance and called for mainstreaming gender in structures like COMIFAC. The US noted that, when forming the partnership, they did not involve as many local NGOs as they should have and looked forward to engaging more NGOs in the future. Tanyi Clarkson Mbyawor, Minister of Environment and Forests of Cameroon, emphasized his country's commitment to the CBFP and to working with NGOs, while he asserted the roles of States and COMIFAC.

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**PLENARY:** Delegates will meet at 9:00 am in the Plenary Hall to hear an update on progress made in the break-out working group discussions and in the negotiations on the Declaration.

**OPEN SESSIONS:** Open Sessions will be held at 10:30 am in Room B to discuss the topic of sharing the results of AFLEG preparation workshops, and in Room C to discuss the activities of the Forest Governance Learning Group. Open Sessions will also be held at 2:00 pm in Room A for an informal roundtable on how to integrate the AFLEG process into existing institutional and regional frameworks.

**NEGOTIATIONS:** Government representatives are scheduled to meet in closed intergovernmental negotiating sessions from 10:30 am in the Palais des Congrès Negotiations Room.