



## UNFF-5 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 23 MAY 2005

On Monday, delegates met in working groups and in a contact group. Working Group I met in morning and afternoon sessions to negotiate the Chair's draft decision on the international arrangement on forests (IAF). A contact group met in the morning to work on goals and means of implementation. Working Group II (WGII) convened in the afternoon to continue this discussion and to negotiate the draft ministerial declaration.

### WORKING GROUP I

SWITZERLAND added a preambular paragraph on strengthening the regional approach. The US proposed a paragraph reaffirming the relevance of the Johannesburg Declaration and the Forest Principles, as well as references to the importance of forests to "social and economic well-being" rather than "livelihoods," the role of the CPF "at the center of the IAF," and the importance of a high-level body on forests, subsidiary to ECOSOC.

JAPAN preferred a reference to "illegal logging and associated trade" instead of "trade from illegal logging." CAMBODIA added a reference to forest land encroachment as a cause of deforestation.

On the preamble, INDONESIA, IRAN, and PERU supported the US's proposal to refer to ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 that established the IAF. MOROCCO, supported by SYRIA, IRAN, INDONESIA and CUBA, added text emphasizing the importance of economic growth and achievement of MDGs for the conservation, management and sustainable development of all types of forests. SYRIA, supported by SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN and INDONESIA, suggested text referring to the special requirements of low forest cover countries (LFCCs).

The US proposed language on strengthening the IAF through existing resources and voluntary contributions, and establishing a regional approach to improve the linkage between high-level dialogue and implementation.

On enhanced cooperation, the US recommended text on enhancing forests' contributions to internationally agreed development goals and encouraging cross-sectoral linkages.

On working modalities, SWITZERLAND suggested a two-year work cycle with regional meetings in the first year and a one-week global meeting in the second. He suggested regional meetings be hosted by the UN Regional Economic Commissions and the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions, and should, *inter alia*: address issues identified by the multi-year programme of work (MYPOW); be open to CPF members and other groups; report to global UNFF meetings; and be financed through the regular UN budget. The US called for the CPF to provide analysis of global trends, gaps and policy implications drawn from country reports to the CPF, and that the MYPOW be organized by the seven thematic elements for SFM. He preferred a "revised" instead of "focused" mandate for the Secretariat, while INDONESIA preferred a "function."

On regional processes, the EU said the IAF structure should be discussed once the policy is decided.

The US added a paragraph urging countries to give the CPF a mandate to develop joint action plans, and inviting the World Bank and FAO to establish, and countries to contribute to, a seed fund to support collaborative projects among CPF member organizations. He listed a number of criteria for awarding seed funding, including that: CPF organizations provide matching funds; projects focus on capacity building and implementation, "with a smaller proportion on policy issues;" and projects benefit three or more countries.

On a voluntary code, the US said the code should consist of the substance of UNFF-5 outcomes, and offered text recognizing paragraphs of the UNFF-5 resolution as the substantive elements of a voluntary SFM code to serve as a statement of commitment, through actions in each country contributing to the achievement of the IAF strategic objectives.

BRAZIL, supported by INDONESIA and PERU, added text expressing concerns about lack of financial resources and technological capacities necessary for implementation, and recognizing the need to highlight the contributions of forests and their economic value to national, regional and international economies.

SWITZERLAND, supported by GUATEMALA, suggested text promoting the active participation of indigenous people, women and other forest-dependent groups in policy making and implementation.

Regarding civil society, the EU suggested using standard language from the Millennium Declaration. On means of implementation, BRAZIL and GUATEMALA proposed language on enhancing country capacity to increase products from sustainably managed forests. BRAZIL preferred "provide" instead of "mobilize" financial and technical resources.

IRAN, supported by SAUDI ARABIA, stressed rehabilitation and conservation in LFCCs, and proposed inviting the CPF to strengthen the Tehran Process.

On enhanced cooperation, INDONESIA, with IRAN, supported language on coordination among multilateral environmental agreements with the UNFF acting as the key intergovernmental mechanism, and opposed listing specific conventions. BRAZIL advanced text on promoting research through a network of established institutions, establishing a clearinghouse mechanism for information sharing on national experiences, and facilitating developing country access to SFM technology. CHINA preferred to "help" instead of "urge" countries to promote collaboration in implementing national forest programmes.

Regarding regional meetings, INDONESIA, with CHINA, said the Forum should ensure the full and effective participation of developing countries. BRAZIL, with INDIA, proposed deleting a paragraph on third party assessments, peer reviews and independent evaluations. On monitoring, assessment and reporting, CHINA proposed inviting the CPF to coordinate existing processes.

**CONTACT GROUP**

Regarding goals, the EU, supported by SWITZERLAND, MEXICO, NORWAY and CANADA, called for measurable and time-bound targets that take into consideration language developed in other fora. The US questioned the benefit of including IAF objectives already mentioned by ECOSOC resolution 2000/35, and opposed numerical "component targets."

SWITZERLAND requested goals on forest cover and quality, and on establishing the relevance of forests and sustainable development. CANADA requested specific mention of decreasing deforestation and increasing afforestation. AUSTRALIA, supported by NEW ZEALAND, suggested that global goals be general, while specific national targets be developed at the discretion of countries.

On means of implementation, the US noted the absence of CPF members from the discussion.

The US proposed "to secure high-level political commitment and support" in chapeau language on improving means of implementation, and proposed deleting language on a holistic approach to local and traditional technologies. She supported the EU's proposal to specify "in order to achieve SFM."

On integrating NFPs into national sustainable development strategies, the US proposed incorporating them into "economic development strategies," while CANADA preferred "national planning strategies," including poverty reduction strategies, "where appropriate."

On voluntary contributions to achieve IAF objectives, the US proposed "urging," and the EU suggested "inviting" countries to do so.

SWITZERLAND proposed deleting a paragraph on creating a global forest fund, while the G-77/CHINA preferred basing it on new and additional financial "resources on a voluntary basis" rather than "commitments."

The EU proposed language on, *inter alia*, fostering partnerships between rural communities and the private sector and removing tenure restrictions that limit community access to assets and markets. MEXICO, NORWAY and CANADA questioned the need for a reference to tenure reform. On partnerships, the US requested the addition of "non-governmental organizations."

On a proposed new Global Environment Facility (GEF) operational programme on forests, the G-77/CHINA stated that such a fund should not prejudice other GEF operational programmes. The US proposed alternative wording to "respect the GEF's mandate." The EU proposed paragraphs emphasizing the importance of NFP activities.

On promoting international cooperation, the G-77/CHINA proposed moving language on "reversing the decline in ODA" for forest-related activities to the top of a list of actions for integrating NFPs into national strategies, and adding "and triangular cooperation" to language on South-South cooperation.

On creating an enabling environment for the private sector, the US added "for SFM." The EU specified "for responsible national and international private sector investment" and, opposed by the US, MEXICO and AUSTRALIA, proposed "fully respecting the rights to land and resources by indigenous people and other forest-dependent people."

NORWAY proposed text on creating an enabling environment for involving communities and forest users in SFM. The G-77/CHINA proposed "inviting international and regional financial and development institutions to channel additional resources to developing countries to finance SFM," and "enhancing the capacity of countries to significantly increase the production of forest products from sustainably managed resources."

On generating revenue through payments for forest environmental services, CANADA added that this should apply to forests that are "sustainably managed."

The US proposed deleting language on protection and use of traditional knowledge and inserting text on promoting improved forest practices through strengthening SFM standards and utilizing the UNFF regional processes as a venue for: presenting country experiences in NFP implementation; inviting the CPF and bilateral donors to examine opportunities for funding projects and programmes; and examining patterns in implementation experiences, including gaps, opportunities, and needs.

SWITZERLAND proposed funding CPF work through, for example, creation of PROFOR or NFP Facility windows.

**WORKING GROUP II**

On goals, the EU, supported by the US, proposed language referring to objectives set out in ECOSOC resolution 2000/35. The US said that a paragraph on maintaining forest cover, resources and quality is redundant as its intent is captured by the goals themselves.

The US, supported by INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA and INDIA, and opposed by the EU, SWITZERLAND, MEXICO, CANADA, and NORWAY, proposed the removal of any mention of targets, and proposed a goal to "reverse deforestation" be replaced by "decrease significantly forest degradation, and enhance forest health."

INDONESIA, supported by INDIA, proposed the removal of target dates, while the US suggested a "possibility of a review" in 2015. SWITZERLAND, supported by MEXICO, reiterated the need to go beyond general goals, while the US reiterated that progress should be measured voluntarily at the national level.

CANADA reiterated his call to include language on decreasing forest degradation, and said relevant supporting information exists. SWITZERLAND, supported by ARGENTINA, specified that it is the current rate of deforestation that needs to be halved. While the US stressed the importance of differentiating goals from targets, SYRIA and MOROCCO stated that these are the same word in Arabic.

On enhancing forests' contribution to achieving international development goals, the US, with INDIA, preferred "goals contained in the Millennium Declaration on poverty eradication and environmental sustainability" over "MDGs." Supported by SWITZERLAND, she suggested deleting a target to reduce by half the forest-dependent people in extreme poverty by 2015. SWITZERLAND preferred "improving the livelihood of forest-dependent people, measured as a reduction of the number living in extreme poverty, including through clarification of forest tenure, use, and access rights."

On increasing forests under effective sustainable management, the US, with ARGENTINA, preferred increasing "significantly," with significance defined by individual countries' actions. The EU preferred increasing "the area of" forests. The US, with AUSTRALIA, but opposed by MEXICO and INDONESIA, proposed adding "the production of forest products, including for export, from sustainably managed forests." Supported by INDONESIA and AUSTRALIA, but opposed by CANADA, she also added "legally-harvested forests." The EU, ARGENTINA and MEXICO, opposed by INDONESIA, favored adding "by 2015."

SWITZERLAND, supported by MEXICO, COSTA RICA, NEW ZEALAND, the EU and MOROCCO, but opposed by BRAZIL, INDIA and INDONESIA, preferred quantifiable, measurable targets. NEW ZEALAND stressed realistic targets, and the US favored national targets. MEXICO favored language on doubling the area of forests under sustainable management. The US warned against lengthy negotiations on targets.

BRAZIL, with the US, favored "objectives," either "strategic" or "over-arching." The US noted that referring to objectives as over-arching differentiates them from other objectives.

SYRIA and MOROCCO, opposed by the US, the EU and AUSTRALIA, proposed additional goals on LFCCs and increased funding. The US proposed language calling for an assessment of progress made by countries and the international community in 2015.

After concluding the discussion on goals, the Chair proposed discussing the ministerial declaration, but delegates stated that this would be premature, and WGII was adjourned early at 5:45pm.

**IN THE CORRIDORS**

In light of continuing entrenchment of positions on targets and timetables, some delegates speculated that this might become the key issue needing resolution this week. So far positions have not wavered, but it is assumed by some that any compromise reached will have to move away from time-bound targets. Some have speculated, however, that a failure to include time-limited targets might cause some countries to abandon the UNFF/IAF process.