



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## HIGHLIGHTS FROM IPF-3 WEDNESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 1996

Working Groups I and II met in morning and afternoon sessions on the eighth day of the third session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. Working Group I considered revised text on programme elements III.2 (criteria and indicators) and I.2 (underlying causes of deforestation). Working Group II considered draft text on programme elements I.4 (desertification and air-borne pollution) and I.5 (countries with low forest cover). A joint Working Group session was convened in the afternoon to discuss the organization of work for the remainder of IPF-3 and the report of the meeting.

### WORKING GROUP I

Working Group I continued discussion on programme element III.2 (criteria and indicators). The G-77/CHINA called for: criteria that reflect components of SFM; a global set of C&I; and contributions from donor countries and multilateral organizations for the development and implementation of C&I. He encouraged the application of nationally agreed C&I in connection with voluntary codes. GABON, citing the Rio Declaration and Forest Principles, stated the need for the international community to mobilize the financial resources and technology required for C&I formulation and SFM in developing countries.

On programme element I.2 (underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation), the G-77/CHINA, supported by COLOMBIA, suggested language emphasizing production and consumption patterns, non-market values of forest goods and services, studies on historical causes of deforestation and forest degradation (D&FD), and "discriminatory" international trade "practices". He proposed language from the Forest Principles for "management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests" for several locations in the text. The US proposed language on sustainable management of forests rather than their use and/or sustainable development and added "other relevant policy frameworks" to a section referring to NFPs. He called for further study of the conclusions from a recent Norwegian conference on consumption and production patterns as underlying causes of D&FD, and said countries should "consider" rather than "prepare" corrective action on D&FD. Supported by JAPAN and CANADA, he said a reference to environmental impact assessments should be included as an example of mechanisms to improve policy formulation and coordination rather than as a separate point..

The EU deleted a statement that poverty and consumption patterns have a major influence on deforestation and urged governments, "where relevant," to prepare strategic studies of the implications of "current" consumption and production patterns for forests. She called for action on "the promotion of open and participatory programs for the implementation of NFPs, taking into account D&FD" rather than on the formulation and application of national strategies. She also emphasized language on: the "formulation of mechanisms aimed at the equitable sharing of benefits from the forests;" policies for securing land tenure for indigenous peoples and local communities; and prompt government action when direct or indirect causes have been identified. She proposed deleting language stating that diagnostic frameworks should not be used as a basis for ODA conditionality.

COLOMBIA proposed language acknowledging the need for an international meeting to discuss the underlying causes of D&FD and urging countries to fund such a seminar. Environmental NGOs called for such a conference to be held before IPF-4. NEW ZEALAND, for AUSTRALIA, CHILE, CHINA, SOUTH AFRICA and UGANDA, noted the role of plantation forests as an important element of SFM by taking pressure off natural forests, and added language emphasizing the need for countries to actually use the diagnostic framework as an analytical tool in assessing options for utilization of forests and forest lands. JAPAN proposed deleting language on the need to appraise benefits and disbenefits of different types of forests under different conditions and on giving attention to terms of trade, discriminatory trade practices and unsustainable policies related to sectors such as agriculture and energy. He added language supporting conversion of plantation forests. He emphasized "securing" rather than "assessing" the quantity and quality of forest. INDIA highlighted the need for consistency in referring to "deforestation and forest degradation."

NORWAY supported language for plantations provided they meet social, economic and environmental conditions including conservation of biodiversity. He called for strengthening intersectoral decision-making and institutions for resource management. TURKEY added that the provision of timely and accurate information on underlying causes of D&FD is essential for public understanding and informed decision-making. Environmental NGOs called for "sustainable" rather than "economic" development, recognition of land tenure patterns' influence on deforestation, and donor assistance to LDCs for conducting strategic analysis of policies contributing to D&FD. CANADA called for all countries to undertake research, technology transfer, case studies using the diagnostic framework

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*© <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Chad Carpenter, LL.M. <chadc@iisd.org>, Deborah Davenport <ddavensp@unix.cc.emory.edu>, Emily Gardner <egardner@hawaii.edu>, and Kira Schmidt <kiras@iisd.org>. The Managing Editor is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The sustaining donors of the *Bulletin* are the International Institute for Sustainable Development <iisd@web.apc.org>, the Dutch Ministry for Development Cooperation and the Pew Charitable Trusts. General support for the *Bulletin* for 1996 is provided by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the United Kingdom, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Swedish Ministry of Environment, the Swiss Federal Office of the Environment, the Ministry of the Environment of Iceland, the Ministry of Environment of Norway and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. Specific funding for this volume is provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Natural Resources Canada and the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association. The authors can be contacted at their electronic mail addresses or at tel: +1-212-644-0204; fax: +1-212-644-0206. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are automatically sent to e-mail distribution lists (ASCII and PDF format) and can be found on the gopher at <gopher.igc.apc.org> and in hypertext through the *Linkages* WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/> on the Internet.

and capacity-building activities for an integrated approach. He added that international organizations and developed countries should assist countries with economies in transition as well as developing countries in strategic analysis.

### **WORKING GROUP II**

Delegates discussed the draft text on programme element I.4 (desertification and air-borne pollution). On conclusions on desertification and drought, the US suggested deleting "in accordance with the IPF's mandate, the Forest Principles and Agenda 21" in a paragraph on coordinated international cooperation on forests. The G-77/CHINA proposed including a reference to the CBD in this paragraph. He recommended adding language regarding the positive and cost-effective results from plantations of fast-growth trees in terms of soil protection, and adding a new subparagraph on the use of protected areas as an *in-situ* conservation strategy for fragile and endangered ecosystems affected by drought and desertification. The EU proposed that forest-related action to combat desertification "should be determined in the context of NFPs." He suggested deleting the reference to the Committee on Science and Technology of the Convention to Combat Desertification as the proposed body to strengthen research on restoration and rehabilitation.

On conclusions on air-borne pollution, the EU called for new language highlighting the important role of education, training and extension systems aimed at specific groups.

On proposals for action on desertification and drought, the US emphasized the need to avoid duplication with the CCD. Supported by JAPAN and the G-77/CHINA, he proposed deleting the reference to long-term institutional and legal arrangements in a proposal for strengthening partnerships. He recommended a new proposal inviting the Committee on Science and Technology of the CCD to undertake the identification of appropriate tree species for arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid land restoration, rehabilitation of existing vegetation types, and the potential for non-timber products. The *AD HOC* NGO FOREST WORKING GROUP recommended a new proposal on support for participatory research in resource management with indigenous people and local communities. The EU proposed inserting "institutional and land tenure reform" in a proposal on forest-related analysis and monitoring. He proposed adding language on: coordination and harmonization of national forest and land use plans at the regional level; and consideration of dry land issues in NFPs and promotion of stakeholder education and training in dry lands management. The G-77/CHINA suggested a new proposal for action to promote protected areas where ecosystems in arid and semi-arid regions still exist, including preservation of water resources and traditional and historical uses.

On proposals for action on air-borne pollution, TURKEY recommended a new proposal to promote technical cooperation, including information exchange and technical assistance, to encourage capacity building in research. The US recommended adding a new proposal for further work under existing monitoring systems on ways to assess and monitor national level C&I for SFM to air-borne pollutants. The EU proposed deleting a reference to field data collection. JAPAN, supported by the G-77/CHINA, proposed making the reference to monitoring programmes more general rather than specifying only those of the EU and ECE. The G-77/CHINA proposed deleting a proposal to incorporate reduction of air pollution into national sustainable development strategies and a proposal encouraging regions to enter into binding agreements to reduce the impact of air-borne pollutants.

On programme element I.5 (countries with low forest cover), the US noted that some proposals on NFPs are covered under other programme elements and, with JAPAN, proposed deleting

paragraphs on permanent forest estates, non-wood substitutes and Forest Partnership Agreements. He also proposed a reference to "other policy frameworks." With the EU, he proposed noting that ODA is "an" important source of funding, rather than "the most" important source. The EU also called for liaison with activities under the framework of the CBD, use of the NFP concept and retention of natural species where appropriate. *AD HOC* NGO FOREST WORKING GROUP said special care should be given to avoid replacing natural species with large scale tree plantations.

The G-77/CHINA proposed language emphasizing: natural regeneration of degraded areas through involving indigenous people in management; national and international protective mechanisms; and, precise identification for countries categorized as having low forest cover. He urged assistance for developing countries in order to increase their forest cover through technology transfer and to gather and analyze data. UKRAINE called for references to countries with economies in transition.

### **JOINT WORKING GROUP SESSION**

A joint working group session met at 4:40 pm to discuss the schedule of work for the remainder of IPF-3 and the report of the meeting. The Chair proposed that the report from IPF-3 the reflect positions of all countries and include bracketed text without attribution. The final report will consist of a general introduction on the meeting, the results on the programme elements and items to be considered at IPF-4, and organizational aspects. The Chair proposed a joint working group session on Thursday to discuss programme elements V.1 (international organizations and multilateral institutions) and V.2 (legal mechanisms) and presentation of the results would be on Friday. There would be no afternoon session on Thursday in order to allow delegations additional time to consider the draft texts.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS I**

Some participants are speculating on the need for an intersessional IPF Bureau meeting sometime after IPF-3 in order to work on draft text for IPF-4's report to the CSD. One delegate said that while an open-ended meeting would allow all interested countries to participate, any effort to work out textual changes requires as small an assembly as possible. An observer noted that if regional groups can consolidate positions it may mean that not all countries will feel a need to be represented. Another expressed skepticism that regional groups could find common ground by Friday.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS II**

Delegates have commented on the lack of timely translation of documents and its effect on the negotiations. Several delegates cite this as a primary cause for delays in progress. Some participants have noted that if documents can only be produced in one language, it might be interesting if they were in a UN working language other than English, which might encourage some English-speaking countries to make sure dues are paid so as to provide for translation.

## **THINGS TO LOOK FOR**

**Joint Working Group Session:** A joint Working Group session will convene at 11:00 am in Room XIX to consider programme elements V.1 (international organizations and multilateral institutions) and V.2 (legal mechanisms).

**XI World Forestry Congress:** A meeting on the XI World Forestry Congress, scheduled for 13-22 October 1997 in Antalya, Turkey, will be held in Room XXVII at 2:00 pm.