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SUMMARY OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON FORESTS: 31 JANUARY – 11 FEBRUARY 2000

The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF-4) convened from 31 January to 11 February 2000 at UN Headquarters in New York. At this final session of the Forum, delegates had before them the task of finalizing conclusions and proposals for action to be submitted to the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which will be held in April 2000. The programme elements discussed at IFF-4 included: promoting and facilitating implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests' (IPF) proposals for action; monitoring progress in implementation of the IPF proposals; the need for financial resources; trade and environment; transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs) to support sustainable forest management (SFM); issues needing further clarification; and international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The issues needing further clarification were: underlying causes of deforestation; traditional forest-related knowledge; forest conservation and protected areas; forest research; valuation of forest goods and services; economic instruments; future supply of and demand for wood and non-wood forest products; and assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation of forest cover in environmentally critical areas.

In the end, the IFF succeeded in producing conclusions and proposals for action on all programme elements. Despite long hours spent trying to reconcile opposing positions on whether a legally binding instrument should constitute part of an international arrangement on forests, at 6:00 am on Saturday, 12 February 2000, delegates agreed on a proposal that will be forwarded to CSD-8 for consideration.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE IFF

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS: The UN Commission on Sustainable Development's (CSD) open-ended *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) was established in 1995 to pursue consensus and coordinated proposals for action to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The IPF focused on 12 programme elements under five chapter headings: implementation of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) forest-related decisions; international cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer; research, assessment and development of criteria and indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management (SFM); trade and environment; and international organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments. Its objective was to submit final conclusions and policy recommendations to the CSD at its fifth session (CSD-5) in April 1997.

The IPF met four times between 1995-1997 and adopted a final report at its fourth session in February 1997, which it submitted to CSD-5. The report contained approximately 140 proposals for action under its 12 programme elements, including a call for continued intergovernmental forest policy dialogue. However, IPF delegates could not agree on a few major issues such as financial assistance and trade-related matters, or whether to begin negotiations on a global forest convention. On these and other elements, the IPF forwarded a range of options to the CSD in its report. CSD-5 adopted the IPF's report and forwarded a set of recommendations to the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) to conduct an overall review and appraisal of progress in implementing the UNCED agreements.

UNGASS: The UN General Assembly, at its nineteenth special session in June 1997, decided to continue the intergovernmental policy dialogue on forests through the establishment of an *ad hoc* open-ended Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), under the aegis of the CSD. In addition, the General Assembly decided, "the Forum should also identify the possible elements of and work towards consensus on international arrangements and mechanisms, for example, a legally-binding instrument."

IN THIS ISSUE

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IFF-1: The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), through resolution 1997/65, established the IFF with a mandate to report on its programme of work to the CSD at its eighth session in 2000. The IFF held its organizational session (IFF-1) from 1-3 October 1997, in New York. Delegates agreed on the IFF's programme of work, the schedule and allocation of programme elements for discussion at future sessions, the number, date and venue of future sessions, participation, and the organization of intersessional meetings or consultations.

IFF-2: Delegates to the second session of the IFF (IFF-2), held from 24 August - 4 September 1998, in Geneva, prepared draft conclusions and proposals for action on promoting and facilitating implementation and addressing certain matters left pending from the IPF. Delegates conducted substantive discussions on: promoting and facilitating implementation of the IPF's proposals for action; forest-related work of international and regional organizations and existing instruments; trade and environment; and transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs). Text on trade and environment and transfer of ESTs remained heavily bracketed. IFF-2 also conducted background discussion on monitoring progress in implementation of the IPF's proposals for action, the need for financial resources, issues needing further clarification and international arrangements and mechanisms.

IFF-3: At the third session of the IFF (IFF-3), delegates conducted substantive discussion on monitoring progress in implementation of the IPF's proposals for action, financial resources, issues needing further clarification, and international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Substantive discussions initiated at IFF-2 continued on trade and environment and transfer of ESTs. IFF-3 adopted Co-Chairs' reports and compilation texts containing draft conclusions and proposals for action on these programme elements.

REPORT OF IFF-4

On Monday, 31 January 2000, IFF Co-Chair Bagher Asadi (Iran) opened IFF-4 and welcomed delegates to New York. He introduced, and delegates adopted, the provisional agenda (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/1). David Harcharik, Chair of the Interagency Task Force on Forests (ITFF), said policy dialogue must have clear objectives, and supported building on and strengthening existing institutions. He also urged maximizing use of existing financial resources. Regarding implementation, he emphasized the need for concrete actions for implementing recommendations, and said money is the best measure of commitment. UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer said that forests could no longer be considered as a factory for timber since they are important for conservation and the protection of the environment. He highlighted the importance of forests and wooded land for water management, biodiversity conservation, and breaking the vicious cycle of poverty associated with deforestation and drought.

UN Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette noted the IFF process had created scientific and political momentum and given incentives to improve national policies. She called for more aggressive treatment of forest issues and said any future arrangement must ensure wide participation, and an open, transparent and inclusive process to promote synergies among the many institutions involved in forest issues.

UNDP Assistant Administrator Emi Watanabe underscored the importance attached to the sustainable management of forests, which relates directly to the alleviation of poverty. Juan Mayr, Colombian Minister of Environment and CSD-8 Chair, assured delegates that focusing on consensus areas could lead to good results.

Portugal, on behalf of the European Union (EU), underscored the need to send a clear message to CSD-8 and noted broad support for institutionalizing an international forest policy dialogue. He said sustainable forest management (SFM) should be self-sustaining in the long run and encouraged public-private partnerships. He noted that while the EU has supported negotiating a legally binding instrument (LBI), it remains open to other proposals.

Cuba noted progress on technical aspects of forests thus far, but expressed concern over the lack of consensus on political elements. Canada expressed support for an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) toward a forest convention and said the Costa Rica-Canada Initiative identified elements and functions critical to SFM. Iran said that since UNCED the concerns of low forest cover countries (LFCCs) have been inadequately addressed and called for international partnerships to assist LFCCs rehabilitate and restore degraded forests and woodlands.

Zambia, on behalf of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, noted that African countries do not support a LBI without a viable financial mechanism and prefer improved coordination of existing arrangements and a new permanent intergovernmental forum for forest policy deliberations. Brazil noted that the Forest Principles constitute the most comprehensive instrument on forests and underscored the lack of consensus on a LBI.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Co-Chair Asadi announced the election of officers: Co-Chairs Asadi (Iran) and Ilkka Ristimäki (Finland), and Vice-Chairs Yevgeny Kuzmichev (Russian Federation), Claude Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire), and Andrea Alban (Colombia), who also served as Rapporteur.

Following the opening plenary session, delegates reconvened the two working groups established at IFF-2, with the purpose of reaching consensus on all matters left pending in the report of IFF-3, (E/CN.17/IFF/1999/25). Working Group 1 was chaired by Asadi and met throughout the week to finalize matters left pending at IFF-2 and IFF-3, with special attention to underlying causes, traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK), forest conservation and protected areas and forest research. Working Group 2, chaired by Ristimäki, established contact groups on EST transfer, trade and environment, and finance, which began their work on Wednesday, 2 February. Delegates convened in three plenary sessions to further discuss international arrangements and mechanisms (Category III). On Monday, 7 February, an additional contact group was established to take over discussions on Category III, chaired by Amb. Samuel Insanally (Guyana). Delegates met in a final plenary session on Friday, 11 February, to adopt the IFF-4 final report.

The following is a summary of the final report adopted by the IFF, with emphasis on the sections that were discussed at IFF-4. Under each programme element there is a set of conclusions and associated proposals for action.

Editors' note: Respecting the confidential nature of informal consultations and contact group meetings, the Bulletin *does not use names of countries and/or groups in its reports of these meetings.*

I. PROMOTING AND FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSALS FOR ACTION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS AND REVIEWING MONITORING AND REPORTING ON PROGRESS IN THE MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF FORESTS (CATEGORY I)

PROMOTING AND FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION: Delegates negotiated this programme element at IFF-2 and adopted six conclusions and all but one of the eight elements for implementation of IPF's proposals for action.

Conclusions: The final text includes conclusions that identify:

- the commitment of governments, international organizations and other partners to implement the IPF's proposal for action and the need for effective involvement of relevant interested parties;
- the need for implementation of funding strategies and appropriate financial mechanisms including support through ODA, for devel-

oping countries, with emphasis on the least developed countries and LFCCs;
- national forest programmes as a viable framework for implementing IPF proposals for action in a holistic and multi-sectoral manner, and national case studies produced under the Six-country Initiative of Finland, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Uganda, and the UK as important for implementing IPF proposals for action at national and sub-national levels;
- the complexity and wide range of issues covered by the proposals for action and the difficulty in reaching rapid substantial progress in, *inter alia*, capacity building and policy development;
- the special attention to be given to implementation in LFCCs, including by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the CBD, the UNFCCC, and the CCD;
- the ITFF's support to the IPF/IFF process;
- the continuing monitoring of the effects of airborne pollutants on forests within countries of the International Cooperative Programme on Forests and the establishment of new protocols dealing with nitrogen, heavy metals and POPs; and
- recent regional and international initiatives supporting the IPF action proposals, including the Sub-Network of Protected Areas of the Amazon, the Central American Convention on Forests, the regional workshops on IPF implementation and the G-8 Forest Action Programme.

Proposals for Action: Bracketed text addressing provision by the international donor community of resources to mobilize finance, technical assistance and ESTs was forwarded to IFF-4. On Thursday, 10 February, delegates agreed to replace "new and additional resources" with "increased financial resources." The US suggested reference to the international donor community, including international organizations and international financial institutions. The text was adopted with these modifications.

Additional elements for the implementation of IPF proposals for action include:
- promoting an integrated approach through National Forest Programmes (NFPs) and forest-related work as set out in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- creating and/or strengthening initiatives and partnerships to encourage, *inter alia*, long-term political commitment, sustained donor support, and participation of the private sector;
- assessing and including implementation of IPF proposals in national processes aimed at SFM through clear objectives and criteria;
- establishing national focal points to guide implementation; and
- using NFPs to channel development assistance by the international community to developing countries.

MONITORING PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION: On Tuesday, 8 February, Working Group 1 considered a proposal for action encouraging ITFF member organizations and other relevant international and regional organizations to consult with countries on the collection and synthesis of national information.

Conclusions: Delegates agreed to several conclusions on this programme element at IFF-3, including:
- data collection, monitoring, assessment and reporting relate to both assessing progress in implementing IPF proposals for action as well as assessing trends in forest management;
- duplication of data collection, monitoring, assessment and reporting should be avoided by using and harmonizing existing reporting systems;
- institutional, technical and human capacity at the national level must be enhanced;
- priority should be given to financial and technical assistance programmes and technology transfer;
- a common understanding of key concepts, definitions and terms should be developed to assist countries in meeting various reporting requirements; and
- incorporating C&I for SFM into voluntary national reporting would provide a useful basis for assessing progress.

Proposals for Action: The proposals for action agreed upon at IFF-3 encourage countries to:
- prepare national information on the conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests as the basis for any consolidated information on forests at the international level, with adequate financial resources, both domestic and international, made available for capacity building and implementation of national reporting incentives;
- make forest-related information for reviewing, monitoring and reporting on SFM readily available;
- report to CSD-8 on the implementation of the IPF proposals for action;
- develop and implement C&I for SFM as a basis for reviewing, monitoring and reporting national trends; and
- encourage the donor community to assist developing countries in preparing national information and reports. Proposals for action also encourage countries and the ITFF to develop harmonized, cost-effective and comprehensive reporting formats, and to improve the effectiveness of coordination and partnership with countries and with international organizations and instruments as a means of capacity building.

MATTERS LEFT PENDING AND OTHER ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PROGRAMME ELEMENTS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS PROCESS (CATEGORY II)

NEED FOR FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Working Group 2 conducted its first round of discussions on the need for financial resources on Monday, 31 January. Co-Chair Ristimäki drew attention to the report of the recent workshop on financing SFM held in Croydon, London. A contact group on financial resources, chaired by Knut Oistad (Norway), began work on Wednesday, 2 February, and progressed through all the bracketed paragraphs contained in the IFF-3 report.

Conclusions: Regarding a conclusion on the need to increase both domestic and international, and public and private funding for SFM, developing countries proposed reference to least developed countries and LFCCs. Delegates agreed to a regional group's proposed text stating that developing countries, including LFCCs and particularly least developed countries, need special consideration in financial cooperation to meet needs for forest products and services sustainably and sustainably manage their forests, and in some cases, expand their forest cover. The conclusion also states that a substantial increase in financing from all sources, including domestic and international, and public and private, is required for effective management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, especially in many developing countries.

On a conclusion about increasing revenues from sustainably-produced forest products, delegates could not agree on whether to refer to biological diversity or biological resources. Following deliberations, delegates agreed to text stating that achieving SFM policy goals require recognition of benefits from profitable sustainable forest practices, while discouraging sustainable forest exploitation. The conclusion emphasizes that the main objective is to increase revenue from sustainably-produced forest products and services, including forest-related biological resources, while encouraging the necessary investment in SFM.

A conclusion referring to bridging financing to achieve SFM was accepted with minor changes. It recognizes that private sector investments in SFM are generally inhibited by factors resulting from policy and market imperfections.

Regarding a conclusion identifying private sector resources as a key component of SFM financing strategy, developing countries said a reference to private sector investment should not be considered a substitute for international public funding, including ODA, and said public sector financing is, *inter alia*, to promote the enhancement of environmental, social and economic functions. Most delegates agreed with this formulation with minor amendments. The conclusion also states that mobilization of private sector resources in financing often requires policy adjustments in order to create enabling conditions for SFM.

Regarding a conclusion on the importance of stakeholder participation and involvement for the effective use of financial resources, a regional group proposed, and others accepted, replacing "stakeholders" with "interested parties" due to a concern that multinational companies may be given inappropriate participation rights.

A conclusion on a need to develop cost-effective and efficient systems and the usefulness of country case studies to further understand the role of financial flows from different sources was agreed upon with minor modification.

On a conclusion relating to the establishment of an international forest fund, one regional group put forward text on proposals for establishing such a fund toward SFM for a transitional period. Developed countries called for text signaling that such proposals were made but that no consensus was reached. They emphasized the need to strengthen the effective use of existing resources. A regional group preferred that the fund be suggested rather than proposed. Developing countries stated the fund was not an abstract issue. One developed country said the lever for new funds is agreement on a LBI. Another developed country noted its recent announcement of a tropical forest fund without need for a LBI.

The conclusion states that the proposal for establishing an international financial mechanism to support SFM was deliberated upon. In this regard, it was proposed that an international forest fund be established in order to support, *inter alia*, the additional costs during the transition period toward SFM. The conclusion also notes that reservations were voiced regarding the establishment of an international forest fund.

Regarding a conclusion on an entity to promote international investment in SFM, a developed country proposed text that avoids reference to any particular entity. With regard to national forest programmes as a basis for channeling finances back into forests, several delegates pointed out that it is inappropriate to speak of an international regulatory framework for investment in SFM. The conclusion states that the concept of such an entity to mobilize private sector investment in SFM deserves further consideration and that it could catalyze and support activities related to information, capacity building, technology transfer and finance between the public and private sectors.

Other conclusions recognize:

- financial flows into the forest sector should support and be consistent with the development and implementation of NFPs and SFM should be considered one of the priorities in domestic resource allocation and ODA; and
- developed countries should fulfill the commitments they have undertaken to reach the accepted United Nations target of allocating 0.7% of GNP to ODA as soon as possible.

Proposals for Action: The proposals for action, *inter alia*:

- call on countries and relevant international organizations to increase financial resources and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of available resources for SFM, and use NFPs or other integrated programmes as the basis for channeling, prioritizing and increasing financial assistance to the forest sector in developing countries;
- call on countries and relevant international organizations to undertake activities for systematic collection and analysis of financial flows data in the forest sector;
- encourage private investments in SFM by providing a stable and transparent investment environment within an adequate regulatory framework that also encourages reinvestment of forest revenues into SFM; and
- call on countries and relevant international organizations to explore the feasibility of operationalizing an investment promotion entity.

On Friday, 11 February, Working Group 2 addressed the remaining unresolved action proposals. Co-Chair Ristimäki asked that a small informal group find language to reflect that no consensus was reached on these outstanding issues. The final text includes a chapeau reflecting that the Forum discussed but did not reach consensus on the action proposals listed under the chapeau. On further exploration, identification and development of effective financial mechanisms, consensus was not reached on whether to include reference to new mechanisms. The Forum also failed to reach consensus on the creation of an international forest fund. On making full use of the potential existing mechanisms, such as the GEF, consensus was not reached on whether their options should be explored to expand their scope, or to review their scope, for financing a wider range of SFM activities. Finally, no consensus was reached on whether to include a proposal on the need for a study integrating issues such as international trade and valuation of forest goods and services.

TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT: On Monday, 31 January, Chair Ristimäki re-established a contact group on trade and environment to continue the work it began at IFF-3 and asked Don Wijewardana (New Zealand) to continue as Chair. The contact group met in four sessions between Wednesday, 2 February, and Tuesday, 8 February, and focused on two conclusions and four action proposals left outstanding from IFF-3. The contact group could not reach consensus on one of the conclusions and two action proposals. Delegates met informally in an attempt to bridge the gap on outstanding issues, but failed to reach consensus. On Friday, 11 February, Working Group 2 convened to discuss unresolved issues. The EU suggested removing the remaining brackets and including language to convey a positive message to the CSD that much progress had been made, but more work still remained in order to reach consensus. Co-Chair Ristimäki asked delegates to meet informally to formulate language to convey this message to the CSD.

Conclusions: Regarding a conclusion addressing the nature and extent of illegal trade in wood and non-wood forest products, debate revolved around whether to lift brackets from a reference to biological resources and whether to provide a definition for the term. Some suggested using the CBD's definition, while others felt the IFF should provide its own definition. A developed country preferred reference to forest-related biological resources. Delegates agreed to this proposal and the text was adopted replacing "biological resources" with "forest-related biological resources."

Regarding a conclusion on increased market transparency for improving market access for forest products and services, many delegates supported language specifying those products and services coming from sustainably managed forests. Developing countries opposed singling out products and services from sustainably managed forests. One developed country expressed concern that this reference might unduly emphasize market transparency for products and services from sustainably managed forests. Delegates could not reach

agreement on this issue and a footnote in the text reflects that the Forum discussed, but did not reach consensus on, the specific reference to "including those coming from sustainably managed forests."

Other conclusions recognize that:

- mutually supportive trade and environment policies can effectively promote the achievement of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests;
- international trade in wood and non-wood forest products has both positive and negative impacts on SFM, special attention should be given to remaining and emerging trade restrictions that constrain market access, and trade measures intended to promote SFM should not constitute arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on trade; and
- voluntary certification and labeling (C&L) schemes have a potential role, more practical experience is needed to reach conclusions on the effectiveness of such schemes, application of such schemes may lead to unjustified obstacles to market access, and the work of the WTO on voluntary eco-labeling was noted.

Other conclusions address:

- the need for long-term SFM strategies to minimize negative effects of short-term market changes such as the recent financial crises;
- full-cost internalization of forest products and services and their substitutes;
- full life-cycle environmental impacts of forest products and their substitutes; and
- the special problems facing developing LFCCs and small island developing States (SIDS).

Proposals for Action: Regarding an action proposal on reducing illegal trade of wood and non-wood forest products, delegates agreed to language referring to forest-related biological resources.

Regarding an action proposal on supporting continued efforts toward trade liberalization with attention to removing trade restrictions that constrain market access, delegates expressed concern over the lack of balance in the text between trade and SFM. One developed country proposed including language on encouraging countries to conduct environmental reviews of trade agreements. Many developing countries said this would constitute conditionality on trade. One country suggested including text encouraging countries to assess, review and consider the environmental implications of trade liberalization measures. The final text states that the Forum discussed but was not able to reach consensus on this issue and reverts to the text forwarded in brackets from IFF-3. It states that the IFF supports continued efforts by countries and the WTO toward trade liberalization, giving special attention to removing remaining and emerging trade restrictions that constrain market access, particularly for value-added forest products.

Regarding a proposal urging countries, international organizations and other interested parties to undertake cooperative work on voluntary certification and/or labeling (C&L) schemes, delegates debated inclusion of language on unjustified obstacles to market access, as well as reference to the WTO. One delegation proposed language combining the ideas of cooperative work on C&L towards achieving comparability and considering equivalence, and their development and application in a way that promotes SFM and avoids unjustified obstacles to market access, which was accepted. A regional group suggested replacing text on unjustifiable obstacles to market access with reference to ensuring adequate transparency and non-discrimination. Developing countries and some others initially opposed this. Much of the debate revolved around reference to the WTO. Developing countries insisted on only including reference to the WTO regarding efforts of international organizations, while a regional group called for including references to UNCTAD, the FAO and UNEP. The contact group did not reach consensus. The final text includes a footnote stating that the Forum discussed, but could not reach consensus on, the specific reference to the WTO. The final text also urges that cooperative work on C&L be undertaken, while seeking to enhance comparability and considering their equivalence to ensure adequate transparency and non-discrimination in their design and operation. It also states that such schemes should not lead to unjustifiable obstacles to market access.

Other proposals for action address:

- achieving trade in forest products and services from sustainably managed forests and avoiding policies and actions that have adverse effects either on trade or on SFM;
- analyzing implications of full-cost internalization on forest management and economic development and implementing full-cost internationalization strategies for forest products and services and their substitutes;
- working further on full life-cycle analysis of the environmental impacts of forest products and their substitutes;
- taking action to improve market transparency, taking into account the role of the private sector, to help promote responsible producer and consumer choices;
- developing long-term strategies for SFM in order to minimize negative effects of short term market changes, such as the recent financial crisis; and
- importing forest products to LFCCs, countries with fragile ecosystems, and SIDS.

TRANSFER OF ESTS TO SUPPORT SFM: On Tuesday, 1 February, Working Group 2 Co-Chair Ristimäki established a contact group to continue its debate from IFF-3 on EST transfer. The group, chaired by Ralph Roberts (Canada), held five sessions from Wednesday, 2 February, through Tuesday, 9 February. The contact group removed one bracket remaining from IFF-3 on a conclusion referring to funding and mechanisms for EST development and transfer. The contact group also removed brackets remaining from IFF-3 on action proposals related to: urging action toward establishment of mechanisms; strengthening cooperation between institutions; technology transfer on preferential terms; benefit sharing; and the development of mechanisms that link TFRK and IPR.

Conclusions: Conclusions in the final text note:

- reiteration of the importance of the Forest Principles, Chapter 34 of Agenda 21, and decision 6/3 of the CSD;
- improved access to and utilization of ESTs have great potential for enhancing SFM;
- recognition of the important but differentiated contributions of the public and private sectors;
- further participation of national forest programmes and other interested parties;
- strengthening the capacity of countries for assessment of the environmental soundness, economic sustainability and social impacts of technologies;
- the technological needs of developing LFCCs;
- opportunities that exist to finance and support North-South technology transfer through ODA and private-public partnerships;
- South-South cooperation is complementary to North-South EST transfer;
- recognition of the importance of technologies related to forest biological resources;
- the necessity for increased diffusion of technology to end-users through forest extension services;
- the urgent need for implementation of modern, appropriate, environmentally sound wood energy technology; and
- focused attention to gender mainstreaming related to capacity building and technology transfer.

Proposals for Action: On an action proposal regarding EST transfer on preferential terms, while taking into account IPR, delegates agreed on the need to take further concrete measures to promote and facilitate EST transfer to developing countries, and to text on mobilizing further support for the development and application of appropriate technologies and corresponding know-how to enhance implementation of SFM within these countries.

On an action proposal urging countries to initiate actions toward the establishment of new mechanisms to enhance EST transfer, a developed country proposed text referring to the development and broadening of mechanisms or further initiatives to enhance the transfer of technology. Another developed country suggested removing references to specific CSD decisions and IPF proposals, and the text was adopted.

On an action proposal regarding strengthening cooperation between institutions, delegates agreed on text stating that institutions recognized as centers of excellence should act as clearing houses, in line with Agenda 21, Chapter 34, in order to expedite technology flow.

Delegates held lengthy discussions on an action proposal regarding sharing benefits from the use of biological resources in accordance with the CBD. Some countries questioned the appropriateness of discussing the relationship between biological resources and IPR at the IFF as it is unresolved in other fora such as the CBD and WIPO and suggested deletion of the paragraph. Many delegations preferred aligning text with that of a similar paragraph under consideration in TFRK and, accordingly, developing countries proposed language referring to the recognition of the origin of forest biological resources, opposing reference to genetic resources. Some developed countries preferred aligning text with that from outside fora, and a developed country proposed a new formulation based on Article 15 (Access to Genetic Resources) of the CBD. Many developed countries opposed reference to recognition of the origin of forest biological resources, preferring terminology agreed to in the CBD or under other programme elements. Developed countries also insisted on the inclusion of benefit sharing on mutually agreed terms and in accordance with national laws. The final text urges countries to share benefits from the utilization of forest genetic resources and the results and application of research, and to work, as necessary, on issues of the identification of origins of these resources within their IPR, *sui generis* or other relevant systems for protection, as appropriate, taking into account the work being advanced by the CBD and other relevant international agreements, in accordance with national laws.

Regarding an action proposal on linking IPR and TFRK in the development of mechanisms to realize benefits of TFRK, developed countries warned against going beyond work underway in other fora and suggested deletion of the paragraph. Many developing countries opposed its deletion, and suggested alternative text referring to, *inter alia*, the establishment and enforcement of TFRK-related IPR and prior informed consent from and due recognition of knowledge holders in patent applications. Some developed countries said this was covered under TFRK, and called for its deletion. The final text states that the Forum discussed but could not reach consensus on the proposal.

Other proposals for action urge countries to:

- develop an enabling policy and a legal and institutional framework that encourages appropriate public and private sector investments in ESTs;
- support the strengthening of cooperation between institutions to facilitate the assessment of needs for adaptation and transfer of ESTs;
- recognize the importance of ESTs to developing countries and countries with economies in transition as an integral part of the process of investment and sustainable development;
- consider practical measures to promote the diffusion of ESTs to end-users;
- enhance partnerships, and initiate coordination and cooperation of EST transfer, development and application;
- facilitate EST transfer for use of wood and non-wood by products created by forest harvesting and wood processing;
- strengthen outreach programmes aimed at women in the areas of education, training and microcredit; and
- use data and information that are disaggregated by gender in sectoral surveys and studies used in the development of technologies.

Other proposals for action underscore the importance of assisting LFCCs and countries with fragile forest ecosystems and called upon countries to undertake steps to ensure equal opportunities for women to be beneficiaries of ESTs.

Delegates agreed to move an action proposal from the programme element on assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation of forest cover to the EST programme element. The proposal encourages countries to promote appropriate transfer of environmentally sound rehabilitation technologies for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in environmentally critical areas.

ISSUES THAT NEED FURTHER CLARIFICATION: Underlying Causes of Deforestation: Working Group 1 addressed underlying causes of deforestation, focusing its discussions on lifting brackets from text in the report of IFF-3.

Conclusions: Delegates considered a conclusion identifying underlying causes of deforestation on Wednesday, 2 February and agreed to lifted brackets from "illegal trade," delete reference to "corruption" and replace "issues of governance" with "lack of good governance." The conclusion was adopted with these modifications.

On a conclusion regarding the impacts of undervaluation of natural forests and the need to price forest goods and services to include environmental costs and benefits, the US, supported by Australia, suggested including a cross-reference to the programme elements on valuation of goods and services, and on economic instruments. Brazil, supported by Ecuador and New Zealand, supported lifting brackets from the conclusion. Ecuador emphasized inclusion of reference to biological resources and delegates concurred, with a note indicating the CBD's definition.

Other conclusions state that the IFF:

- reiterates the need to implement the IPF proposals for action and notes the recommendations of the global workshop on underlying causes held in Costa Rica in January 1999;
- emphasizes the need for effective policy coordination to address underlying causes of deforestation and stresses the importance of policy consistency inside and outside the forest sector;
- recognizes the need for analysis, at the national and international levels, of the sequences of causes contributing to changes in the quantity and quality of forests;
- notes the need to involve many actors in addressing forest-related issues; and
- notes current economic valuation of forest resources has often resulted in inadequate incentives for sustainable resource use.

Proposals for Action: With regard to a bracketed action proposal on national technical guidance and international economic incentives to promote community involvement in SFM, Australia, supported by Ecuador, proposed replacing "promote" with "support." The US, with Canada, proposed deleting reference to national and international economic incentives. Ecuador, with the G-77/China, supported referring to economic incentives. The text calls for economic incentives to support community involvement.

Regarding an action proposal on identifying the lack of internalization of externalities and introducing positive incentives, Canada initially proposed deleting the paragraph or deleting reference to positive incentives. Several delegations, including the US, the EU and Brazil, disagreed and brackets were lifted from the text.

Regarding a proposal for action on supporting local community programmes for capacity building and facilitating access to markets, delegates debated a bracketed reference to external markets. New Zealand proposed "domestic and external" markets and the proposal was adopted with this modification.

On a proposal for action requesting international financial institutions to analyze impacts of foreign debt and to explore innovative debt reduction schemes, several delegations, including the US, Norway and Brazil, suggested deleting reference to such analysis. Delegates agreed to amended text requesting financial institutions to analyze the impacts of foreign debt on deforestation and forest degradation.

In considering an action proposal inviting countries to work with international financial institutions to establish transparency regarding structural adjustment policies (SAPs) and to harmonize them with national sustainable development objectives, Australia, Norway, Mali and the EU supported lifting brackets. However, the G-77/China, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana and Chile called to delete the proposal, fearing it could result in additional conditionality on SAPs. Delegates agreed on a revised formulation inviting international financial institutions to strengthen transparency in decision-making as it affects SFM and to ensure that their policies support SFM.

The IFF report also includes action proposals calling on countries to, *inter alia*:

- create appropriate procedures to promote effective participation of all interested parties in decision-making about forest management;
- support capacity building in communities and community involvement in SFM; and
- support appropriate land tenure law and/or arrangements to define land ownership as well as the rights of indigenous and local communities and forest owners.

It also invites countries to use NFPs to involve indigenous and local communities and women to participate in the formulation and implementation of measures that aim to protect their forest land rights and privileges, TFRK and forest biological resources (as defined by the CBD). It encourages the ITFF member organizations to support the elaboration of a comprehensive study of land tenure issues related to deforestation and forest degradation.

Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge: Working Group 1 began substantive discussions on remaining bracketed text on Wednesday, 2 February. Discussions on new text and proposals for modified language on TFRK were conducted throughout IFF-4. On Thursday, 3 February, negotiations made rapid progress and consensus solidified. However, discussions arrived at a stalemate on Tuesday, 8 February, and Co-Chair Asadi decided the debate would be better carried out informally. Delegates concluded adoption of text on Friday, 11 February.

Conclusions: On a conclusion regarding implementation of measures for protecting TFRK, delegates discussed further work to help develop a common understanding of the relationship between IPR and patents, TRIPs and the CBD. On Monday, 7 February, the EU supported deleting reference to patents and TRIPs. Japan supported reference to IPR systems. Brazil supported reference to *sui generis* and suggested changing formulation to "under the CBD." The text was adopted with these modifications and an additional reference to "other relevant systems for protection."

The final text includes additional conclusions on:

- the involvement of indigenous people and local communities, their traditional knowledge and the recognition of their rights to natural resources to support the formulation and implementation of SFM policies;
- the need to further explore the modalities for promoting greater recognition, respect and protection of TFRK involved in SFM;
- the right of indigenous and local communities to participate in the conservation and management of forests and forest biological resources, in compliance with Agenda 21, Chapter 26; and
- welcoming the CBD's *ad hoc* Working Group on Article 8(j).

Proposals for Action: On Thursday, 3 February, regarding an action proposal calling on countries to implement measures for greater recognition, respect and protection of TFRK in SFM, Japan suggested adding "sufficient" measures, the US proposed "strong" measures, and Australia proposed, and delegates agreed to, "effective" measures. Australia and Brazil suggested reference to "other relevant international agreements." The EU agreed and advocated addition of "or other systems." The text was adopted with these modifications.

Delegates agreed to merge the text directing the CBD *Ad hoc* Working Group to include options for collecting, recording and locating TFRK and establishing prior informed consent, with the paragraph inviting the CBD Secretariat to prepare an overview of approaches to identifying and recording TFRK.

On Wednesday, 2 February, delegates discussed an action proposal promoting fair and equitable sharing of benefits and the EU supported deleting "including payments, where appropriate" to avoid overlap with work in other fora. Canada asked that text be retained. Mexico opposed reference to specific articles of the CBD while the US supported reference only to Article 8(j). Japan called for reference to "IPR-related treaties." Brazil disagreed and said benefit sharing was relevant only to the CBD. On Thursday, 3 February, Brazil, Australia and the Philippines supported reference to "payments, where appropriate" and to specific articles of the CBD. Australia also suggested reference to developing benefit sharing mechanisms. The US and Ecuador supported reference to related articles of the CBD. Brazil suggested instead insertion of "*inter alia*" before CBD articles. Delegates supported the Brazilian proposals, agreed to refer to payments, international agreements, national law and specific CBD articles and the text was adopted.

Delegates began negotiating text encouraging consistency between trade-related IPR agreements and TFRK on Thursday, 3 February. Japan and the EU said the identification of the origin of TFRK was already addressed by private contracts and asked for deletion of the whole paragraph. Norway and several developing countries opposed its deletion and highlighted the role of the CBD in this identification. Canada proposed new text encouraging work with relevant international organizations to help develop a common appreciation and understanding of the relationship between IPR, *sui generis* or other relevant systems for protection, and the CBD, including work on the issue of identification of the origin of TFRK and of genetic resources with a view to protecting such knowledge from inappropriate use. On Monday, 7 February, the US suggested, and Ecuador, Brazil and Colombia opposed, deletion of reference to the origin of genetic resources. Canada said TFRK includes implicit reference to genetic resources. On Tuesday, 8 February, Canada proposed two bracketed options, one referring to knowledge of related genetic resources and another referring to associated forest biological resources, as defined by the CBD. On Friday, 11 February, delegates adopted new text with reference to "the knowledge that results from the use of forest genetic resources (as defined by the CBD)."

On Thursday, 3 February, on text inviting the CBD Secretariat to prepare an overview of approaches to identifying and recording TFRK, the Philippines asked for reference to possible approaches to "applying" TFRK. Peru and Ecuador said the reference to CIFOR, IUFRO and the FAO undermined the role of holders of TFRK and

supported deletion of the paragraph. On Friday, 4 February, Ecuador suggested reference to ILO and Brazil called for reference to traditional communities. Peru said the text should invite the CBD COP to prepare the overview, rather than the Secretariat. On Monday, 7 February, Canada proposed new text highlighting the role of holders of TFRK and inviting the CBD Secretariat to prepare an overview of approaches to incorporate TFRK in SFM. Norway suggested language reflecting governmental control.

On Tuesday, 8 February, delegates agreed to merge this paragraph with text inviting the CBD COP, through its *ad hoc* Working Group, to consider options for collecting, recording, applying and locating TFRK. The new text includes direct reference to the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities and related provisions of the CBD in preparation of the overview, and recognizes the need to foster the wider application of TFRK, innovations and practices with the approval and effective involvement of the holders of TFRK. Brazil insisted on qualifying this approval with either "legal," formal," "prior" or "informed" and quoted the UN Draft Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People to support his proposal. The US opposed and said the Declaration addresses the involvement of indigenous people in decision-making and is not relevant in this context. The text was adopted on Friday, 11 February, without Brazil's proposal.

On a proposal for developing national level legislation and policies to achieve objectives under various CBD articles, many delegates opposed the reference to "development of a legal framework" for the CBD articles at the international level. The US suggested instead "enhanced international cooperation." Canada preferred, and delegates approved, reference to a set of guidelines. On Friday, 4 February, delegates supported, for purposes of clarification, inclusion of language on supporting efforts of international organizations and institutions in developing these guidelines. Brazil advocated qualifying the guidelines by adding "in accordance with their mandates." Brazil's proposal was accepted and the text was adopted.

Forest Conservation and Protected Areas: Working Group 1 conducted initial discussions on forest conservation and protected areas on Thursday, 3 February. Delegates carried out substantive discussions and adopted a final text on Monday, 7 February.

In initial discussions, the World Bank encouraged the IFF to take note of a definition for protected areas provided by the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas and used by many countries, UN institutions and major groups. The US expressed concern that the conclusions and action proposals contained in the IFF-3 report did not accurately reflect the IFF-3 outcome.

Conclusions: The final text includes conclusions on:

- the outcomes of two workshops on protected areas, one sponsored by Australia, and the other co-sponsored by the US and Brazil;
- the importance of an ecosystem approach that underlines forest conservation and protection as an integral component of SFM and contributes to local economies and non-market benefits to society;
- the fragmentation of forest land as a constraint to the effective protection of biodiversity and ecological functions of forests and requiring that protected areas form part of the landscape continuum where conservation is accorded priority;
- the inadequate implementation of, *inter alia*, forest conservation and protected areas policies due to insufficient coordination, lack of political will and resources, warranting appropriate legislation, protection of biodiversity and ecological values and support from indigenous and local communities;
- the need to develop a common understanding on the key concepts, definitions and terminology concerning management regimes consistent with forest conservation inside and outside protected areas;
- effective cross-sectoral linkages and coordination with the many non-forest sector policies, such as those related to regional development, resettlement, trade, structural adjustment and agriculture, that may have profound perverse impacts on forest conservation goals; and
- the value of greater awareness of the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits, especially biological resources, of forest conservation and protected areas to generate public support and resources for forest conservation.

Proposals for Action: Delegates agreed to merge paragraphs on provision of financial support. Colombia called for reference to national action plans. Canada opposed, noting this would exclude developing countries. Colombia suggested adding "in countries where they exist." Delegates agreed on "where such plans exist" and the text was adopted. The final text calls upon countries, international financial institutions and other donors to provide financial support and other resources to activities in developing countries related to forest conservation, and the implementation and management of protected areas under their surrounding landscapes, in accordance with national action plans, where such plans exist.

On an action proposal on developing and implementing a range of innovative mechanisms for financing and encouraging forest conservation, including returns from carbon sequestration, Brazil suggested, and Colombia supported, reference to UNFCCC Article 3.3 identifying forest activities covered by the UNFCCC. Australia said this was beyond the IFF's mandate. Brazil suggested "in accordance with, and in the context of," implementation of relevant articles of the Kyoto Protocol and the UNFCCC, and the text was adopted.

Additional proposals for action encourage countries to:

- commit themselves to the protection, conservation and representativeness of forests, consistent with national forest policies and programmes that link forest conservation and sustainable development;
- develop and implement strategies for the protection of the cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic values of forests;
- provide for partnerships with forest owners, and indigenous and local communities in forest conservation initiatives for SFM;
- develop financial mechanisms to engage all interested parties, in particular forest owners and the private sector, in the planning and management of protected areas;
- contribute to a global and regional assessment of the status of protected areas to support the establishment of biogeographically balanced networks of protected areas;
- establish joint protected areas, including ecological corridors of regional and/or global significance, together with agreed guidelines on their collaborative management;
- cooperate with international organizations and institutions to develop methodologies for assessing the conditions of protected areas, taking into account national efforts to collect and utilize information and including indigenous and local knowledge;
- cooperate with international organizations and institutions to develop guidelines for consistency in the interpretation and use of existing IUCN categories of protected areas; and
- improve, with international financial institutions and other donors, coordination of policies and programmes that affect forest conservation, and address cross-sectoral policies, structural adjustment packages and perverse incentives.

Forest Research: Working Group 1 briefly reopened discussion of forest research on Thursday, 3 February, and delegates approved the conclusions and action proposals agreed upon at IFF-3 without further debate.

Conclusions: The conclusions:

- recognize the value of research and information systems, the value

of inter-country research collaboration at the eco-regional level and the importance of including policy issues beyond the forest sector;
- acknowledge inadequacies in existing systems for mobilizing resources, setting priorities and achieving coherence and calls for improved research mechanisms and more relevant research agendas;
- take note of a proposal for a global forest information service, emphasizing the role of networks in providing valuable opportunities for collaboration among research institutions; and
- call for greater priority to financial and technical assistance programmes to strengthen capacity in developing countries.

Proposals for Action: The proposals for action call upon countries to, *inter alia:*
- formulate policies, programmes and strategies within the context of NFPs in order to identify research needs and priorities;
- consider new ways of mobilizing research funding;
- improve linkages between forest science and forest policy processes at the national and sub-national levels; and
- ensure forest research be undertaken with prior consent of the country concerned.

Other proposals for action call on international organizations, donor countries and financial institutions to: fund forest research in developing countries; examine new ways for mobilizing forest research funding; enhance access to forest-related information through use of existing institutions, mechanisms and networks; and foster joint ventures in forest research involving both the public and private sectors. An additional proposal requests the ITFF member organizations to explore ways of improving priority setting and support for national, regional and international forest-related research efforts.

Valuation of Forest Goods and Services: Working Group 2 briefly addressed valuation of forest goods and services on Friday, 11 February.

Conclusions: Conclusions state that:
- forest valuation should reflect the social, cultural, economic and ecological context and consider values of importance to local and/or indigenous communities, private forest owners, gender aspects and distributional impacts;
- more quantitative data will make forest valuation more effective and simplified, and rapid and cost-effective valuation methodologies to suit specific country circumstances are needed; and
- scope of valuation needs to extend beyond the forest sector and development of an approach to identify both costs and benefits of SFM is needed.

Other conclusions address:
- the importance of forest valuation in promoting SFM, noting that valuation by itself does not provide a guarantee for appropriate policy decision;
- enhanced international cooperation, with special attention to capacity building for developing and applying forest valuation in order to enhance informed policies and decision-making, as well as enhanced programme formulation in developing countries; and
- the need for enhanced cooperation on valuation with other forums, such as those on climate change, trade, desertification and biodiversity.

Proposals for Action: Regarding an action proposal requesting relevant international organizations to develop policy relevant valuation methods, and to develop approaches for identifying costs and benefits, delegates agreed to lift brackets on a reference to incremental costs and benefits. The text also requests relevant international organizations to develop and test rapid valuation methods that are policy relevant and efficient, and to develop approaches to identify costs and benefits, including incremental costs and benefits of SFM.

Proposals for action recall relevant IPF proposals for action. Other proposals for action:
- urge governments to improve collection of quantitative data to develop physical accounts of the full range of forest goods and services, as well as for non-wood materials;
- encourage further development of rapid and low-cost valuation methods; and
- request countries and international organizations to assist developing countries in building and promoting capacity for developing and applying forest valuation methods.

Economic Instruments, Tax Policies and Land Tenure: Delegates finalized negotiations on this element at IFF-3.

Conclusions: Conclusions emphasize that:
- economic instruments and tax policies may be ineffective or counterproductive in a situation of policy, institutional or regulatory failures;
- economic instruments in the forest sector should consider opportunities in alternative land uses, and in both public and private ownership of forests;
- offering a variety of forest goods for sale in local, national and international markets can serve as an incentive for SFM, but additional information is required on ways to create such markets, especially for non-wood forest products;
- secured land tenure and user rights are needed in the effective use of economic instruments as tools to support SFM;
- tax and revenue collection can be a source of financial support for improved SFM;
- consideration of the extensive and enduring effects of macroeconomic policies of countries on the forest sector can provide the basis for informed decision-making and lead to SFM; and
- weak and inconsistent policies in non-forest sectors can undermine the use of forest policy tools, including economic instruments.

Proposals for Action: Several proposals for action encourage countries to:
- assess the potential scope and effective combination of economic instruments and tax policies as tools for promoting SFM, including the collection of forest revenue from timber extraction;
- combine regulations and economic instruments for achieving the objectives of forest policies, including the use of charges and forest revenue collection;
- recognize the impact of economic instruments and tax policies in providing incentives to engage in activities that avoid deforestation and forest degradation, and the contribution of policy failures to deforestation;
- support, within their legal framework, land tenure policies that recognize and respect legitimate access and use and property rights to support SFM;
- develop macroeconomic policies and policies in other sectors that support and contribute to SFM, and request international financial institutions to mitigate the impacts of macroeconomic SAPs on forests.

Other proposals for action invite relevant international organizations to undertake a review of contemporary forest revenue collection systems for the use of forest products and services, and provide advice on the design and administration of economic instruments and tax policies.

Future Supply of and Demand forWood and Non-Wood Forest Products and Services: Delegates finalized this programme element at IFF-3.

Conclusions: Conclusions recognize that:
- future supply and demand will continue to form the basis of forests' contribution to economic and social development and the

need for commodities will provide motivations for conservation and sustainable management of forests;
- deforestation, forest degradation, and additional forest protected areas are leading to a shift toward more intensively managed forests, including natural and planted forests, which require consideration of SFM;
- work is required to accurately assess the impacts of fuelwood collection on forest resources;
- policies that distort the prices of wood and non-wood products may contribute to the unsustainable management of forests; and
- private and community ownership of forests and the private sector play an important role in sustaining production of industrial wood products.

Proposals for Action: An action proposal encourages countries and international organizations to improve data collection and information dissemination through: increasing the inventory data on wood and non-wood products and services; reporting on the use of non-wood products; collecting and reporting on the source and use of wood fuels; and providing comparable prices of wood and non-wood products and their substitutes.

Other action proposals encourage countries, including through international cooperation, to:
- promote policies to meet increasing demand for wood and non-wood forest products and services through SFM;
- recognize the role of the private sector and eventually support it within a framework of policies such as secure land tenure and tax policies;
- incorporate supplies of fuelwood, wood energy and efficient wood energy technologies in policy-making within the forestry, agriculture and energy sectors and develop pilot studies to assess the impacts of fuelwood collection on trees and forests;
- develop and implement policies to promote sustainable production of wood and non-wood products that reflect different values and ensure that commercialization of these products contributes to improved management of forests;
- review policies that have direct effects on the price of forest products, initiate studies on market behavior and discourage overuse, waste, excess and inefficient manufacturing; and
- undertake studies on the cost and benefits of using renewable wood and non-wood forest products as opposed to non-renewable substitutes.

Assessment, Monitoring and Rehabilitation of Forest Cover in Environmentally Critical Areas: Negotiations on this element took place at IFF-3. At IFF-4, Working Group 2 briefly addressed this issue on Friday, 11 February.

Conclusions: Conclusions address:
- the IPF proposals for action on fragile ecosystems affected by desertification and droughts;
- more effective policies, coordination and partnerships to address the ecological, social, cultural and economic problems associated with critical areas;
- the role of planted forests in rehabilitating degraded land and in providing cover for critical areas;
- the importance of action-oriented proposals, including through the provision of financial resources and EST transfer; and
- the special situation of mountain ecosystems and the importance of mountain forests for soil and watershed protection.

Proposals for Action: Delegates agreed to move to the programme element on EST transfer an action proposal encouraging countries, with the cooperation of international organizations, to promote the transfer of environmentally sound rehabilitation technologies for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in environmentally critical areas.

The remaining proposals for action encourage countries to:
- contribute to more systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of information, including social and economic data;
- place rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and trees in environmentally critical areas as a higher priority on national development agendas;
- use planted forests and, where appropriate, native species as options for rehabilitating degraded lands; and
- engage in raising awareness of the ecological, social, cultural and economic roles of planted and natural forests in the rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests in environmentally critical areas.

One proposal further urges international organizations and donor countries to strengthen their collaboration with international programmes and conventions, including through the provision of financial resources and EST transfer.

FOREST-RELATED WORK OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND UNDER EXISTING INSTRUMENTS: Delegates discussed and finalized text on this programme element at IFF-2.

Conclusions: Conclusions recognize the need for:
- a holistic approach to forest matters and the use of the comparative advantages of forests to support their management, conservation and sustainable development;
- coordination of, and new partnerships with, existing international and regional organizations and instruments;
- strengthening the work of the ITFF;
- making the best use of available forest-related institutional capabilities existing at the regional and international levels and supporting efforts made in developing countries toward SFM;
- international organizations and multilateral institutions to be flexible to accommodate the existing and emerging needs of social and economic development in developing countries, and to improve efficiency and coordination among SFM objectives;
- a comprehensive directory of forest-related international and regional organizations;
- inter-agency coordination to pay special attention to integrating the needs of LFCCs in relevant policies and programmes; and
- an examination of practical approaches based on expected results with a focus on experiences gained in the implementation of existing instruments and the work programmes of international and regional organizations toward SFM.

Another conclusion recognizes the usefulness of the Secretariat's documentation on this programme element for deliberations under Category III.

Proposals for Action: A proposal for action calls on all interested parties, including the governing bodies of relevant international and regional organizations and instruments, to: mobilize their strengths and capabilities to support national efforts; participate and contribute to the international forest policy dialogue; and clarify their respective roles in UNCED forest-related programmes of action.

Another proposal calls on governments to utilize the expertise provided by international and regional organizations to better address the cross-sectoral issues of SFM in their NFPs, and provide coordinated and effective guidance to multilateral organizations.

A third proposal calls on the secretariats of the ITFF member organizations to: inform their governing bodies on the outcome of the IPF/IFF process; develop institutional synergies with, *inter alia*, regional development banks, regional commissions, NGOs and the private sector; and cooperate toward the developing of a directory of forest-related international and regional organizations and instruments.

A fourth proposal encourages NGOs to: increase public awareness of the direct and indirect benefits derived from forests; facilitate institutional consultation and cross-sectoral forest policy; and enhance cost-effective data systems.

Proposals also call upon relevant international and regional organizations to consider the needs of developing countries in their policies and to integrate forest-related aspects in programmes aimed at poverty alleviation, decreasing population pressures, and promoting food security and environmental awareness.

A proposal requests the IFF Secretariat to provide an analysis of experiences with implementation, compliance and achievements of forest-related work under existing instruments and of the contributions that could be made by regional and international voluntary initiatives, for example, on criteria and indicators.

INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE THE MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF FORESTS (CATEGORY III)

Over the course of IFF-4, delegates discussed Category III in four plenary sessions and nine meetings of a contact group chaired by Amb. Samuel Insanally (Guyana).

In Plenary on Tuesday, 1 February, Jag Maini of the IFF Secretariat introduced the Secretary-General's Report on Category III (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/4) and two Secretariat notes: priority forest policy issues (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/2); and elements and functions for a future international arrangement and mechanism (IAM) (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/3).

The G-77/China supported an action-oriented, permanent dialogue and provision of new and additional financial resources and EST transfer. The EU supported an action-oriented, institutionalized and permanent arrangement, focused on implementation and monitoring. He said that although the EU has supported a LBI, it remains open-minded to the form of a future arrangement.

While stating that a LBI is necessary in the long-term, Costa Rica acknowledged the lack of political support for such a mechanism and, supported by Panama, advocated a transitional arrangement. Canada expressed support for negotiating a LBI and said commitments would be balanced with the provision of technology transfer and funding for implementation. Switzerland supported a global LBI and, with Poland, suggested a framework convention with regional or issue-related protocols or annexes. Iran stressed that all arrangements must take into account LFCCs. The Russian Federation, Benin, Turkey, Malaysia, Georgia, Tajikistan, Belarus, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and the Forest Alliance of British Columbia supported a LBI.

Australia proposed a non-binding, permanent arrangement. The US advocated establishment of a non-binding international arrangement under the CSD. China said the Forest Principles should provide the basis for future negotiations. Japan supported an arrangement that includes policy implementation, development of C&I for SFM, and monitoring and evaluation of progress. Colombia called for a permanent arrangement under the CSD and Brazil supported a permanent mechanism under the General Assembly. New Zealand stressed the need to build on existing national and regional initiatives. Mexico supported strengthening existing mechanisms. Indonesia emphasized the urgency of implementation. Cuba said scarce economic and technical resources in developing countries prohibit the choice of a LBI. Norway called for, *inter alia*: an emphasis on implementation; monitoring of results; international and national coordination; and a high degree of political commitment to SFM.

India opposed a LBI, and supported a permanent forum and establishment of a global forest facility to channel financial resources. The Latin American Forest Network supported a permanent and restructured ITFF to ensure transparency and increased participation and proposed strengthening regional initiatives and an IAM supporting private and independent efforts. The South Pacific Forum Secretariat reported on results from the South Pacific Regional Meeting on Category III held in Fiji, and with Friends of the Earth International and the Canadian Environmental Network, supported improved use of existing instruments. The International Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of Tropical Forests underscored the importance of recognizing and strengthening indigenous peoples' rights to land, language, identity and culture by preserving and protecting forests. The Global Forest Policy Project discouraged establishment of another IFF.

In a Plenary session on Friday, 4 February, delegates considered a Co-Chairs' text summarizing the previous discussion, proposing the establishment of: a UN Forest Council (UNFC), under the CSD or the GA; a UN Partnership on Forests (UNPF); a steering committee, with a structure similar to the ITFF; and a small secretariat.

Some delegates, including the US, Australia and the G-77/China, accepted the draft proposal as a basis for discussion. Others, including Canada and the Russian Federation, felt the text did not adequately reflect all views expressed. The G-77/China said the draft text focuses on coordination and policy development functions and stressed the need for a global forest fund or strengthening of the GEF.

On the proposed UNFC, some countries opposed the term "Council." The G-77/China preferred a forum focused on developing policy and coordinating implementation, rather than on mobilizing political support for a convention. Some countries, including the EU, the Republic of Korea and Switzerland, questioned the need for a separate steering committee. Several delegations, including the EU, the Russian Federation, Armenia, Poland, Senegal and Switzerland reiterated their preference for negotiating a LBI and lamented its omission. Canada, supported by Papua New Guinea, proposed a two-track approach: a transitional phase focused on implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action; and the establishment of an INC to develop a convention to cover all functions and elements identified by the IFF. New Zealand opposed references to a new LBI, noting that negotiation of a LBI would impede action. The US requested more emphasis on implementing existing arrangements. Brazil noted that there is not enough consensus or knowledge to launch a negotiating process for a LBI. Greenpeace International advocated reference to the special status of ancient forests, curbing illegal logging, and the precautionary principle.

On Monday, 7 February, the contact group considered a revised proposed arrangement that provided for, *inter alia*: a UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) under the GA or ECOSOC; a secretariat; an institutional partnership on forests; an INC for a LBI; financial support; a review process; and subsidiary bodies.

In discussing the arrangement's objective and whether to include references to a legal framework, one developed country advanced a proposal for a global framework for policy development, coordination and implementation. One country highlighted difficulties with judicial coordination of existing legal instruments.

Delegates debated whether the UNFF should be under the GA or ECOSOC. One pointed out that the GA has universal State membership but excludes non-State groups while ECOSOC has limited State membership but allows the participation of all major groups. Alternative proposals were made for "standing" and "open-ended," everyone agreed on "an intergovernmental body" without qualifying it. Delegates agreed to hold annual meetings with high-level ministerial segments as needed. With reference to the scope of participation in the proposed UNFF, delegates agreed to use the phraseology "major groups as identified in Agenda 21" throughout the text. On the UNFF's programme of work, delegates agreed to refer to Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, the Forest Principles, the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and the Rio Declaration. A regional group proposed, and others accepted, text indi-

cating that at its first meeting, the proposed UNFF will adopt a plan of action for the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, which "will address financial provisions for implementation."

With regard to the institutional partnership, delegates considered a proposal introduced by one developed country for a partnership chaired by the FAO and involving members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests. Some cautioned against pre-judging which institution would lead the partnership. Delegates agreed that the partnership should receive guidance from the UNFF. A number of countries supported a review process to be conducted five years after the UNFF is established.

On the need for subsidiary bodies for scientific and technical advice, delegates agreed to establish *ad-hoc* expert groups of limited duration to this end.

On the need for financial resources, developing countries said reallocation of existing resources would be inadequate. They supported the establishment of a global forest fund, with some proposing that it constitute a separate function of the arrangement and others suggesting it be part of its structure.

In discussing funding for the proposed secretariat, one developed country supported funding from "existing resources" while a regional group of developed countries preferred "the UN regular budget." Regarding administrative funding, one developed country indicated it would support only voluntary contributions.

On a LBI, some delegates called for specification of a time-frame for the proposed INC. Others preferred reference to establishing an INC "in due course." One developed country called to bracket all references to the UNFF while references to a LBI remained in brackets. Several LBI proponents said there was no consensus on simply continuing the international forest dialogue either, expressing the view that a UNFF would not bring action. A regional group of developing countries said that the issue of a LBI is contingent on issues of financial support, technology transfer, and trade. One developed country said a LBI would facilitate the establishment of a voluntary fund. Several developing countries questioned whether a LBI would elicit funding at all. A developing country proposed text recommending "concrete steps toward the establishment of a global fund and a mechanism for technology transfer" and another said finances for implementation should not be contingent on an INC.

Final negotiation of the proposal was conducted in the closing Plenary. Unable to achieve consensus, the Plenary adjourned to allow for informal consultations and, after several hours, reconvened once delegates had reached consensus on the remaining points of contention associated with the structure of the arrangement. At 5:55 am on Saturday, 12 February, Co-Chair Asadi presented the consensus text that states to achieve the objective and to carry out the functions of the arrangement, the ECOSOC and GA would, *inter alia*:

- establish of an intergovernmental body that may be called UN Forum on Forests;
- invite relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to form a collaborative partnership to support the work of the UNFF and enhance cooperation and coordination among its participants;
- within five years, and on the basis of an assessment, "consider with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests"; and
- take steps to devise approaches toward appropriate financial and technical transfer support to enable implementation of SFM as recommended under the IPF/IFF processes.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday, 11 February 2000, Co-Chair Ristimäki opened the final Plenary at midnight and introduced the draft report of IFF-4, as contained in documents E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1 and Add.1-7. E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.1; E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.2; E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.3; E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.4; E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.5; E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.6; and E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.1.Add.7. Delegates considered and adopted each section of the report along with oral amendments read by the Co-Chairs.

Co-Chair Asadi then asked delegates to address unresolved issues surrounding the proposed international arrangement, which had been under discussion in the contact group on Category III, and suggested delegates take a short break for consultations.

Plenary reconvened at 2:00 am. The G-77/CHINA said it had been unable to agree to wording that would adequately express emotions and allow the debate to move forward in a manner that would allow them to feel comfortable. Co-Chair Asadi said progress hinged on a paragraph on initiating a process to consider preparations for a legal framework on forests. CANADA noted its preference for text to develop a legal framework. The G-77/CHINA opposed using the word “develop.” Noting it was 2:15 am and hoping that progress would be made, Co-Chair Asadi asked "key delegates" to participate in informal consultations.

At 5:55 am, Co-Chair Asadi returned and announced that delegates had agreed to text stating that the ECOSOC and GA would, within five years and on the basis of the agreed to assessment of the arrangement, "consider with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. This process could develop the financial provisions to implement any future agreed legal framework." They also agreed to text stating the ECOSOC and GA would: "take steps to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technical support to enable the implementation of SFM, as recommended under the IPF and IFF processes." Delegates adopted the text on the proposed arrangement, as well as the report of the meeting. Co-Chair Asadi then proposed, and delegates adopted, an oral decision stating that the IFF adopts text on the draft decision and decides to convey this to the CSD for consideration and appropriate action.

Co-Chair Asadi commended delegates for never having wavered from the task at hand. The G-77/CHINA noted that some key issues related to finance, EST transfer and trade remain unresolved, and added that the crux of the issue is control of global markets for forest products. He said the five countries that constitute 53% of the global market have the future of forests in their hands and that developing countries are marginalized from access to global markets. In closing, he hoped the proposed arrangement would not encounter the same fate as the IPF proposals for action.

The EU said the IFF has been an enriching learning experience. CANADA identified the IFF process as the most significant accomplishment by the CSD and said he was proud of achieving what Canada has wanted for so long. The US said international forest policy has stepped into a new stage. Jag Maini, IFF Secretariat, also extended his gratitude and congratulated delegates on work well done.

Remarking on the rising sun outside the conference room window, Co-Chair Ristimäki commented that "the sun also rises and so does the IFF." He described the IFF as a collective experience with delegates driving national interests yet managing to serve a common goal. He thanked the IFF and CSD Secretariats, international organizations, NGOs, and indigenous peoples for their contributions and gaveled IFF-4 to a close at 6:50 am on Saturday, 12 February 2000.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF IFF-4

While the final meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests succeeded in addressing many outstanding issues, the preoccupation at IFF-4 was whether to start negotiations on a legally binding instrument (LBI) on forests. A number of other issues also generated considerable heat. New finances, technology transfer, and trade and environment were what some developing country delegates called the three pillars that form the necessary foundations for achieving sustainable forest management (SFM). Contact groups on the "three pillars" provided moments of passionate debate, with the governments agreeing to disagree on the issue of new financial resources and whether trade and environment should be mutually supportive concepts.

TO LEGALLY BIND OR NOT TO LEGALLY BIND?

The debate on international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, specifically whether to start negotiations on a legally binding instrument, inspired the greatest passion among delegations. The intensity of these negotiations was demonstrated by the fact that delegations were unable to come to agreement on key elements of this issue until sunrise on the morning after the meeting was due to close. It was evident from the start that some delegations had a winner-take-all attitude toward the negotiations. Some of the pro-convention delegations would not concede to any reference to a new policy forum on forests without reference to a LBI. Those in the opposite camp argued that there should be a new forest forum and no LBI.

The deep divide between the two camps was not based on the standard North-South division. Some tropical forest countries were in favor of a legally binding instrument, while others were against it. Some temperate forest nations were pro-LBI and others were indifferent or strongly against it. Motivation for supporting a LBI varied, from focusing action on SFM, to creating a trade protection regime, to the promise of new finances. The justifications against a LBI ranged from protecting sovereign rights, to focusing on implementation action, to taking action under other instruments. Indigenous Peoples feared that a LBI would further impinge on their rights to a forest-based culture and livelihood, and some NGOs feared that a LBI would legitimize bad forestry practices. While developing countries were not of a single voice on the issue, it was evident, particularly for a number of African countries, that they were wary of the legitimacy of any promises on new and additional financial assistance associated with a LBI, especially in light of false promises that had been brandished out prior to the development of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).

In the end, the agreed text, "…consider (within five years) with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests…" is sufficiently obscure that both pro- and anti-LBI camps felt they had achieved a successful outcome. As one delegate confided: "In five years time, a vast array of lawyers will spend large amounts of public money trying to interpret what the negotiators meant."

WHO FOOTS THE BILL?

While not as dramatic, the discussions on creation of a forest fund became a significant preoccupation for a number of delegates. Many pinned their hopes of finding new and additional funds to steer them on a path towards achieving SFM. Developed countries knew they had little to offer and were disinclined to put what money they might be able to secure into a centralized fund.

Some developing countries said again and again that they would not give consideration to a LBI without explicit language for new and additional funding. One developed country offered a financial olive branch, but stated that it could not obtain funds from its government until they had a legal arrangement. Others drew attention to their bilateral funding activities, which some perceived as a means of diverting attention from the call for a fund. Clever attempts were made to replace "new and additional" with "innovative" funding, but no matter how hard developed countries tried to repackage the text, the fact remained that no new money was going to surface. In the end, delegates agreed to forward to the CSD text, which states that the Forum discussed but did not reach consensus on whether to establish a global forest fund.

WHO OWNS THE KNOW-HOW?

Apart from the usual call for technology transfer, discussions led to the emergence of a debate on access and benefit sharing of biological resources. The IFF became a vehicle to advance consideration of complex issues associated with access, intellectual property rights (IPR) and *sui generis* systems of ownership. These issues also surfaced in connection with discussions on trade and environment and traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK). Discussion on IPR and *sui generis* systems apparently caused unease among some delegates who felt that the IFF did not have the competency to deal with such issues, preferring that they be discussed within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Intellectual Property Organization. Others saw this as an opportunity to advance the issue and as a means of leveraging greater transfer of forest-based technologies. Discussions on IPR, particularly relating to TFRK, sparked concerns within at least one developed country that *sui generis* systems, may create an avenue for countries (or the legally-protected holders of the traditional knowledge) to apply these protection rights retroactively. All these fears created a stalemate, delegates agreed to disagree, and in the end, despite brackets being lifted from text, little was advanced.

AN UNDERLYING LACK OF POLITICAL AUTHORITY?

Only one proposal for action on underlying causes, relating to transparency within international financial institutions, survived from the 1999 Global Workshop on Addressing the Underlying Causes of Deforestation and Forest Degradation, which submitted over 100 action proposals to IFF-3. One delegate speculated that the IFF's lack of attention to underlying causes suggests that the Forum did not have the political might to tackle "big picture" macroeconomic issues that transcend other institutions. He suggested that a sub-agency of the CSD is unlikely to have enough political authority to address issues associated with the IMF, WTO, World Bank and other key high-level institutions. This observation lends weight to the call for the proposed UN Forum on Forests to be under the UN General Assembly rather than ECOSOC or the CSD.

However, a surrounding issue is the trade-off between political authority and participation of major groups. While the proposed UN Forum on Forests might benefit from the higher political authority it would have under the General Assembly, it might also lose the open, transparent and inclusive process that is needed to promote synergies among the many institutions, governmental and non-governmental, involved in forest issues, since NGOs have limited access to General Assembly-based bodies.This dilemma of how to both have the political authority to address larger issues and to include those directly impacted by policy issues remains a central debate of the proposed arrangement.

DÉJÀ VU?

The IFF picked-up where the IPF left off with the task of forging consensus on the most contentious issues in international forest policy. Although there was a definite sense of déjà vu arising from discussions on many of these issues, in some areas the IFF did make veritable headway. One delegation noted that the IFF's major achievement was in focusing attention and continuing the dialogue on the issue of forests, as well as spotlighting the value of NFPs. The IFF process also encouraged a myriad of country- and NGO-led initiatives, which

increased interest in areas such as finance, underlying causes, low forest cover countries, and forest research, while solidifying consensus on many issues discussed at IPF and previous IFF sessions.

A NEW AND IMPROVED FORMULA?

At the close of IFF-4, many delegates were relieved to have reached a consensus text, unlike the IPF three years earlier. However, some elements of the IFF's consensus text mirror the outcome of the IPF, as agreed at the 1997 UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the implementation of Agenda 21, particularly the proposal for an ongoing forum and continued discussion of a legally binding instrument. To this end, some delegates commented that convincing their capitals that the IFF had made progress would be the real challenge. Some delegations hinted that the battle is not yet over as the IFF proposals are only a recommendation, and the real decision remains to be taken by the CSD. However, the CSD was unable to advance discussions on the IPF's recommendations in 1997 and needed the higher-level participants at the UNGASS to reach consensus. It remains to be seen this time around just how the CSD will react to the IFF recommendations and what the future will be for international dialogue and cooperation on forests.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE CSD-8

MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY: This Conference will be held from 14-18 February 2000, in New Delhi, India. Themes to be discussed include: agro-biodiversity and agro-forestry; biodiversity, people and sustainable agriculture; and natural resources management and comprehensive food security. For more information, contact: A. K. Singh, Secretary-General, Indian Agricultural Research Institute; tel: +91 (11) 573-14-94; fax: +91 (11) 575-55-29; e-mail: icmnr@bic-iari.ren.nic.in

WORKSHOP ON CAPTURING THE VALUE OF FOREST CARBON FOR SUSTAINABLE LOCAL LIVELIHOODS: The Workshop, organized by CIFOR, will meet from 14-18 February 2000, at the Bellagio Study and Conference Center in Lake Como, Italy. The Workshop will suggest an institutional arrangement to produce beneficial environmental and local livelihood impacts and will aim to influence the UNFCCC-COP debate on the inclusion of land use and forestry climate change mitigation options for the Clean Development Mechanism. For more information, contact: Sara J. Scherr at the University of Maryland; tel: +1 (301) 405-8360; fax: +1 (703) 758-2548; e-mail: sscherr@arec.umd.edu

INTERNATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE: This Conference will meet from 2-5 March 2000, in Melbourne, Australia. For more information, contact: Joanne Safstrom; tel: +61 (3) 9412-4382; fax: +61 (3) 9412-4442; e-mail: j.safstrom@dce.vic.gov.au; Internet: http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/conf/landcare2000/

CSD INTERSESSIONAL *AD HOC* WORKING GROUPS: The CSD Intersessional *ad hoc* Working Group on Finance, Trade, Investment and Economic Growth will meet from 22-25 February 2000. The Intersessional *ad hoc* Working Group on Integrated Planning and Management of Land Resources and Agriculture will meet from 28 February – 3 March 2000. Both meetings take place in New York. For more information, contact Andrei Vasilyev, DESA-Division for Sustainable Development (DSD); tel: +1 (212) 963-3170; fax: +1 (212) 963-4260; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org or dsd@un.org; Internet: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd8/csd8_2000.htm

***AD HOC* GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** The CSD *ad hoc* open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development will meet from 6-10 March 2000, in New York. For more information, contact: Leticia Silverio, Coordinator, DESA-DSD; tel: +1 (212) 963-4670; fax: +1 (212) 963-4260; e-mail: silveriol@un.org; Internet: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/enrexpert.htm

SECOND WORLD WATER FORUM: The World Water Council's Second Water Forum and Ministerial Conference will be held from 17-22 March 2000, in The Hague, the Netherlands. For more information, contact: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.O. Box 20061, 2500 EB, The Hague, the Netherlands; tel: +31 (70) 348-5402; fax: +31 (70) 348-6792; e-mail: hans.vanzijst@dml.minbuza.nl; Internet: http://www.worldwaterforum.org

CRITERIA AND INDICATORS (C&I) FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: The Conference for C&I for Sustainable Forest Management at the forest management unit level, organized by the European Forest Institute and the Task Force On Sustainable Forest Management of IUFRO and co-organized by FAO and CIFOR, will meet from 21-25 March 2000, in Nancy, France. For more information, contact: Olivier Laroussinie, GIP ECOFOR, 19 avenue du Maine, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France; tel : +33 (1) 45-49-88-36; fax: +33 (1) 45-49-88-39; e-mail: laroussinie@engref.fr.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR SOIL CONSERVATION: The Third Congress of the European Society for Soil Conservation will be held from 28 March-1 April 2000, in Valencia, Spain. For more information, contact: Centro De Investigaciones Sobre Desertification-CIDE; tel: +34 (96) 126-0126; fax: +34 (96) 127-0967; e-mail: sabina.asins@uv.es; Internet: http://www.uv.es/cide

***AD HOC* WORKING GROUP ON ARTICLE 8(J):** The Convention on Biological Diversity's *ad hoc* Working Group on Article 8(j) will meet from 27-31 March 2000, in Sevilla, Spain. For more information, contact: Hamdallah Zedan, CBD Secretariat; World Trade Center, 393 Jacques St, Suite 300, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2Y 1N9; tel: +1 (514) 288-2220; fax: +1 (514) 288-6588; e-mail: chm@biodiv.org; Internet: http://www.biodiv.org/indig/Wg8j1/index.html

EIGHTH SESSION OF THE CSD: CSD-8 will meet from 24 April-5 May 2000 in New York. The Commission will consider integrated planning and management of land resources, agriculture, and financial resources/trade and investment/economic growth. For more information, contact: Andrei Vasilyev, DESA-DSD; tel: +1 (212) 963-3170; fax: +1 (212) 963-4260; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org or dsd@un.org; Internet: www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd8/csd8_2000.htm