

## SUMMARY OF THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY: 12-16 MARCH 2007

The eighteenth session of Committee on Forestry (COFO18) of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 12-16 March 2007. The meeting attracted almost 600 participants from governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including the President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, and a number of ministers.

Delegates addressed issues relating to the 2007 State of the World's Forests, forest and energy, forest protection, putting forestry to work at the local level, progressing towards sustainable forest management (SFM), shaping an action programme for FAO in forestry, decisions and recommendations of FAO bodies, and the XIII World Forestry Congress.

COFO18 was also the stage for side events, information sessions and in-seminar sessions, which covered a range of topics, including national forest programmes (NFPs) and poverty alleviation, fire management, forest health, forest tenure, small- and medium-scale forest enterprises, voluntary guidelines and forestry tools that contribute to sustainable development, a new generation of watershed management programmes, the interface between forestry and agriculture, and reducing carbon dioxide emissions from deforestation. There were also meetings of the Regional Forestry Commissions (RFC) Bureau and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

COFO18 adopted a final report, in which COFO requested and recommended FAO to undertake numerous activities related to the issues debated during the meeting, including forests and energy, forest protection, putting forests to work at the local level, progressing towards SFM and shaping an action programme for FAO in forestry.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

The Committee on Forestry (COFO) is the most important of the FAO Forestry Statutory Bodies, which also include the RFCs, the Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products, the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions (*Silva Mediterranea*), the International Poplar Commission, and the

Panel of Experts on Forest Genetic Resources. The biennial sessions of COFO, held at FAO headquarters, bring together heads of forestry services and other senior government officials to identify emerging policy and technical issues, seek solutions and advise FAO and others on appropriate action. This is achieved through: periodic reviews of international forestry problems and appraisal of these problems; review of the FAO forestry work programmes and their implementation; advice to the Director-General on the future work programmes of FAO in the field of forestry and their implementation; reviews of and recommendations on specific matters relating to forestry referred to it by the FAO Council, Director-General or member states; and reports to the FAO Council. Membership in COFO is open to all FAO member states wishing to participate in its work.

**COFO12:** COFO's twelfth session convened in 1995 to discuss the role of the FAO in forestry, particularly with regard to SFM. It considered the development of criteria and indicators for SFM, trade and environment, and a possible FAO role in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development's (CSD)

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Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). Delegates negotiated the Rome Statement on Forestry, later adopted by a ministerial meeting; and discussed FAO's medium-term perspectives (1996-2001) and long-term priorities (1996-2010).

**COFO13:** At its thirteenth session in 1997, COFO continued discussion of progress towards SFM, recommended the implementation of the IPF proposals for action and tackled the issue of COFO's role and that of the RFCs. In addition, it considered implications for forestry of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit, addressed conservation and sustainable utilization of forest genetic resources, and called for additional financial resources for the 1998-2003 Medium-Term Plan.

**COFO14:** Discussions at COFO's fourteenth session in 1999 addressed the work of the CSD's Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), global forest sector outlook, and national and international challenges to forest policies for sustainability. COFO14 also reviewed FAO's programmes in the forestry sector, and its Strategic Framework (2000-2015) and medium-term implications for the forestry programme.

**COFO15:** In 2001, COFO's fifteenth session focused on forest information and knowledge management, criteria and indicators for sustainable development of all types of forests, and implications of certification and trade for SFM. It reviewed FAO's forestry programmes, including results of the Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2000, the 2002-2007 Medium-Term Plan, proposals for a global FRA, and key forest-related issues of climate change and the Kyoto Protocol.

**COFO16:** COFO16 convened in March 2003 to discuss: forests and freshwater; NFPs as a mechanism to implement the key outcomes of the World Food Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development; the review of FAO programmes; and the FAO medium-term planning process, particularly regarding forests, poverty and food security, forest governance and forest biodiversity.

**COFO17:** COFO17 convened in March 2005 to address issues relating to the 2005 State of the World's Forests report, Regional Forestry Commissions, needs and opportunities for international cooperation in forest fire preparedness, the role of forests in contributing to the Millennium Development Goals, and the World Forestry Congress. The Ministerial Meeting on Forests was also held during COFO17 and ministers addressed issues relating to international cooperation on forest fire management and maintaining commitment to sustainable forest management, and adopted a Ministerial Statement.

## COFO18 REPORT

David Harcharik, FAO Deputy Director General, opened COFO18 on Tuesday, 13 March 2007. He welcomed delegates and highlighted the release of a new report on the State of the World's Forests. He said that new forest areas are increasing and that biodiversity, soil and water conservation have maintained forest values; but noted that deforestation is accelerating and that external challenges, including climate change and poverty, are impinging on forest health. He listed policy issues for COFO's consideration: forests and energy; forest protection; poverty alleviation; and progress toward sustainable forest management (SFM). He noted that the regional forestry commissions (RFCs) have been important links between global issues and action at the country level, and noted that FAO reforms have placed more foresters in regional offices.

The plenary then adopted the provisional agenda (COFO 2007/2) without amendments. The following COFO officers were nominated and elected by acclamation: G.K. Prasad (India) as Chair; Sally Collins (US) as First Vice-Chair; Arlito Cuco (Mozambique), Alain Chaudron (France), Alexandros Christodoulou (Cyprus), Héctor Miguel Abreu Aquino (Dominican Republic), and Neil Hughes (Australia) as Vice Chairs. In addition, delegates elected members of the Drafting Committee, including representatives from Australia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Libya, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Sudan, and the United States. Hiroki Miyazono (Japan) and Mario Gustavo Mottin (Brazil) were elected Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of the Drafting Committee.

On Tuesday, the plenary addressed the State of the World's Forest 2007. On Wednesday, delegates discussed the issues related to forests and energy, forest protection and putting forestry to work at the local level. On Thursday, delegates considered issues of progressing towards sustainable forest management and shaping an action programme for FAO in forestry. On Friday afternoon, a plenary session was held to discuss the XIII World Forestry Congress and adopt the COFO18 report. Delegates also participated in information sessions, in-seminar sessions, special session and side events. There were also closed meetings of the Drafting Committee and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

## PLENARY

**STATE OF THE WORLD'S FORESTS 2007:** On Tuesday, Jan Heino, Assistant Director of FAO and head of FAO Forestry Department, chaired this session and introduced the State of the World's Forests 2007 (SOFO 2007). He explained that SOFO 2007 evaluates progress towards SFM at regional and global scales, and discusses eighteen selected issues in the forest sector, including climate change, forest tenure, trade, and wood energy. Heino said that global deforestation continues at unacceptable rates and that the world lost 3% of its total forest cover between 1990 and 2005. Summarizing regional findings, he said that: progress towards SFM has been uneven and slow in Africa where 9% of forest cover was lost between 1990 and 2005, a reduction accounting for half of global forest loss; but that the majority of African countries have new forest policies and laws, and that the region is active in developing innovative regional approaches.

On Asia and the Pacific, Heino noted that the forest area in China is expanding due to large investments in afforestation. Noting that rapid economic growth in the region provides more resources for forest management, he said that countries with expanding forest areas tend to be those with high income. Summarizing findings in other regions, he noted, *inter alia*: stable forest cover and strong regional policy mechanisms in Europe; a significant forest product trade surplus and a large increase in the area designated for biodiversity conservation in Latin America and the Caribbean; desertification and a large deficit in forest product trade in the Near East; stable forest cover in North America and Mexico's scheme for payment for environmental services. Finally, he drew attention to crucial developments at the United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF), congratulated the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) for its work and revealed the new COFO slogan: "Weaving knowledge into development."

UNFF7 Chair Hans Hooegeven said that the international forest agenda is entering a new era and that 2007 will be an historic year that will shape global forestry for a decade to come. He emphasized that UNFF7, scheduled for April 2007, has to adopt a non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) on all types of forests that is expected to be a turning point in the international forest regime. Hooegeven also noted that this year UNFF needs to adopt a new multi-year programme of work (MYPOW) for the next nine years. He said that the last outstanding key issue on the international forest agenda is to provide new and additional resources for action on the ground, and noted the need to translate words into action and the importance of utilizing cross-sectoral approaches to forest management. He called attention to a General Assembly decision to launch the International Year of Forests in 2011, and encouraged all relevant actors to join forces in pursuing SFM.

Manoel Sobral, Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), highlighted the importance of SFM, which presents challenges particularly for developing countries. He said that SFM is finally spreading in the tropics but noted there is still work to be done in promoting SFM. He noted that FAO and ITTO have complementary expertise, overlapping membership and a common aim, and that they have joined together in many recent initiatives, including some under CPF. Sobral listed joint achievements of FAO and ITTO, including: publishing a set of best practices to improve compliance with forest legislation; developing a code of best practices for forest plantations; promoting the adoption and implementation of criteria and indicators as a tool for forest management monitoring, reporting and assessment; and providing training for people directly involved in forest management.

Brazil underscored the current discussion of a NLBI, and highlighted the need to establish an innovative programme of work, strengthen the economic social environmental benefits of forests, promote SFM and halt the decrease of official development assistance. Ethiopia stressed the importance of indigenous knowledge and the need for financial resources to assist developing countries to promote alternative forms of energy and contribute to SFM. The US highlighted the importance of bioenergy to address forest degradation. Japan noted the impact of depopulation and stagnation on economic activities in forest areas. The Russian Federation stressed the importance of global monitoring and applying science and technology to SFM. The EU highlighted the impact of climate change on forestry. Malaysia stressed the need to provide funding for, and review compliance with, SFM programmes.

Sweden pointed out that the forest sector is too often treated as a source of environmental problems and described it as a contributor to social development and wealth. Noting that the dire forestry situation in some countries is due to lack of knowledge and capacity, he urged FAO to continue working with countries to improve their knowledge base and to strengthen its cooperation with other relevant organizations.

India said that in many countries most of the wood utilization relates to daily energy requirements, and opposed linking climate change policies with fuelwood consumption. Malawi supported the findings of SOFO, noting that the situation is not encouraging and challenges governments to strengthen their efforts. He drew attention to natural causes of forest degradation

such as invasive species, said that most countries struggle to solve these problems but do not have adequate resources and personnel, and listed his country's national policy initiatives and achievements.

China commended the SOFO report for its accuracy. Describing current national forestry programmes and successes, she credited foreign partners for contributing to her country's accomplishments and thanked FAO and the RFCs for their support and active international engagement.

Mexico said it has the smallest area affected by forest fires in North America, and described national policy initiatives, including new legislation and programmes on forestry and poverty alleviation, new investments and support mechanisms for SFM.

Guatemala listed its forest policy achievements, including a new programme of forestry incentives, significant increases in investments, and advances in community forestry management. Recalling Hans Hooegeven's call to work side by side, he urged developed countries to prove their commitment to collaborative action and asked FAO to define strategies on bioenergy and biofuel production.

Syria highlighted its activities to combat and prevent forest fires, and to implement SFM. South Africa noted his country's activities on water management, SFM and economic and social development. He noted that South Africa's certified forest plantations have enhanced poverty alleviation and job creation. Costa Rica highlighted his country's experience on reversing the trend of forest destruction and degradation by high-level policy decisions to include forests in many relevant areas and to look at forests as a source of beauty, biodiversity, water and carbon sequestration. Norway noted the valuable cooperation of FAO under the CPF. The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) noted the importance of stakeholders' participation and called for immediate action on wood energy.

Afghanistan discussed the role of forests in environment and society, and the values of community-based management for forest protection, afforestation, water management and preservation of genetic resources. Angola said that the forestry sector must face challenges from globalization through SFM with participatory management linked to implementation of NFPs.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO requests FAO to continue to report on forest resources, products, policies and institutions through an integrated and harmonized assessment approach using national focal points, RFCs, advisory committees, and collaborating with other processes and organizations, to enhance the ability of SOFO to deliver key findings.

**FORESTS AND ENERGY:** This session on Wednesday was chaired by Sally Collins (US) and focused on forests and energy, a topic introduced in the FAO document "Forests and Energy: New Challenges in Sustainable Forest Management" (COFO 2007/5). Presentations were made by Hikojiro Katsuhisa, Chief of Forest Products and Forest Industry Division, FAO, and Franziska Hirsch, Timber Section, UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

Katsuhisa outlined policy issues with regard to wood energy, including integration into NFPs and national energy policy. He said that there are problems in identifying valid data and

making sound economic analyses because of questions about the impact of increased fuelwood use, utilization of wood residues and waste, and concerns about incentives. There are issues, he noted, involving energy efficiency, links between fuelwood use and climate change, and the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects for cleaner fuelwood use in developing countries. He described coordination of efforts among agencies in the International Bioenergy Platform, FAO and the International Energy Agency (IEA) cooperative work on bioenergy, and public-private programmes such as those organized by UNECE and the World Business Council on Sustainable Development.

Hirsch described developments in Europe, North America and the Commonwealth of Independent States. She alluded to the EU target of a 20% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020, noting it will promote bioenergy, including fuelwood as alternative energy sources. Mobilization of wood resources, she said, requires a broader wood supply base and improved information on forest areas, and infrastructure and training, all of which involve the private sector. She listed as policy issues: leveling the playing field, consistency of policy making, reconciliation of NFPs with biomass action plans, attention to local conditions, wider criteria for sustainability, and attention to new opportunities to develop bioenergy.

Brazil portrayed bioenergy as an economically viable alternative that presents a number of advantages including reducing the dependence on petroleum imports and ameliorating climate change. Listing national achievements in Brazil, he said there is a 90% increase in afforested areas, 45% of energy consumed comes from renewable sources and 80% of cars sold have flex fuel engines, enabling them to run on either gasoline or ethanol. He added that FAO has an important role to play in providing countries with technical assistance on bioenergy issues.

Germany, on behalf of the European Union (EU), noted that bioenergy development provides new income and employment opportunities, predicted that bioenergy demand will increase significantly, and stressed that its growth should be fostered in an efficient and sustainable manner. He said promoting forest output should minimize market distortions, take into account environmental risks and follow principles of SFM, and called on FAO to finalize guidelines for sustainable bioenergy production in consultation with member states.

Saudi Arabia said that increased charcoal production generates new pressures on forest cover and contributes to forest decline. He requested that FAO address technology transfer, social and economic issues at regional levels, organize regional workshops and symposia, and provide support for capacity building.

Japan observed that the issue of wood energy has been neglected in the past but receives increasing attention, described its Biomass Nippon Strategy that aims at increasing bioethanol production to 10% of gas consumption by 2030, and called for strengthening cooperation among CPF members.

Tanzania said wood meets 92% of energy requirements in his country. Noting that wood fuel demand drives the rapid destruction of forest cover, he said that new guidelines are being developed for wood harvesting and charcoal burning.

Norway said increased wood energy production provides income generation and economic development but also leads to increased market demand, pressure on forest resources,

competition for raw materials and higher prices. He emphasized that higher demand should be addressed by increasing production while applying principles of SFM. He called on FAO to promote the efficient use of biomass, develop toolkits, promote capacity building for integrated land use planning and strengthen cooperation among CPF members.

France stated that French forests suffer from underexploitation rather than overexploitation, and listed its initiatives to develop wood demand and wood fuel production while considering local conditions, engaging in constructive dialogue with forest industries and respecting principles of SFM and biodiversity protection.

Lesotho outlined national efforts on protecting forests and stressed the need to promote alternative energy sources to preserve indigenous trees and shrubs. Colombia highlighted the difficulties in changing local community practices and introducing alternative energy sources. Namibia informed delegates about his country's policies regarding bushes and their potential utilization as energy resources.

Sweden noted the need for FAO to continue working together with other partners and governments to exchange experiences, especially in research and development and demonstration. Portugal stressed the need to promote an integrated approach that makes sectoral links between forest and energy. Slovenia highlighted the importance of capacity building.

Malaysia underscored the need to promote the use of improved stoves and charcoal, and utilize biomass for combating climate change. He also suggested that FAO study ways to maximize the use of logging waste as fuel. Guatemala asked FAO to develop a long-term strategy to ensure the balance between the promotion of wood energy and protected areas, while avoiding pressures especially in indigenous land.

Syria observed that bioenergy development lags in countries with droughts, and called for promoting bioenergy through incentives and technology transfer because of its benefits to the environment. Senegal said that Sahel countries depend on wood for 70% of their energy, and described a bioenergy programme for SFM covering 300,000 hectares, supported by the Netherlands and the World Bank. Ethiopia expressed support for FAO's work in the forest/energy area and called for expansion of capacity-building efforts. Libya said that there is a need to make bioenergy use compatible with other energy use and to address environmental problems. Zambia said that bioenergy is an essential alternative to fossil fuel, but conservation and efficiency of bioenergy as well as fossil fuels must be included in a harmonized approach to energy policy.

The International Family Forest Alliance urged support for local use of resources as a means of reducing dependency on imported energy. The Confederation of European Paper Industries noted different problems of fuelwood relating to issues such as climate change, energy security, energy mix, competence and poverty alleviation.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO requests FAO, *inter alia*, to: assist members to develop comprehensive and integrated national bioenergy strategies, including wood energy, as well as to integrate wood energy issues in national forest programmes or other forest strategies; prepare an analytical report on the social, economic and environmental impacts of changes in the use of wood for energy generation; and organize workshops to promote dialogue at the national and regional

levels to help increase institutional and technical capacity related to the sustainable production and consumption of bioenergy, including wood energy.

**FOREST PROTECTION:** On Wednesday, Sally Collins (US) chaired this session and Gillian Allard, FAO, gave a presentation on forest health (COFO 2007/6). She said that disease outbreaks and invasive species can reduce tree survival and forest yield, deplete water, affect international trade in forest products, and negatively impact livelihoods. She identified the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) as the most important international policy mechanism for protecting forest health, called for more awareness of IPPC Standards, and urged for enhancing international cooperation and the flow of information.

Denny Truesdale, US Forest Service, gave a presentation on fire management. He said that: most fires are caused by humans; their effects include air and water pollution, loss of biodiversity and habitats, and damage to livelihoods; many fires are beneficial and important tools in agriculture and forestry; and that unwanted destructive fires require suppression. Truesdale outlined a strategy to enhance international cooperation in fire management that comprises voluntary guidelines, implementation partnerships, a 2006 global assessment, and a review of international cooperation. He said current cooperation includes development of regional fire management strategies, organization of conferences, development of model agreements, and regional and international training in community-based fire management.

In the ensuing discussion, China supported FAO efforts on forest health and protection, noted that a 2006 survey found weaknesses in preventing invasions by alien species, pledged its unwavering commitment to continuously improve its domestic action plans and practices, and said international cooperation should focus attention on assisting countries in capacity building.

Canada drew attention to the catastrophic invasion of mountain pine beetle in his country and its impacts on forests and local communities. He underscored the importance of collaboration among FAO members and national forest services, and expressed support for the FAO voluntary guidelines on fire management.

Spain supported the choice of 2011 as the International Year of Forests and stressed the need to address the significant challenges of forest fire and desertification. The EU highlighted that fire management is an integral part of SFM, welcomed FAO voluntary guidelines for fire management, and called for support in their implementation via partnerships and programmes of action.

Malawi called upon FAO to assist in fostering capacities in developing countries, especially training, and material and financial resources to implement management of invasive species; and to organize regular workshops and seminars on dealing with invasive species and sharing experiences. Cyprus noted the need to develop bilateral and multilateral agreements to facilitate international assistance regarding fire combat, especially exchange of fire fighters across borders. Expressing increased concern with the effects of climate change on insect populations, Malaysia supported FAO's efforts to research the effect of habitat loss and climatic change in the spread of invasive species.

The Russian Federation suggested that FAO and the World Bank promote further international cooperation on research and assessment of climate change impacts on forests in boreal and temperate zones. Myanmar noted his country's efforts on fire management and invasive species and stressed the importance of further promoting the participatory approach in forest protection, capacity building and knowledge sharing. Saudi Arabia stressed the need for guidelines and training found in other regions, and noted the urgent need to establish a regional network for preventing the danger of invasive species, and training in fire management.

The US said that forest management involving local communities is the best way to address problems such as fires, which have been the worst in 50 years; and that many local fire departments have developed plans to leverage their strengths and expertise. Brazil stressed the importance of technical assistance from FAO for fire management, involving local communities, the private sector and governments. The Gambia also said that SFM and fire management should involve local communities and civil society. Portugal supported the EU's position and added specific information on fire suppression, combating alien species such as the pinewood beetle, and treatment of cork oak mortality. Uruguay described a recent project on forest plantations that helped frame a regional project on invasive species. Colombia said that its law on forestry coordinates fire management through a national commission on mitigation of forest fires, and highlighted the need to increase prevention efforts on invasive species at the international level. The Central African Forest Commission, said that its members work together to protect biodiversity and take preventive measures on fire management and alien species management.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO recommends that FAO, *inter alia*:

- strengthen its technical support to countries to address the increasing threats to forest ecosystems from wildfires, pests and invasive species;
- continue to promote the exchange of information and experiences through networking, capacity building and international cooperation;
- support developing countries in strengthening their capacities to monitor and control pests, diseases and invasive species;
- work with members to promote, expand and create linkages among the regional, subregional and national networks on invasive species; and
- support the establishment of a subregional invasive species network among the Southern Cone Countries as part of the work of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission.

**PUTTING FORESTS TO WORK AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:** On Wednesday, Hector Miguel Abreu Aquino (Dominican Republic) chaired this session. Eva Muller, FAO, gave a presentation on putting forestry to work at the local level (COFO 2007/7). She identified obstacles to community-based SFM, including lack of secure forestry tenure, excessively complicated legal procedures, lack of technical know-how, and conflicting stakeholder interests. She recommended actions to be carried out, including: introducing secure and diversified tenure systems conducive to SFM; establishing legal requirements that are realistic, transparent and simple; pursuing economic

sustainability by creating economic incentives; developing community-based enterprises, building capacity in local communities; and preventing latent stakeholder conflicts.

The EU stressed the importance of secure ownership, local capacity building, technical support, information networks, and natural resource conflict management. He stressed that participatory approaches do not inevitably lead to SFM and must be accompanied by proper safeguards for SFM and better governance at all levels.

Iceland detailed the forestry developments in his country over the last 100 years, including severe deforestation due to clear-cutting and sheep-grazing activities, the development of a NFP, the implementation of national afforestation programmes, and involvement in regional cooperation.

Colombia said indigenous communities control considerable forest areas and that their rights are recognized by national forestry legislation. She acknowledged the support of the US, the Netherlands, and Japan for national initiatives on local communities. She said it is necessary to: strengthen international support for NFP implementation; develop mechanisms for improving economic incentives for small holders; and focus on capacity building regarding natural resource conflict resolution.

Cameroon emphasized the serious problem of illegal forest use, stressed that mandatory environmental impact assessments are very expensive to conduct, and called for international support in policy development at national and local levels. Afghanistan reiterated the importance of participatory community-based management and capacity building, noted difficulties with, and requested FAO's assistance for, policy implementation.

Switzerland recommended discussing tenure in the framework of forest sector governance and the need to involve the local level and all relevant actors. He underscored that collective local control or title can be more secure and effective in supporting SFM in the long run rather than individual titles. Norway stressed the need to focus more on tenure and good governance, capacity building and institutional strengthening. Saudi Arabia underscored the need to involve local communities in promoting ecotourism that encourages SFM and biodiversity protection.

Tanzania explained its legal system for participatory management, which includes local reserves and joint management agreements with the government. Brazil said that it has 130 million hectares managed by local groups, whose main challenge is to promote SFM and improve participation in forest policy debates. Gabon said that it is committed to SFM through its national forestry code that protects biodiversity and involves communities and small- and medium-forest enterprises (SMFEs). The Gambia called on FAO to support SFM by focusing on SMFEs at the local level and providing guidelines on SFM. Guatemala noted it has 500,000 hectares under community management with strong support from the national government. Malaysia contended that local management is vital to SFM and alleviation of poverty is the key to successful development plans. Senegal pointed out that there are many constraints to local management, including lack of resources and skills, but they provide a way for new forest products to be promoted through the right incentives. Mali said that countries can receive support from the FAO for SFM but must have political will and good governance to put the support to good use. Lebanon noted that it

had received assistance from FAO for pest control in the Cedars of Lebanon, but other areas of Lebanon have been devastated by military activities.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO requests FAO, *inter alia*, to: carry out further studies on forest tenure and its implications for SFM and poverty alleviation in Central Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean; in collaboration with partners, assist those communities and smallholders in developing countries, as appropriate, to develop small-scale forest-based enterprises for timber and non-timber products; and, in collaboration with the NFP Facility, assist developing countries, as appropriate, in better integrating forestry in poverty reduction strategies in order to enhance the contributions of forestry to poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods.

**PROGRESSING TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT:** COFO18 Chair Prasad chaired the session on Thursday and mentioned that it would be a follow-up discussion to Wednesday's in-session seminar on the regional action on sustainable forest management, based on "Progressing towards Sustainable Forest Management" (COFO 2007/8.1 and COFO 2007/8.2). Peter Holmgren and Mette Wilkie, FAO Forestry Department, presented an overview of the topic. Holmgren said that SFM is an umbrella concept for forestry management and its contributions to sustainable development. He defined "progressing" as political dialogue, leading to action on the ground, with feedback from action to improve the dialogue. Wilkie then delineated six tools and mechanisms that mark progress toward SFM:

- national forest programmes: now used in 130 countries, they set national vision and priorities, indicate institutional capacity, assess enforcement of international agreements, solicit stakeholder participation, and contribute to poverty alleviation;
- voluntary guidelines: adoption of guidelines will inform fire management and management of planted forests, meet the challenge of translating agreements into action on the ground, and provide an intersectoral approach to policy strategy and management;
- national monitoring and assessment: responsible for an increasing demand for facts and knowledge for policy dialogue, and help with integrated land use and field inventories;
- forest landscape restoration: uses the "bigger picture" of sustainable livelihoods and land use; promotes social, economic and environmental benefits; creates a learning network; and leverages pilot sites; and
- Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRAs): for overall assessment of forest resources, their condition, management and uses, and the global progress toward SFM.

The Russian Federation said SFM goals should be based on reliable information, reiterated its call for establishing an international development and training center, and proposed that FAO provide institutional support for forest education programmes. Australia welcomed the FAO working paper on voluntary guidelines, and said the guidelines should be continuously maintained, updated and improved. Myanmar said that criteria and indicators (C&I) are a useful tool for SFM, and, noting the importance of research data, called on countries

to reinforce their remote sensing capabilities and requested the FAO to provide more assistance for monitoring, assessment and reporting.

The EU welcomed FAO work on evaluating progress toward SFM, drew attention to the importance of local policy implementation and feedback from the local level, said that FAO support for UNFF and the future NLBI is crucial, and stressed the concept of continuous learning and improvement in all aspects of forestry work. Congo listed his country's national accomplishments, including new forestry legislation, management programmes and action plans, and use of C&I for SFM.

Switzerland welcomed the FAO voluntary guidelines and elaborated its views on the role of planted forests, stressing that their value is not equivalent to that of natural forests and underscoring the importance of maintaining a continuum of natural forests for biodiversity protection.

Colombia called for consolidating cooperation between different forest-related international agreements and processes, drew attention to the ongoing UNFF discussions on a NLBI, and emphasized the important role of FAO in the CPF, UNFF and the RFCs. Poland listed its activities on SFM since the early 1990s, and stressed that SFM is essential for mitigating climate change. China underscored the importance of balancing state sovereignty with international responsibilities, strengthening national legislature development and enforcement, and strengthening cooperation through the UNFF.

Norway highlighted the relevance of FAO for providing information according to thematic elements of SFM, including legal policy and institutional frameworks. He underscored capacity building and good governance as major requirements for achieving SFM.

The Kyrgyz Republic noted that concerted governance on the basis of collaborative partnerships is required for promoting SFM. He requested FAO to consider the assignment of Russian as one of the official languages of COFO.

Cuba thanked FAO for supporting his country's NFP. Morocco informed delegates about national policies and efforts to promote SFM. Syria highlighted the need for reliable data and indices for planning and implementing SFM. Côte d'Ivoire underscored his country's new forest policy that aims to promote biodiversity and restore production capacity, improving income and livelihoods of smallholders. New Zealand supported focusing on regional priorities and encouraged global and regional collaboration. Saudi Arabia informed delegates of changes in his country's forest legislation, and asked FAO to assist countries in collecting information on SFM.

Italy said it supports the EU position and described its carbon sink inventory as a means for enabling the scientific community to quantify carbon sinks in forests for mitigation of climate change. India, while agreeing with SFM principles, asserted that funding for meeting SFM expectations is inadequate and called on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), ITTO and others to provide more funds for capacity building. Gabon stated that SFM is a priority of the government, which has codified the guidelines for its forest sector but needs FAO support in pursuing SFM objectives. Malaysia noted that SFM is a high priority because US\$20 billion of its exports are forest-related, and called for continuous improvement in SFM through research and development on land use, small enterprises and ecotourism.

Brazil said that it is a challenge to implement and achieve the goals of SFM, and noted that harmonized international reporting of forestry conditions is a complex issue because SFM elements are not comprehensive enough to cover all areas. The CBD Secretariat thanked FAO for its cooperation in promoting biodiversity through SFM, particularly the biodiversity indicators in the FRA. The MCPFE Secretariat said that SFM is a priority in the European ministerial process and is linked to other policy areas including water, agriculture, biodiversity and energy. The Gambia observed that, having moved from plantation approaches to forest management, SFM has improved in his country, especially with involvement of local communities. IUCN said that it has participated in the drafting of guidelines to clarify the principles of SFM, especially in landscape restoration, human rights and biodiversity.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO requests FAO, *inter alia*: in collaboration with members and partner organizations, to develop, promote and implement management tools to bridge the gap between policy and actions at all levels with emphasis on inter-sectoral and landscape approaches; to continue its support to the development, implementation and monitoring of national forest programmes, including in partnership with the NFP Facility; to make available updated information on the status and progress of national forest programmes; and to continue assisting members in their efforts to improve law compliance in the forest sector by promoting the use of best practices, the sharing of experiences among countries and collaboration at the regional level.

COFO also recommended that FAO collaborate with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to assist developing countries in taking the best advantage of the GEF as one possible source of funding to improve sustainable forest management and to achieve the Global Objectives on Forests.

**DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF FAO BODIES:** This session was chaired by Vice Chair Alexandros Christodoulou. Pape Koné, Near East Region Senior Officer, outlined the process by which the regional commissions provide information to COFO on: progress of SFM, forests and energy; and regional perspectives on the SOFO, using NFPs for reinforcement of capacities, planted forests and fire protection, and networks against alien species. Other organizations also provide input to COFO: the Consultative Committee on Forest Products, *Silva Mediterranea*, the Expert Group on Forest Genetic Resources, and the International Commission on the Role of Livelihoods and Restoration of Degraded Lands. He clarified that after COFO's review of these inputs, the recommendations are sent to the FAO Council for endorsement.

France stressed the importance of cooperation in the Mediterranean region, drew attention to the current revitalization of *Silva Mediterranea*, noted his country's active financial and political support for the process, and asked FAO what concrete measures FAO plans to undertake to enhance Mediterranean cooperation.

Morocco said all countries must be involved in cooperation, and called for supporting the strengthening of *Silva Mediterranea*. Saudi Arabia called attention to cooperation in the Near East on forest management and the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Namibia highlighted challenges in fire management. Liberia called on FAO to assist developing countries in assessing their carbon sink capacities and developing their capabilities to quantify rates of avoided deforestation in the context of international climate change policy. Denmark expressed support for the FAO recommendations. Colombia called for making increasing resources available to the Latin American Regional Commission.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO recommends that, *inter alia*, each RFC develop a programme of work to facilitate the implementation of SFM, and that FAO increase the allocation of resources and support for the work of the RFCs.

**SHAPING AN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR FAO IN FORESTRY:** On Thursday, Alain Chaudron (France) chaired this session and introduced documents titled Review of FAO Programmes in Forestry: Actions to Implement the Recommendations of COFO17 (COFO 2007/10.1) and Shaping an Action Programme for FAO in Forestry (COFO 2007/10.2).

Dan Rugabira, FAO Forestry Department, presented a review of FAO Forestry programmes since 2005. He stressed, *inter alia*: a new programme structure, reorganization of the Forestry Department into three renamed divisions, consolidation of programme entities and reduction of their number, reductions in staff and activities as a result of budget cuts, and increased partnerships. Among COFO activities following COFO17 recommendations, he listed: a fire management strategy and voluntary guidelines; work on bioenergy; leadership and support to the CPF; support to developing countries in capacity building for implementation of forestry-related aspects of the Kyoto Protocol; support to NFPs and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs); outlook studies; and post-tsunami rehabilitation.

Ian Heino presented information on shaping an FAO action programme. He said that FAO programme revisions were mandated in 1999 and are necessitated by UN and FAO reforms and broad changes in forestry sectors worldwide. Noting that a strategic plan will be completed for COFO19 in 2009, he stressed that no details can be presented yet since the revisions depend on an independent external evaluation to be conducted later in 2007. Heino emphasized that FAO wishes revisions to be prepared in consultation with countries, preferably through the regional forestry commissions. He listed areas to emphasize in the new programme, including: enhancing country capacity building; harmonizing international reporting; strengthening partnerships at all levels; and assisting countries in implementing voluntary guidelines.

Brazil stressed that FAO should continue to be the lead agency of the CPF, and FAO work should be guided by the four objectives in the draft NLBI. He expressed concern about the budget level and staff assigned to the forestry department regarding its major activities, and requested more details on FAO's reporting regarding funding.

The US said that focusing on governance helps institutional growth, community achievements and the creation of opportunities to develop partnerships and promote the MDGs. She welcomed the inclusion of law enforcement in the programme of work and budget (PWB). Switzerland proposed the establishment of indicators on tenure, especially in the local level, and welcomed FAO's work and commitment to provide

expertise on carbon sequestration, avoiding deforestation and implementation of the CDM under the Kyoto Protocol. Afghanistan expressed concern about FAO's dependency on individual donors and the possibility that such donors' national interests may interfere with the neutrality of FAO's work.

The EU highlighted the importance of taking into account the results of the independent external evaluation and any further general guidance by COFO. Canada welcomed the PWB on sustainable natural resource management.

Cameroon suggested that FAO efforts need to be followed up in some areas, such as SFM, wood and non-wood forestry programmes, and that there should be more emphasis on capacity building and reforestation. Australia expressed its continued support for FAO participation in: implementation of UNFF work, NFPs, harmonization of standards through guidelines, criteria and indicators, and combating invasive species. Angola asked about the period of time covered by the Action Programme, financing of projects, summarizing costs, and extrabudgetary sources of funds. He noted that, because of reform measures, FAO has seen a reduction in its programmes and several professional positions have been eliminated and asked, as a result, which divisions will take responsibility for the activities affected.

In response, Manoj Juneja, Director of Programme, Budget and Evaluation, said that: the Action Programme covers the period 2006-2007 but the figures are not comparable to 2004-2005 because of reorganization; professional staff has declined by ten at headquarters, but increased by six in the regional offices; if one adds all of the other resources available, the decline in the Forestry Department funds is only 1% compared to 5% for FAO funding in general.

Japan suggested that FAO should look at the results of the external evaluation when it formulates its Action Programme, and supported the Swiss suggestion that it be expanded to cover forests and water. Saudi Arabia asserted that reforms and funding cuts should not have a negative effect on the programmes but that the programmes need to be better described. Sweden supported the EU position and added that his country welcomes an outside evaluation but expects to be consulted on its terms. He expressed concern particularly with the elimination of positions at headquarters without identifying how the work is to be reallocated. Finland also supported the EU position and added that NFPs must be of high quality and involve all stakeholders if they are to be implemented effectively. Norway said that it has three priority areas: capacity building, Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRAs) and partnerships, and also wants FAO to focus more on governance, land tenure and fee systems.

**Final Outcome:** In the final report, COFO, *inter alia*: requests that FAO continue to support national monitoring, assessment and reporting on forests, including their social, economic and environmental benefits; and recommends that FAO, in collaboration with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other partners, assist countries in strengthening their capacities to develop and implement climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including to reduce emissions from deforestation. It also noted the need to provide continuing support to sustainable mountain development as well as fragile ecosystems such as mangrove forests.



## INFORMATION SESSIONS

On Tuesday afternoon, delegates took part in four information sessions on forest health, forest tenure, small- and medium-scale forest enterprise development, and forest fire management. On Thursday afternoon, delegates discussed the issues of “Generating and sharing knowledge on forest resources – national and global monitoring and assessments” and “Forests and water: New generation of watershed management programmes.” On Friday morning, delegates took part in information sessions addressing the interface between forests and agriculture, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation.

**FOREST HEALTH:** This session was divided into three parts: Overview, Plant Protection and Networking and Information Exchange. On the overview, Catherine Parks, US Forest Service, presented data and information on protecting forests from invasive species through enhanced international cooperation. Identifying invasive species as an international health issue, she pointed out that they are the second largest cause of biodiversity loss after habitat loss, and incur damage of US\$120 billion per year in the US alone. She said a free flow of information is essential and suggested that future cooperation can be enhanced by raising awareness, developing prevention pathways and developing networks.

On Plant Protection, Richard Ives, Coordinator of the IPPC, offered an overview of the IPPC. He said the IPPC was created in 1951, aims at protecting plant resources from the spread of pests, and covers forests as well as commercial agriculture. He discussed the relationship between IPPC, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement and the CBD, as well as its efforts at enhancing information exchange and technical assistance for capacity building. Hugh Evans, United Kingdom Forestry Commission, discussed the IPPC’s effectiveness in enhancing forest protection. He noted that there are currently 27 International Standards for phytosanitary measures, and explained that the country at risk conducts risk assessment and pest management, usually in reaction to an already existing pest presence. In listing drawbacks of the implementation process, he said that: there is high dependence on named pest organisms at the risk of missing unknown pests; information is difficult to obtain especially for developing countries; networking is fragmentary; and that exchange of information is essential.

Lex Thomson, Biodiversity International, gave a presentation on issues related to movement of research quantities of tree germplasm. He said that deliberate cross-border transfer of germplasm can bring benefit to forests and communities, including improvement of tree health. He gave various specific examples, noted a recent slowing down of transfers and attributed it to post-CBD confusion about how to handle requests for germplasm transfers. Thomson cautioned against the restriction of germplasm transfers and recommended facilitating them by training quarantine inspection staff and developing agreements, non-binding guidelines and material transfer agreements.

Participants heard four presentations on Networking and Information Exchange. Hugh Evans, representing the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, made introductory remarks on communication, cooperation and collaboration for forest health. He said the speed and volume

of international trade overwhelms the capacity for proper inspection, and that the movement of pests is increasing enormously. Evans identified priorities, including information sharing, developing data sharing agreements, coordinating research and monitoring efforts, and connecting scientists and officials. He pinpointed the following existing gaps: networking and information sources are mainly Internet-based; funding for research on forest health issues tends to be national; and there are no specific research networks.

K. V. Sankaran, Kerala Forest Research Institute, presented information on the Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network. He identified foreign invasive species as one of the most serious environmental problems, and said they cause a loss of 1% of gross domestic product (GDP) in some countries. He said the network has 32 country members and listed its activities in raising awareness, exchanging information, capacity building, and developing action plans.

Clement Chilima, Forest Research Institute of Malawi, gave an overview of the Foreign Invasive Species Network for Africa (FISNA). Listing various concrete initiatives, he said FISNA collects and disseminates information, provides policy advice, raises regional awareness, and encourages the publication of research results.

Valery Roshchupkin, Federal Forestry Agency of the Russian Federation, presented on the state of Russia’s forests. He said that while there is no hard scientific evidence, climate change likely causes forest die-back that leads to economic, social and environmental crises. Stressing the need for international coordination, he proposed creating an international training and development center for forest monitoring and assessment under the auspices of FAO.

**FOREST TENURE:** This session addressed property rights, community ownership and poverty issues. Arvind Khare, Rights and Resources Institute, spoke about changes in forest sector governance but noted that reforms in tenure arrangements have lagged behind other sectors. He said that today’s global challenges involving climate change, violent conflicts and abuses of human rights can all be addressed through forest tenure reform.

Dominique Reeb, Forest Policy Service, FAO, discussed FAO’s survey of forest tenure in South Asia and Africa. He described how deforestation involves loss of rights to resources and how forest tenure of local individuals and communities can reduce these losses. He said that public ownership may be maintained if there is devolution of management responsibilities to local communities. He noted that private ownership is high in Europe and is guided by state regulations in ways that preserve public values.

Liu Jinlong, Chinese Academy for Forestry, discussed the history of forest tenure in China, which went from mostly private early in the twentieth century to public ownership in the 1950s. It has now reverted to partial privatization, he said, because 25% of forest area is now controlled by individuals and families, but the government still manages forests by regulating logging, shipping, land use and forest protection.

**SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SCALE FOREST ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT:** This session covered forestry development and business practices. The first presentation was by Duncan MacQueen, International Institute for Environment and Development, who presented case studies

that demonstrate that SMFE development can meet basic needs, accrue wealth locally, empower local creativity and build environmental accountability. SFMEs have, however, disadvantages because they lack economic and political power, market information, capital, technology and stability. He suggested that enabling conditions must include sound forest governance, voluntary trade mechanisms and a business support network.

David Singh, Iwokrama International Centre, discussed flexible support to local small- and medium enterprises in Guyana. He said Iwokrama manages 2% of state forests and helps establish community enterprises. He noted that SMFEs can benefit more than 50% of the community population but their effective establishment requires political support, business planning and technical know-how.

Sophie Grouwels, FAO, and Tony Hill, TREE AID, described initiatives for SMFE development in Burkina Faso, Mali and Ghana. Grouwels said that the FAO Community Based Enterprise Development programme aims to assist local people in generating income while preserving forests. She described an approach to enterprise creation through market analysis and development (MA&D), noting that the approach is flexible, participatory and gender sensitive.

Hill described an ongoing SMFE initiative involving 172 rural communities, non-governmental organizations and government ministries in Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana. He said constraints include lack of financial capital, declining forest resources, lack of training skills, poor coordination and lack of information, ineffective regulatory frameworks and lack of coherent national forest policies. The intermediate stage of the project resulted in the formulation of enterprise development plans by 164 forest product interest groups. On lessons learned, he said an NGO-government collaboration requires large investments in time and effort, governments can either reinforce or undermine local enterprises, and that the initiative demonstrates the importance of skilled facilitators and top-down technology transfers.

Kebba Sonko, the Gambia, presented on the Gambian experience in mainstreaming community-based forest enterprise development. He reviewed regulatory and policy changes over the last decade, and gave a detailed description of the Gambia's application of the MA&D approach in 22 community-owned forests nationwide. He listed a number of benefits including awareness raising and a projected profit of over US\$20,000.

**FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT:** José Antonio Prado, FAO, noted the increased importance of forest fire management, which requires cooperation at the country, regional and global levels, and strengthening local capacity.

Jim Carle, FAO, presented FAO's papers prepared in cooperation with a number of partners on "Fire management: Voluntary guidelines, principles and strategic actions," "Fire Management: Review of international cooperation," and "Fire Management: Global assessment 2006." He noted that the: "Voluntary guidelines" was a result of a multi-stakeholder process; "Review of international cooperation" is a working document that identified priority themes for cooperation and potential areas for future collaboration; and the 2006 Global Assessment has a global synthesis and regional summaries on, *inter alia*, fire causes, effects, prevention, suppression and institutions. Carle asked for feedback from participants on

strategy development, implementation of voluntary guidelines, and monitoring and assessment of fire management around the globe, support to the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) fire network and facilitating field support in implementing fire management programmes.

Denny Truesdale, US Forest Service, underscored that effective and efficient fire management promotes sustainable resource management, and that voluntary guidelines include all aspects of fire management, not just suppression. He highlighted the importance of using compatible fire management systems, such as the Incident Command System and common international agreements to enable cooperation.

Johann Goldammer, Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), highlighted the participation of the UNISDR Global Wildland Fire Network in the elaboration of the three papers. He outlined the "Review of international cooperation" in fire management, including: terminology, statistics and monitoring; support to policy, legal, institutional and planning frameworks; and the contribution of research including the impact of fires in human health.

Andrey Kushlin, World Bank, noted the need to develop work on the core decision making relating to fire as an important economic factor that affects ministries of economy, planning and financing as well as the private sector and local municipalities.

Ayn Shlisky, The Nature Conservancy, summarized her organization's activities and efforts on fire management, and highlighted the importance of strategy and guidelines, which support unique roles of conservation organizations and establish principles and actions that are consistent with biodiversity conservation dealing with fire, its effects and human land uses.

**GENERATING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE ON FOREST RESOURCES – NATIONAL AND GLOBAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENTS:** Steven Johnson, ITTO, opened the session on generating and sharing knowledge on forest resources. He clarified that the session covers three topics, namely national forest monitoring systems, forest resources assessments and future actions.

Peter Holmgren, FAO, presented the programme on national forest monitoring systems. He said national forest inventories support strategic decision-making process, consist of systematic and repeated observations, cover forest resources, management and uses, and entail periodic delivery of information to countries. He noted that forest inventories do not involve monitoring of logging, fires, or forest management planning at local levels. Holmgren said that FAO support in establishing national monitoring systems involves 500 experts, 500 sample sites, 500 days of work, and 500 monitoring parameters.

Ramón Álvarez Lazzaroni, Honduras, presented information on national monitoring in Honduras. He said that despite regular monitoring since 1965, a recent inventory was conducted over a period of eight months and produced surprising results. Among these, he noted that: forests cover 51% of Honduras' territory; the rate of deforestation is lower than previously believed (only 30,000 hectares since 1965); and actual pine harvest is only 700,000 cubic meters compared to a potential allowable forest production of 100 million cubic meters. Lazzaroni pointed out that future follow-up inventories are needed to provide a basis for comparison and review management options as well as forest policies and projections.

Mohamed Saket, FAO Forestry Department, presented the FAO Programme on Evaluation of Natural Resources of Forestry, which is a support system for SFM and the development of NFPs. He contended that all countries need forest inventories, which FAO supports as part of its mandate, but that the majority of developing countries do not have reliable data, and 80% of the world's forests have not been inventoried. Remote sensing has covered 77% of the land area but this is not a full inventory, he argued, because changes in forest cover do not provide evaluation of other aspects of forests such as social, economic and environmental values. To help countries with inventories, he said the Forestry Department builds teams to prepare an approach with expert advice, with the objectives of monitoring, evaluation, capacity building, harmonization of information and policy approaches. Saket said that the methodology includes: systematic sampling at both ground level and remote sensing; information from countries' forests services; harmonization with international data; multiple function analysis; capacity development of national teams; and a baseline for long-term monitoring. Each inventory costs between US\$500,000 and US\$1 million, with most at the lower end. Thus far, FAO has cooperated in making inventories in: Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Cameroon, Congo, Zambia, Kenya, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Lebanon; and future plans include Ecuador, Brazil, Sudan, Angola, nine countries in West Africa, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan and Vietnam.

Brazil described its plans for an inventory, which has already begun with participation by 16 universities and two national institutions over the past two years. He said that the methodology has been approved at the national level and is now being tested; the inventory will begin in 2008. Uruguay mentioned that visits from FAO have initiated a discussion of inventories but the government does not have resources to gather data from the field. Denmark mentioned the Australian workshop on reducing emissions from deforestation, which was held in Cairns, from 7-9 March 2007, has brought wide attention to financing inventories. In response, Holmgren said that there have been both political and technical difficulties with emissions studies, which cannot be done with remote sensing alone but require on-the-ground inventories.

Cyprus noted that there have been successful inventories in Lebanon and Cyprus but that all Near East countries need more expertise from consultants to do better work. Holmgren responded that international exchange through the inventory programme has helped spread the technology. Guatemala noted that its experience with its inventory has made it possible to cooperate with others in the region and train them for country inventories. Senegal called for FAO support for countries to share information at the subregional level and to establish networks of countries for cooperation on inventories.

Next, participants heard presentations on the Forest Resources Assessment. Aulikki Kauppila, Finland, described 20 years of expert consultations on how to assess the world's forests. She recalled 1987, 1993, 2000, 2002 and 2006 meetings in Kotka, Finland, organized by the FAO, UNECE and the Finnish government, involving 100 experts. Kauppila noted that each of the five consultations had a distinct focus: environmental change, common definitions, indicators for SFM, linking national and international efforts, and collaboration with other forest-related collaboration processes, respectively. She pointed out that the

consultations resulted in various improvements, including: harmonization of forest definitions; expansion of the scope of global assessments; linkage to thematic elements of SFM and C&I processes; increased collaboration among countries and forest-related processes; and the creation of an advisory group to the FRA.

Steven Johnson, ITTO, presented information on harmonizing international forest-related reporting. He said that UNFF requested that CPF members reduce reporting burdens; and CPF created a task force that analyzed reporting requirements of processes, identified impediments to harmonization, created a portal for country reports ([www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar](http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar)) and established a joint information framework. On FRA as a harmonization framework, he noted that FRA 2010 is structured around seven thematic elements and will provide information to assess CBD biodiversity targets. Regarding collaboration between FRA and ITTO, he noted continued ITTO reporting on tropical forest management and the possibility of a joint questionnaire and shared analytical work.

Mette Wilkie, FAO, gave a presentation on preparations for FRA 2010. She said that the assessment will follow guidance by COFO, the Kotka process and advisory groups; cover seven thematic elements of SFM; provide inputs to the CBD; include a global remote sensing survey that looks at changes in forest cover; estimate the distribution of forests and trend statistics; rely on voluntary input from countries; and contribute to capacity building in developing countries. She said that in preparing FRA 2010 the FAO will update the list of national correspondents, review draft tables and plans for the remote sensing survey, prepare guidelines, and organize regional training workshops.

**FORESTS AND WATER: NEW GENERATION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES:** Thomas Hofer, FAO, presented FAO's work, in collaboration with other key partners, on a global review titled "The new generation of watershed management programmes and projects." He informed participants that the review used the integrated approach, focusing on grassroots participation and administrative decentralization. He said that the review's process and outputs included a stocktaking exercise, review of FAO's projects, organization of regional workshops and global conferences on watershed management, and analysis and synthesis.

Pier Carlo Zingari, Director of European Observatory of Mountain Forests, noted the review used a new approach to arrive at its findings, which:

- treats underlying causes rather than symptoms;
- focuses on government capacity and institutional arrangements;
- gives importance to multi-disciplinary research, education and training;
- uses common sense as well as scientific and tested evidence;
- makes long-term planning and financing;
- involves gender balance in decision-making processes;
- considers capacity building and communication, climate change impacts and new financing mechanisms, such as payment for environmental services; and
- focuses on improving use of livelihood natural capital assets.

Thomas Hofer, FAO, said FAO would like to see the review's findings used in the field in many different continents around the world to implement recommendations, which will need to be adapted to each site. He outlined case studies in Tajikistan

and North Korea, in which FAO introduced a basic monitoring system, interdisciplinary training, involvement of all relevant actors in the planning and implementation activities; and considered long-term approach with a pilot-phase in establishing the watershed plans.

**THE INTERFACE BETWEEN FORESTS AND AGRICULTURE:** Jeffrey Tschirley, FAO Environment and Natural Resources Service, opened the session, noting FAO efforts to address the tensions between forestry and agriculture policies, and inviting country guidance to the FAO.

Wulf Killmann, Director of the FAO Forestry Department, presented an overview of the agriculture-forests interface. He discussed land use changes, forest area changes, and causes of forest degradation; noted that deforestation contributes 18% of global emissions of carbon dioxide; and said net annual loss of forest area is 7.3 million hectares. On causes of deforestation, he highlighted: economic incentives to convert forests to permanent and shifting agriculture, poverty, population pressures and infrastructure development.

Tasso Azevedo, Director of Brazil's Forest Service, gave a presentation on sustainable forest districts in Brazil. He said 85% of the Amazon is covered by forests and 15% was lost in last 20 years due to unclear land tenure, conversion of land to agriculture and cattle, unsustainable timber harvesting, and low values of forest products and services. He detailed the implementation of a 2004 action plan that includes 144 actions on land tenure, law enforcement, attributing value to forests, and strategic planning of infrastructure. As a result of these policies, he noted, the rate of deforestation was cut in half in two years and the destruction of one million hectares of forests was prevented.

Azevedo defined a sustainable forest district as a region where public policies of all sectors should take into consideration SFM as main source of socioeconomic development. He said Brazil established three districts covering 60 million hectares and listed expected impacts on timber harvesting, wood biomass production, job creation, income generation and intersectoral integration. On lessons learned, he stressed the importance of recognizing the value of forest products and services, law enforcement, and involvement at the highest political level.

Henning Steinfeld, FAO Livestock Policy Branch, discussed the role of livestock in forest and agriculture. He noted that large areas, 27% of global ice-free land is used for grazing, mostly lands unsuitable for agriculture. Pasture expansion continues in Latin America, he said, but has stopped elsewhere and is declining in OECD countries. He listed as drivers of the expansion: population growth leading to increased demand; land abundance; low land prices; and past practices of land titling. He noted that industrial livestock production, especially pigs and poultry, accounts for most of global livestock growth, and this impacts land use since one-third of arable land is used for feed crops. In Latin America, he said that 70% of deforested land is used for pastures, mostly in the Amazon Basin, and the critical policy issue is to provide feedback mechanisms on environmental damage and benefits to change practices toward sustainable agriculture. He described an FAO project on an integrated silvopastoral approach to ecosystem management in Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Colombia with GEF support, which has shown that productivity remains high in pastures with up

to 30% tree cover and that the high investment costs can be alleviated by payment for environmental services such as water, carbon and biodiversity.

Gustavo Best, FAO Senior Energy Coordinator, discussed bioenergy in the context of the agriculture-forest interface. He said that the traditional use of wood for cooking and heating is being replaced with agroindustrial uses, leading to land tenure conflicts. He described conversion technologies that vary in effectiveness, including pyrolysis, fermentation, extraction and anaerobic digestion, and said that the choice of conversion systems affects crop production, cattle raising, land speculation and infrastructure development. Conversion, he noted, can lead to deforestation and degradation because of the technology chosen, and some technology, such as small and medium gasifiers and cogeneration can reduce the impact. Future technologies such as cellulose conversion, he observed, will have less impact and reduce food-energy competition. He concluded that FAO tools, including land use planning, use of forest residues, and future introduction of second generation technologies, such as conversion of forest cellulose, can help with some of the bioenergy problems such as deforestation.

Roger Guillén, Executive Secretary of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), and Marco Gonzalez, Executive-Secretary of the Central American Commission on the Environment, discussed Central American forest policy. Guillén emphasized efforts to ensure multisectoral integration in pursuing SFM and socioeconomic development, listed joint policies on SFM, agriculture, pollution control and preservation of cultural heritage, and noted an intersectoral dialogue process since 2003 that involves agriculture, environment and health sectors.

Gonzalez listed a number of regional initiatives, including a Central American Forestry Convention and enhanced collaboration among ministries within each country. He noted that all countries in the region have created forest funds and forestry legislation, and listed cross-cutting themes, including: water resources management, forest products, climate change, sustainable agriculture and food security.

Eric Kueneman, FAO, summarized the session's conclusions, highlighting the importance to balance land uses, local and regional interests, and develop tools for assisting policy makers.

**REDUCING EMISSIONS FROM DEFORESTATION:** Wulf Killmann, FAO, said that deforestation is responsible for 18% of carbon dioxide emissions and this has been addressed in the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2005 and 2006. Susan Braatz, FAO Senior Forest Officer, presented FAO's view on reducing emissions from deforestation (RED). She said that forests play an important role in climate change, as reservoirs (holding 792 gigatons of carbon), sinks (absorbing 2.6 gigatons per year) and as sources (1.6 gigatons per year, 25% of total carbon dioxide emissions). She noted that the largest sources are land use changes in South America, Africa and Asia, and that only ten countries, led by Brazil and Indonesia, account for 60% of these land use changes. She said that UNFCCC discussions focused on financial incentives and funding instruments; and technical issues such as definitions, baselines, avoiding "leakage," availability of data, and cost of monitoring. She promoted FAO's role in preparation of FRA 2010, which will help with data collection, monitoring, national forest policy processes, capacity building and international cooperation.

Rocio Lichte, UNFCCC Secretariat, delivered a presentation on recent discussions regarding reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries. She described a two-year formal dialogue on the topic under the UNFCCC, including workshops that addressed policy approaches and positive incentives, technical and methodological requirements, and improving understanding. She said that participants in the workshops reached general agreement on a number of points, including the urgent need for early and meaningful action, capacity building, substantial, predictable and sustainable funding, and best use of experience.

On policy approaches and positive incentives, Lichte noted 21 country submissions that will be considered at a Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice meeting in May 2007. On technical requirements, she noted agreement on the existence of robust methods and tools and the need for improved data, solid monitoring and capacity building. She also outlined disagreements on ways of accounting for emissions, establishing a reference emissions rate or baseline; and the need to take non-carbon dioxide emissions into consideration.

On financing options, she noted agreement that funding should be given to demonstrable emissions reduction, and disagreements on: whether credits could be used by industrialized countries to meet their commitments; how to deal with countries with historically low deforestation rates; whether funding should be in advance or after emissions reductions; and whether it should be provided to local communities. In concluding, Lichte said that countries expect the next UNFCCC COP to produce a formal decision on emissions from deforestation.

Lars Marklund, FAO, overviewed the potential use of a mechanism on RED, and outlined RED data needs. He noted FRA 2005 is the latest and most comprehensible forest assessment available, and it is based on country reports, with more than 40 variables taken in three points in time (1990, 2000 and 2005). Marklund highlighted that: on deforestation only a few countries have real data, thus FRA 2005 presents only rough global estimates; and data is also weak in carbon stock changes, with only few countries having inventories. He noted future plans for FRA 2010, which will be based on three components: country reports, special studies in issues of specific interest, and the global remote sensing survey, which is in an advanced stage of preparation that will give estimates of deforestation. He concluded that the FRA 2010 remote sensing survey will constitute a framework for national systems to assess and monitor deforestation; and that national forest assessment will provide more data on deforestation and carbon stocks.

Giacomo Grassi, European Commission, noted that to estimate emissions from deforestation it is necessary to estimate the area deforested and the carbon stocks for such areas, comparing the baseline and accounting period. He said that possible obstacles for estimating and reporting carbon stock changes are accuracy of data, and following the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change good practice guidance. He concluded that, while many developing countries may not be able to report accurate estimates of carbon stock changes, they could report conservative estimates. This approach could help broaden the participation in a RED mechanism.

### **IN-SESSION SEMINAR: REGIONAL ACTION ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

On Wednesday afternoon, an in-session seminar, chaired by Barbara Ruis, UNEP Environmental Law Branch, was held. The seminar opened with an overview of the six regions by Arlito Cuco (Mozambique), African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC), who stated that:

- the AFWC accomplishments include updates of forest policy and legal frameworks in member countries, implementation of NFPs and increased levels of political will, but challenges remain in limited institutional capacity to implement SFM, forest loss, and human-wildlife conflict;
- the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) accomplishments include progress towards SFM, decentralization of expertise, code of practices for forest harvesting, plantation development, rehabilitation of degraded areas and local level involvement; but challenges remain in illegal logging and international funding;
- the Near East Forestry Commission (NEFC) accomplishments include: increase in forest area, integrating approaches to resources development, forest rangelands and agriculture; but challenges remain in institution reform, education, action plans to combat desertification, and accounting for the forest sector in GDP;
- the European Forestry Commission (EFC) accomplishments include strong traditions of sound forestry, civic culture, assistance to economies in transition and regional cooperation, but challenges remain in support for private forest owners, use of wood energy, and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (COFLAC) accomplishments include advancement of SMF, strengthened NFPs, and cooperation among countries; but challenges remain in the trade of forest products, forest law enforcement, financial mechanisms, and conservation of biodiversity; and
- the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) is the smallest, with only three members, and is a net importer of forest products, but faces challenges of climate change, wildfires and invasive species.

N. Tuong Van, APFC, presented APFC's approach to regional action on SFM. She identified the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network as APFC's major accomplishment. She said that APFC plans to address the challenge of strengthening policies and institutions by undertaking a number of policy studies to gather information, offering a forest policy training course, and establishing a forest policy network to assist countries in developing policy tools.

The presentation of the Middle East region was by Alexandros Christodoulou (Cyprus), NEFC Chair, who said that major accomplishments include formulation of forest policies with FAO support and finalizing forestry studies, while challenges include shortage of qualified staff and funding for SFM. He listed some actions agreed by members, including: pilot forest management projects, training, education and extension programmes, NFPs, and criteria and indicators.

Alain Chaudron (France), EFC, presented information on collaborative forestry processes in Europe. He identified three institutional bodies that serve as venues for inter-state cooperation and cooperate with each other: the MCPFE, the

FAO European Forestry Commission, and the UNECE Timber Committee. He noted joint activities between the FAO and UNECE, and listed efforts to widen future cooperation by coordinating meeting schedules and agendas and a plan to organize a joint regional event in 2008, tentatively titled the “European Week on Forestry.”

Presentation of the Latin American region was by Hector Miguel Abreu (Dominican Republic), President, COFLAC, who said that major accomplishments include a strategy for regional cooperation in fire management, and challenges include intersectoral coordination and participation of the main actors.

Sally Collins, NAFC and US Forest Service, gave a presentation on regional action on SFM in North America. She pointed out that most policy work is conducted through technical committees and working groups, and illustrated accomplishments in fire management, invasive species management and forest inventory, including the adoption of an Incident Command System for fire management that allows exchange of fire brigades and equipment.

Jorge Rodríguez Quirós, Costa Rica, described Central American cooperation. He said that countries in the region collectively seek to improve national implementation of international agreements, raise awareness of the multifunctional values of forests, and coordinate different sectors. He listed numerous regional efforts and initiatives on biodiversity, governance, livelihoods, external financing, national planning processes and legislation, food security and agricultural production systems. He stressed that countries managed to reduce the rate of deforestation by 50%, and acknowledged the bilateral help of the EU, Germany and the Netherlands.

Piotr Borkowski, MCPFE, presented on MCPFE commitments toward SFM. He said the overall goal of MCPFE is the promotion of SFM through participatory and open cooperation, and enumerated various outputs of the process, including: four ministerial declarations, 17 resolutions, a pan-European definition of SFM, qualitative and quantitative C&I for SFM and a common approach to NFP development and implementation; assessment guidelines for protected forests; and pan-European guidelines for afforestation and reforestation. On implementation, he highlighted regularly updated work programmes to facilitate implementation of ministerial commitments; inputs in international dialogues under the UNFF and CBD; reporting on SFM in Europe; and integration between science and policy.

In the ensuing discussion, Saudi Arabia said regional discussions and efforts of regional commissions should be thoroughly transparent. Several participants noted the value of establishing synergies between FAO regional commissions and the UNFF. In response to the interventions, speakers noted that there is a need for more coordination, both among sectors and at the international level.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

**CLIMATE CHANGE:** On Monday morning, delegates took part in a “Special Event on Climate Change” and heard a keynote address delivered by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, followed by interventions by Kevin Conrad, Director of the Coalition of Rainforest Nations, on forest and climate change and by Jack Saddler, University of British Columbia, Canada, on climate change impacts on agriculture and forestry.

FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf introduced President

Obasanjo and listed his contributions to food security and poverty alleviation, particularly his leadership in the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). President Obasanjo commended the FAO for its programmes on food security, forestry, fisheries and soil degradation over the past 20 years. He acknowledged that petroleum, a major export for Nigeria, contributes to climate change and called for applying science and technology to address climate problems, particularly impacts on agriculture and food security. He noted that African countries are cooperating with the European Union and the G8 to address climate change, and said that the NEPAD-CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme), in cooperation with FAO, is embraced by all African leaders.

Kevin Conrad, Coalition of Rainforest Nations, delivered a presentation on reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries. He said that one billion acres of tropical forests have been lost and that deforestation accounts for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions causing climate change. Conrad described existing negative incentives for deforestation, including promotion of loans for road construction and pressures to increase hardwood harvesting and coffee production. Stressing the interlinkages between forests, climate change, biodiversity and watershed management, Conrad called for establishing an international system of positive incentives to reduce deforestation. He lamented that the Kyoto Protocol implementation process does not credit countries that preserve their forests, stressed that the Protocol discriminates against developing countries in carbon markets and called for equal compensation for countries that reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by reducing deforestation.

Jack Saddler, University of British Columbia, Canada, highlighted the impacts of climate change on agriculture and forestry, underscoring issues related to mitigation and adaptation, and measures to be taken in order to address them. He noted that, due to climate change, transboundary pests and diseases migrate and impact agriculture productivity, species shift polewards and forest fires increase. Saddler suggested measures to address climate change in the agriculture and forestry sectors, including: promoting energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, shifting to biofuels and sequestering greenhouse gases. On adaptation, he stressed the importance of developing, *inter alia*: alternative crops, livestock, trees and fish breeding for stressed environments; agricultural production systems and practices; livestock systems; soil, land and water management; risk management and response strategies; crop yield forecasting; knowledge transfer and capacity building; and support for smallholders’ livelihoods. Saddler underscored the need to promote energy efficiency, review sustainable development measures to reduce vulnerability, and adapt agriculture and forest management to deal with climate change.

**FORUM ON FORESTS AND ENERGY:** The Monday afternoon session, “Forum on Forests and Energy,” was chaired by Hikojiro Katsuhisa, Chief of Forest Products and Forest Industry Division, FAO. Wulf Killmann, Director of the Forest Products and Industry Division, FAO, introduced the topic with an overview of bioenergy derived from wood, noting that half of all trees harvested are burned and that new technologies such as wood pellets can increase energy efficiency. Jack Saddler, University of British Columbia, described the

changes in bioenergy that improve the recovery of energy such as cogeneration, and tax incentives that promote bioenergy substitutes for petroleum. Bernard De Galembert, International Council of Forest and Paper Associations, discussed the role of forest industries in addressing climate change through SFM, recycling and the substitution of wood for more energy intensive materials such as steel and concrete. Alan Moulinier, Director General for the Forest Sector and Rural Affairs, French Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, described the low proportion of biomass energy in the total energy use of France and noted that most wood energy is used for household heating. He suggested ways for increasing efficiency, avoiding conflict and waste of resources in the forest industry, and mobilizing resources through private and public bodies.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates highlighted, *inter alia*: the importance of financial resources for implementing afforestation programmes and combating poverty in developing countries, especially in Africa; the possibility of producing fertilizers in biorefineries; the importance of using wood energy, not destroying existing industrial employment and maintaining SFM; and productivity and sustainability of wood products.

The session resumed after a break, chaired in the latter half by Wulf Killmann, FAO. Pape Koné, Senior Forestry Officer, Cairo Regional Office, FAO, discussed "Sustainable Use of Wood Fuels in Developing Countries," noting that cooking with wood fuels provides food security, and that restaurants and bars increasingly use charcoal. Jurij Begus, Slovenia Forest Service, described methodologies in "Assessing Wood Energy Demand and Supply," using mapping techniques. Michael Taylor of the Economic Analysis Division, IEA, described historical trends showing a doubling of bioenergy use between 1970 and 2000, and identified as additional sources of supply: plantations, improved forestry practices, use of agricultural byproducts and post-consumer waste. Andre Faaij of Utrecht University presented an "Outlook on Forest Energy" using modeling and scenarios based on increased food production efficiency and the use of abandoned crop lands. Gustavo Best, Vice-Chair of the UN Energy Group and Senior Officer for Energy, FAO, described the FAO programmes on bioenergy organized under the International Bioenergy Platform. Discussion focused on: the UN Economic Commission for Europe inventory survey for Europe and North America, the use of biomass to produce biogas, alternatives to deforestation, the effects of demographic growth on wood use, and using market incentives to reduce deforestation.

**NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMMES AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION:** On Monday afternoon, Rosalie McConnell, FAO, presented a current FAO study on the links between NFPs and PRSPs in seven developing countries. She said that while there is increasing recognition of the linkages between NFPs and PRSPs, there is little policy integration between the two. She said that countries that have established coordination units are better able to secure financial and political support for forestry. McConnell stressed that, *inter alia*: current PRSP implementation is sectoral rather than intersectoral; most NFPs do not attribute sufficient importance to social issues; there is no evidence that forestry increased financial resources available for PRSPs; and evaluations of the forestry sector performance ignore

forestry impacts on poverty. She said there is sharper focus on poverty reduction but forestry is not well integrated with PRSPs. McConnell stressed the role of regular monitoring and evaluation, enterprise development, participation of civil society, and communication between experts and politicians.

Ibro Adamou, Niger, discussed the role of the forestry sector in poverty reduction in Niger. He stressed the importance of forests for energy use and animal husbandry. He described recently adopted legislation including the 2002 PRSP, the 2004 Forestry Law that gives rural communities access to public forests, and a new tax system channeling revenue back into forestry projects and local communities. On lessons learned, Adamou emphasized that data is not being used sufficiently, not all forestry products are being taken into account in calculating GDP, and that the forestry contributions to poverty reduction are not being sufficiently appreciated.

Alima Issufo, Head of the Forestry Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Mozambique, reviewed forestry and poverty issues in Mozambique. She said that agriculture accounts for 80% of exports and 70% of employment. She stressed that although communities rely heavily on forests for energy consumption and income generation, it is difficult to quantify the contributions of forestry to poverty alleviation. Describing a 2003 partnership agreement between her country and the FAO NFP Facility, she said that the NFP Facility has been of great importance in supporting implementation of forest policy and legislation, involving stakeholders, and training communities to receive tax refunds.

Gregor Wolf, World Bank Programme on Forests (PROFOR), presented the Poverty-Forests Linkages Toolkit developed by PROFOR, IUCN, the Center for International Forestry Research and Winrock International. He explained that the toolkit was developed to increase understanding of, and increase capacity for, PRSP-NFP linkages, and contains appraisal methods, explanation of the PRSP process, case studies and a field manual for training local officials and collecting data. Wolf noted that: there is little documentation on the role of forests in livelihood strategies; the calculation of GDP typically underestimates forest contributions; poverty programmes are often geared to urban poor; the PRSPs tend to overlook the forest sectors; and forest specialists do not always understand PRSPs. In conclusion, he stressed that recognition of the importance of forests for PRSPs does not always translate into adequate planning strategies.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed, *inter alia*:

- quantification of countries' dependency on forest products;
- the availability of financial resources to implement concrete policy steps;
- the need to generate political will;
- rivalry in the uses of land and the importance of rural communities being organized for promoting land use and management;
- the importance of national environmental laws supporting forest development; and
- the use of the data generated by the toolkit to adjust planning and policy interventions at the local level in a broader context that takes poverty into account together with other relevant multisectoral factors related to livelihoods, people and forests.

**CLOSING PLENARY**

On Friday afternoon, FAO Forestry Director Heino opened the session thanking the Forestry Department staff for all its hard work for convening the meeting. He then invited Arlito Cuco (Mozambique), Chair of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission, to chair the closing plenary.

On the XIII World Forestry Congress, Tomas Schlichter, Argentina Forest Service, Ministry of Economics and Production, presented a video on his country and said that the meeting will be held in Buenos Aires from 18-25 October 2009, with the theme "Forests in Development: A Vital Balance" and will include issues related to biodiversity, forests for people, bioenergy, environmental benefits of forests and forest health. Canada congratulated Argentina on its hosting of the Congress and offered its help based on its experience with the 2003 Congress.

Chair Cuco then announced that COFO19 will be held in March 2009 at FAO headquarters, with dates to be determined by the FAO Council.

Hiroki Miyazono, Chair of the Drafting Committee, presented the Draft Report for adoption. Delegates discussed the report section by section. Each section was approved with no or minor amendments, apart from the agenda item on "Progressing towards Sustainable Forest Management," which was the subject of some debate, particularly with regard to UNFF's four global objectives. The US proposed language to read "help to achieve SFM, including the four global objectives..." and to delete mention of "and to achieve the global objectives" in a paragraph concerning the GEF and SFM. Brazil, supported by Cameroon, Burkina Faso and South Africa, objected, and expressed surprise that these proposals were not raised in the Drafting Committee. The US suggested as a compromise, and COFO agreed, that this paragraph be revised to use the same language as a later paragraph, reading "to improve sustainable forest management and to achieve the Global Objectives on Forests." Delegates agreed.

Canada proposed deleting references in various paragraphs to a non-legally binding agreement on all types of forests and a new MYPOW for UNFF, noting that the adoption of these two documents cannot be prejudged. The EU opposed, and offered a reference to the NLBI and MYPOW "when adopted." Canada accepted the compromise.

On a paragraph listing areas that should continue to receive attention, Norway added a reference to "developing secure tenure arrangements." On a paragraph regarding support to sustainable mountain development, Cameroon added a reference to fragile ecosystems such as mangroves. On FAO work with CPF, the US proposed adding a reference to recognizing the importance of the seven thematic elements of SFM. COFO18 delegates adopted the report with these amendments.

Jan Heino thanked all participants for offering guidance to FAO for its future work, and all members of the Steering Committee for their devoted work, and noted that COFO18 differed from previous meetings in the active participation of regional forestry commissions.

Chair Cuco thanked FAO for the new meeting format and for giving regional commissions the opportunity to co-chair sessions. He also thanked the Secretariat, interpreters and other FAO staff for their hard work, and declared the session closed at 4:32 pm.

**A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF COFO18**

The eighteenth meeting of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO18) may be recorded in the annals of history as one of its most successful forest-related meetings. The meeting was superbly organized, disciplined but broadly participatory and accommodating, richly informative and always running on time. Delegates found the massive exchange of information gratifying. The FAO, on the other hand, was pleased to receive considerable concrete guidance from delegations in crafting its future action programme. On the last day, some veteran participants described COFO18 as the most substantive forest policy meeting in years. This analysis will examine the internal dynamics of COFO18 and interpret them against the global context within which the meeting took place.

**SUBSTANCE, NOT POLITICS**

A hallmark of COFO18 was the exchange of substantive technical information, free from the political constraints and controversies characteristic of many other fora. With a large number of professional foresters in attendance, the meeting was designed to keep politics out and substance in, as demonstrated by its information intensity, with a spate of expert presentations on a broad range of subjects. The meeting also included a large number of substantive side events that were remarkably well attended. Nevertheless, not everyone was satisfied. Some noted that the range of topics at COFO was too broad and did not allow much time for in-depth discussion on any subject. Others observed that the forestry industries were under-represented, and expressed concern that the information may be reaching governments but not corporate players.

Most participants, however, were lavish in their positive remarks and many commented that the information exchange made COFO18 a most useful forum to attend. In this context, the decision four years ago to adopt a new format with heavy emphasis on side events, information sessions, in-session seminars and special sessions has brought dividends and has elevated FAO's profile in the competitive international forestry arena.

**CONTEXT VERSUS CONTENT**

The global context of this meeting was as important as its content. Participants commented that the current global political climate is particularly favorable to innovative forest policy and provides unprecedented opportunities to advance the forest policy agenda. Many noted in sessions as well as in the corridors that worldwide demand for fuelwood is increasing. Moreover, the climate change process is paying new attention to forests, and the issue of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation is a pending topic on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agenda, with a formal decision expected to emerge at the next Conference of the Parties to be held in Bali in December 2007. Many delegates enthusiastically pointed out that both of these developments create new economic incentives for sustainable forest management (SFM). COFO discussions demonstrated that the forestry community is determined to seize these fresh opportunities and their crispy optimism was palpable. Delegations from developing countries made various requests for help from FAO in estimating carbon sink capacities and linking forests to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol. Thus, the decision



to include the linkages among climate, energy and forests on the COFO18 agenda succeeded in reinforcing these lucrative synergies and capitalizing on them to promote forestry.

Another major undercurrent throughout COFO18 was the ongoing process of negotiations of a non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) on forests in the UNFF. Officially, COFO18 was not about the NLBI: the issue was not on the agenda and only a few delegations raised it in plenary discussions. Some noted that the meeting seemed to be designed as the antithesis of political negotiations, and therefore its connection to UNFF developments should not be exaggerated. At the same time, the NLBI was a major topic of conversation in the corridors. Many of the key UNFF players were in attendance and observers noted that COFO18 provided them with an opportunity for informal consultations that may pave the way for a productive UNFF7 in April. In plenary, Brazil made repeated references to the four “global objectives” on forests under the draft NLBI and called upon FAO to embrace these objectives as the main guidance for its new revised programme of work. Another delegation disagreed, arguing that there is currently no NLBI and that its adoption cannot be prejudged. This exchange was an echo of UNFF discussions but did not manage to politicize and disrupt this technical meeting.

It did become clear, however, that the relationship between UNFF and FAO is still a work in progress. As one independent observer noted, on the one hand FAO enjoys the new prominence as a leader of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), an offspring of the UNFF. On the other hand, the FAO is trying to carve its own important niche that provides it with a distinctive role as a body that is both substance-oriented and comprehensive in the scope of its field work. Preserving this identity while collaborating with other institutions will likely continue to be a fine balancing act.

### ***THE FUTURE IS UNLIKE THE PAST: PROGRAMME OF WORK***

The ongoing process of revising the FAO’s programme of work in forestry received major attention and was considered by some as the most important item on the COFO18 agenda. The reform process, mandated in the late 1990s and necessitated by UN reform and budget cuts, has to be completed by 2009 and is contingent on an independent external evaluation later this year. As a result, discussions of this item at COFO18 were only preliminary and could not produce any major decisions on a new programme of work. The meeting was merely an opportunity for FAO to receive evaluation and guidance from its member states.

There was general agreement that FAO has been efficient and effective in supporting national SFM policies and implementing international agreements on forests. Delegates gave the organization high marks for its past and current performance and offered constructive guidance on how this role can evolve in the future. As highlighted by many, the changes implemented in FAO in recent years have resulted in increased reliance on the regional commissions, with more technical staff at regional offices and more efficient use of scarce resources. The exhibitions and side events, the State of the World’s Forests 2007 (SOFO 2007) and the Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA) showed that FAO has solidified its role as a

policy-oriented body for forestry, with numerous concrete field projects and technical publications to assist countries in national implementation. COFO18 participants commended FAO for developing voluntary guidelines in several policy areas, and for establishing the National Forest Programme Facility, which some identified as the biggest FAO success in recent years and a key tool in supporting governments in their cross-sectoral national policies on SFM, law enforcement, and poverty alleviation.

Participants agreed that money is important and is likely to remain so in shaping FAO’s future action programme. COFO18 used the slogan “weaving knowledge into development,” but translation of knowledge into development programmes is resource intensive. Developing country delegations called for an increase in capacity-building programme elements, and many lamented the shortage of funding to realize this objective. Many delegations indicated concern with the reforms that reduced the number of professional positions by 10 at headquarters. The Secretariat responded that this reduction was accompanied by an addition of six positions in regional offices, an objective guided by recommendations from COFO17.

Another concern of developing countries was an overall decline in the budget. The Secretariat tried to allay these concerns, pointing out that when all other resources are included, the decline is only 1%. Still, delegates noted the heavy dependence on voluntary contributions that are not as solid as other parts of the budget, with some key programmes such as Forestry Management, Conservation and Rehabilitation dependent on voluntary contributions for more than half of their funding.

Despite concern about declining resources, delegates called for expanding the scope of FAO’s work. The final report of the meeting includes a recommendation that FAO move into climate mitigation policy by assisting countries in reducing their emissions from deforestation. Some developed countries also proposed that FAO extend the scope of its work to include water resources such as water storage and filtration.

The perennial issues of forest tenure and forest governance were also major topics during the week. Discussions highlighted the reality that property rights and community land ownership have lagged behind other reforms in forest governance. The issue of private ownership in particular received much attention, with the EU and US delegations differing on the issue of regulation by public authorities. These differences were nuances, since regulation is necessary for forest management in all systems. However, the total range of issues covered under forest governance demonstrate wide differences in management practices for forests.

### ***FORGING A NEW PATH***

In the end, COFO18 emerged with a consensus document that addressed most issues without rancor. The sessions were highly harmonious and seemed to provide delegates with more substantive discussion than at past COFO sessions. The result is a set of recommendations to FAO that is likely to enhance and broaden its future action programme to include energy, climate and water policies. The expansion of the work programme into such new areas carries some risks, but if actualized, it would project FAO’s influence even farther into the international arena.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION PROJECTS DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE CDM:**

This regional workshop is being held under the auspices of the ITTO's project on building capacity to develop and implement afforestation and reforestation projects under the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol in the tropical forestry sector. It will take place from 19-23 March 2007, in Lima, Peru. For more information, contact, ITTO Secretariat, Reforestation and Forest Management, tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: rfm@itto.or.jp; internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

**SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS:**

UNFF7 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>

**ITTC-42:** The forty-second session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Associated Sessions of the Committees will be held from 7-12 May 2007, in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. For more information, contact: ITTO Secretariat; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.or.jp; internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

**FOURTH INTERNATIONAL WILDLAND FIRE CONFERENCE:**

This Conference will be held from 14-17 May 2007, in Seville, Spain, and will provide a forum for forest fire management leaders, politicians, professional and other actors throughout the globe to discuss and work on critical fire issues affecting people, communities, resources and ecosystems in all regions. For more information, contact: Atril Congressos; tel: +34-954-226-249; fax: +34-954-221-657; e-mail: info@wildfire07.es; internet: [http://www.wildfire07.es/html/in/index\\_in.html](http://www.wildfire07.es/html/in/index_in.html)

**WORLD TRADE FAIR FOR FORESTRY AND WOOD INDUSTRIES:**

The LIGNA+ Hannover 2007: World Trade Fair for the Forestry and Wood Industries will take place from 14-18 May 2007, in Hannover, Germany. This exhibition provides a marketplace for wood and timber processing innovations, particularly for medium and small industries. For more information, contact: Anja Brokjans, tel: +49-511-89-31602; fax: +49-511-89-32631; e-mail: anja.brokjans@messe.de; internet: <http://www.ligna.de>

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:**

This conference will convene in Beijing, China, from 19-21 September 2007, and will bring producers, traders and consumers together to share experiences in promoting NTFPs in domestic and international trade. For more information, contact: ITTO Secretariat; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.or.jp; internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

**FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE:**

The Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe will convene in Warsaw, Poland, from 5-7 November 2007, and discuss the theme "Forests for Quality of Life." For more information, contact: Ministerial Conference on Protection of

Forests in Europe, Liaison Unit Warsaw; tel: +48-22-331-7031; fax: +48-22-331-7032; e-mail: liaison.unit@lu-warsaw.pl; internet: <http://www.mcpfe.org/me/me07/>

**ITTC-43:** The forty-third session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Associated Sessions of the Committees will be held from 5-10 November 2007, in Yokohama, Japan. For more information, contact: ITTO Secretariat; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.or.jp; internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

**UNFCCC COP-13 AND KYOTO PROTOCOL COP/MOP-3:** UNFCCC COP-13 and Kyoto Protocol COP/MOP-3 will take place from 3-14 December 2007, in Bali, Indonesia. These meetings will coincide with the 27th meetings of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies and other events and workshops. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; internet: <http://www.unfccc.int>

**NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY:**

The 19th biennial session of the FAO Committee on Forestry will convene at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, in March 2009. For more information, contact: Douglas Kneeland, FAO Forestry Department; tel: +39-06-5705-3925; fax: +39-06-5705-31 52; e-mail: douglas.kneeland@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/forestry>

**GLOSSARY**

C&I	Criteria and indicators
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FRA	Forest Resources Assessments
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFMC	Global Fire Monitoring Center
IEA	International Energy Agency
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
MA&D	Market analysis and development
MCPFE	Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MYPOW	Multi-Year Programme of Work
NFPs	National Forest Programmes
NLBI	Non-legally binding instrument
PROFOR	World Bank Programme on Forests
PRSP	Poverty reduction strategy paper
PWB	Programme of work and budget
RED	Reducing emissions from deforestation
RFC	Regional forestry commissions
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SMFE	Small- and medium-forest enterprise
SOFO	State of the World's Forests
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests