



UNFF-4 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 10 MAY 2004

On Monday, delegates met in working groups to begin negotiating vice-chair's draft texts. In the morning, delegates worked on social and cultural aspects of forests and enhanced cooperation. In the afternoon, delegates negotiated text on forest-related scientific knowledge (FRSK) and monitoring, assessment and reporting and criteria and indicators (MAR/C&I).

WORKING GROUP I

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF FORESTS:

Chair Xolisa Mabhongo (South Africa) invited general comments on the draft vice-chair's text on the social and cultural aspects of forests. AUSTRALIA suggested adopting language negotiated at UNFF-2, which highlights lessons learned from country experiences. The US suggested appending lessons learned and country experiences to each vice-chair's text. G-77/CHINA proposed synthesizing all preambular paragraphs into a chapeau using existing language from UNFF-3.

On mainstreaming social and cultural aspects into the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action, the EU suggested these be mainstreamed into the work of the UNFF. The US, supported by CANADA, proposed, and delegates agreed, that "mainstreaming" be replaced by "integrating."

On poverty eradication, the EU proposed replacing "eradication" with "reduction." The US proposed, and delegates agreed, to retain poverty eradication. G-77/CHINA proposed, and delegates agreed, merging this paragraph with one on national development strategies and making reference to national priorities and capacities.

On linkages between sustainable forest management (SFM) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), G-77/CHINA, opposed by the US, suggested that UNFF encourage countries to "identify," rather than "strengthen," these linkages. The EU proposed "identify and develop" as a compromise.

On benefit sharing and stakeholders' involvement, AUSTRALIA suggested addressing this in the chapeau to avoid restating the IPF/IFF proposals for action. G-77/CHINA proposed a reference to "fair and equitable" benefit sharing. The EU, opposed by the G-77/CHINA, suggested that UNFF "encourage the use of the Bonn Guidelines and the development of an international regime to promote access to forest genetic resources and benefit sharing within the framework of the CBD." NEW ZEALAND recommended distinguishing between access to genetic resources and benefits from forests goods and services.

On social impact assessments, G-77/CHINA opposed reference to methodologies, but agreed with the US and MEXICO "to invite countries to develop and apply such methodologies that take account of local situations." The EU, supported by NORWAY, and

opposed by the US, proposed adding the Akwé:Kon Guidelines. CANADA expressed concerns about how the guidelines' would be quantified.

On international support, G-77/CHINA proposed adding the enhancement of human and institutional capacity. The US proposed SFM be included in poverty reduction strategy papers. NEW ZEALAND proposed adding a reference to the private sector.

On CPF support to developing countries' initiatives, G-77/CHINA suggested that this support be provided "upon request."

FOREST-RELATED SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE:

G-77/CHINA suggested referring to the exchange of views at UNFF-4 and the status of implementation in the preamble of the vice-chair's draft text. On enhancing research capacities, AUSTRALIA, supported by the US, the EU, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and opposed by G-77/CHINA, suggested addressing this issue in a section on lessons learned. G-77/CHINA recommended strengthening linkages between science and policy "within countries' capacities." On the Collaborative Partnership on Forests' (CPF) actions, the US bracketed, and G-77/CHINA opposed, a reference to the Global Forest Information Service. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested to reflect in the vice-chair's draft the needs of countries with economies in transition (CEITs).

On forest research networks, G-77/CHINA suggested referring to sub-regional research organizations. The US proposed adding a reference to the work of International Union of Forest Research Organization's Special Programme for Developing countries. AUSTRALIA, opposed by several delegates, said that the paragraphs on research networks and stakeholder involvement in research, are already contained within the IPF/IFF proposals for action and suggested changing their wording and appending them to the draft text as lessons learned. On international organizations' promotion of research, G-77/CHINA proposed referring to "multi-disciplinary," rather than "cross-sectoral," research. The US proposed a paragraph asking the Food and Agriculture Organization and PROFOR to promote the integration of FRSK in national programmes. On the exchange of scientists, G-77/CHINA proposed the deletion of a paragraph on exchange of scientists. The US proposed encouraging partnerships of private and public forest owners and managers and local and indigenous communities in the development of national research programmes, and added a paragraph on communicating research results to relevant stakeholders. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION warned that the vice-chair's draft text might narrow the definition of research compared to the broader definition in the IPF/IFF proposals for action. G-77/CHINA proposed merging the paragraphs on stakeholder involvement and the needs of end users. Several delegates called for the involvement of local and indigenous communities.

The EU, supported by several countries, and opposed by G-77/CHINA, suggested deleting paragraphs on enhancing research capacities and support for forest-related research, noting



their similarities with the relevant IPF/IFF proposals for actions. G-77/China, supported by the US and CANADA, suggested merging paragraphs on support for forest-related research and capacity-building. CANADA recommended that this support be provided when developing countries prioritize forest-related research. NEW ZEALAND added text on promoting the role of private sector investment. G-77/CHINA recommended that countries identify linkages between forestry education and research "within their capacities."

On research priorities, CANADA, with the US, AUSTRALIA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, suggested referring to national mechanisms for priority setting. The EU suggested that UNFF encourage enhancing research on forest-related policy in the context of the review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests. G-77/CHINA suggested alternative text to encourage the CPF to provide information, as requested, on scientific and technical aspects of SFM.

WORKING GROUP II

ENHANCED COOPERATION: Delegates discussed a vice-chair's draft text on enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination. Noting the need to avoid duplicating the IPF/IFF proposals for action, AUSTRALIA, with G-77/CHINA, SWITZERLAND and NIGERIA, suggested using preambular text adopted at UNFF-3. The EU, supported by NEW ZEALAND and CANADA, proposed a preambular reference to a Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) decision on SFM as a means of implementing the ecosystem approach.

Regarding cooperation with regional organizations, AUSTRALIA, supported by NEW ZEALAND, and opposed by NIGERIA, PERU, MEXICO and SWITZERLAND, proposed listing particular regional bodies. CANADA, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, stressed cooperation between UNFF and regional organizations and not among regional bodies.

The US proposed adding an appendix summarizing country experiences. NEW ZEALAND suggested creating a country experience register on the UNFF website.

Regarding operational paragraphs, AUSTRALIA, supported by G-77/CHINA, proposed language in several paragraphs stressing progress already achieved in enhancing cooperation. G-77/CHINA suggested reaffirming the importance of cooperation on finance and technology transfer for developing countries, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed adding CEITs.

The US proposed adding that the "UNFF encourage countries to foster a secure and predictable legal and institutional context that will promote private sector investment in SFM."

CANADA proposed inviting the Rio convention Secretariats to inform UNFF-5 of their planned forest-related joint activities. On collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), G-77/CHINA and NEW ZEALAND suggested inviting the GEF Council to give "special" consideration to financing SFM projects.

On a proposed UNFF-5 ministerial declaration, the EU, supported by NORWAY, suggested that the Secretariat prepare the message. On linkages between forests and the MDGs, G-77/CHINA proposed requesting that the Secretariat identify the linkages between forests and MDGs in a report to UNFF-5.

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AND CRITERIA AND INDICATORS: Chair Stephanie Caswell (US) invited delegations to continue with their opening statements. Several delegations emphasized synergies with other conventions and processes. SWITZERLAND suggested strengthening references to using C&I. FINLAND emphasized that C&I are not only a means for MAR, but also a tool for forest policy formulation. CANADA highlighted the C&I-related work under the Montreal Process and, with CHILE, called for reflecting the role of forests in carbon absorption and soil and water protection. MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE shared its experience in developing a pan-European set of C&I for SFM.

The working group then considered the vice-chair's draft text on MAR/C&I for SFM.

Calling for an action-oriented resolution, G-77/CHINA proposed deleting preambular paragraphs recognizing the connection between MAR and C&I, and welcomed CPF work on the streamlining of reporting. The EU, CANADA and the US opposed this and the paragraphs were retained. NEW ZEALAND, opposed by the EU and G-77/CHINA, suggested stating that MAR is critically dependent on C&I. The EU proposed recognizing that C&I have contributed to a "better" instead of "common" understanding of SFM. The US suggested welcoming continued MAR progress achieved through the implementation of C&I. CHILE said there is no empirical data proving success in C&I implementation.

On assistance to developing countries and CEITs in MAR and C&I, G-77/CHINA introduced language stressing countries' national priorities and conditions. NORWAY, with G-77/CHINA, suggested highlighting the GEF's Operational Program on Sustainable Land Management within a general section on enhanced cooperation, while the US preferred keeping the reference in a separate paragraph.

On including forests in poverty reduction strategies, the EU proposed references to 'sustainable' development plans and enhancing the link between forestry, the MDGs and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. G-77/CHINA opposed and offered "national development plans where they exist." Opposing the EU's proposal, CANADA insisted on retaining a reference to the inclusion of forests in poverty reduction strategies as a means of enhancing opportunities for financing. He stressed that reversing the current decline in forest-related official development assistance requires that recipient countries first prioritize forests at the national level.

Delegates discussed wording proposed by the US on the participation of other stakeholders at regional, national and sub-national levels in the development and implementation of C&I. Delegates also debated whether to refer to the seven elements of SFM as thematic elements, criteria or something else. G-77/CHINA suggested taking note of the seven thematic elements instead of endorsing them.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates from one negotiating bloc were occupied in coordination meetings for much of the day, forging their positions on various draft resolutions, which resulted in long delays to the formal deliberations. Some delegates said they were slightly frustrated by these delays given that time for negotiating the draft texts was slowly running out. In the meantime, corridor discussions on the REIAF continued, which led some to speculate that breakthroughs would be reached by week's end. Meanwhile, some major groups were resisting efforts by the Secretariat to format the summary of the multi-stakeholder dialogue as a consensus paper. They were also ringing the alarm bell that draft texts currently under negotiation only deal with monitoring the state of forests, rather than progress in implementation, even though implementation has been a main area of concern for most at UNFF-4.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Delegates will meet in Salle XVIII from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm to hear lessons learned and country experiences with an emphasis on small island developing states.

WORKING GROUP I: Delegates will convene in Salle XVIII from 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm to continue work on the *ad hoc* expert group on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

WORKING GROUP II: Delegates will convene in Salle XVII from 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm to continue work on the review process.