



Earth Negotiations Bulletin

UNFF-O
4

A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations

UNFF online at <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/unff/org/>

Vol. 13 No. 70

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development

Thursday, 15 February 2001

UNFF INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2001

On the second day of the informal consultations on the multi-year programme of work (MYPOW), delegates continued discussion on programme elements relating to facilitation and promotion of implementation, and exchanged views on the programme elements relating to: monitoring, assessment and reporting; enhancing cooperation and policy and programme coordination; and fostering international and cross-sectoral cooperation. Deliberations on the location on the Secretariat continued in a small informal group and through bilateral discussions.

PLENARY

FACILITATION AND PROMOTION OF IMPLEMENTATION: The G-77/CHINA reiterated that discussions of programme elements have been underway for six years, and that the focus should be on implementation. He suggested that the sixteen programme elements from the IFF be organized into a chart for the PoA, with corresponding timetables and financial provisions. BRAZIL stressed that the IPF/IFF proposals for action should be the focus of the MYPOW and PoA, and emphasized that the elements should be discussed in terms of means for their implementation.

The US, highlighting its proposed MYPOW, emphasized implementation by countries and the CPF. She noted the suggested thematic issue clusters are intended to encourage specific, constructive and substantive discussion, and underscored the US's flexibility regarding the clusters. She said multi-stakeholder dialogues should be held at each UNFF session and focus on thematic issues and cross-cutting areas, such as capacity building and governance.

CANADA stated that the MYPOW and the PoA are linked but are not a single entity, and emphasized the importance of the mandate given to the UNFF by ECOSOC regarding a legal framework. She called for: establishment of an expert group on the mandate for developing a legal framework; efforts to establish baseline conditions and guidelines toward monitoring, assessment and reporting; and clearly defining expected products and outcomes. She suggested that the PoA should focus on strategically important priority areas, and that participatory approaches be developed at all levels. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said greater attention should be given to feasible goals and supported prioritization and a comprehensive valuation of actions in the PoA. He highlighted the link between the PoA and CPF activities.

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING: The EU recommended that monitoring and assessment be based on a harmonized voluntary reporting system. She said such a reporting system should build on and create synergies between existing forest-related reporting requirements, using existing methods as much as possible. She suggested national governments, CPF members, third parties and donor countries identify achievements and obstacles to progress. She supported the exchange of views as an important part of policy development and dialogue, and highlighted the role of reporting in improving cooperation. She said monitoring, assessment and reporting should be based on criteria and indicators for SFM, and supported the creation of an *ad hoc* working group on this issue.

The G-77/CHINA called for guidance on harmonization of existing reporting systems to enable efficient reporting to the UNFF. CANADA suggested an *ad hoc* working group convene immediately to: establish baseline information; provide reporting format and requirements; and make recommendations on frequency and timing. BRAZIL called for diminishing the burden incumbent on developing countries and opposed the creation of such a working group. GHANA supported linking UNFF reporting with that of other forest-related instruments' reporting systems. JAPAN supported synchronizing and harmonizing existing reporting mechanisms. The US said the UNFF must coordinate, facilitate and harmonize reporting. She suggested reporting on a cluster of issues to allow the UNFF to focus on implementation goals in a more manageable way. She supported intersessional activity in the first year of the UNFF.

INDONESIA stressed implementation of priority areas and cross-cutting issues, and called for financial assistance. NORWAY supported the creation of a working group on reporting and suggested the CPF produce a harmonized reporting framework based on existing reporting systems and developed to reflect the priorities of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. AUSTRALIA stressed that reporting must assist national assessment of implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. He also supported the creation of a working group and said the CPF work plan should include harmonizing reporting systems. MALAYSIA and CHINA called for development of a harmonized reporting format by UNFF-2.

ENHANCING COOPERATION AND POLICY AND PROGRAMME COORDINATION: The EU noted that the CPF is a vital part of the new international arrangement on forests, and stressed

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Laura Ivers <laurai@iisd.org>, Violette Laclache <violette@iisd.org> and Wendy Jackson <wendy@iisd.org>. The Digital Editor is Jenny Mandel <jenny@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the United States (through USAID), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the European Commission (DG-ENV). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2001 is provided by the German Federal Ministry of Environment (BMU) and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation (BMZ), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment of Norway, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment of Finland, the Government of Australia, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, and the Japan Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES.) The *Bulletin* can be contacted by e-mail at <enb@iisd.org> and at tel: +1-212-644-0204; fax: +1-212-644-0206. IISD can be contacted by e-mail at <info@iisd.ca> and at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications only and only with appropriate academic citation. For permission to use this material in commercial publications, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists and can be found on the Linkages WWW server at <http://www.iisd.ca>. The satellite image was taken above New York ©2001 The Living Earth, Inc. <http://livingearth.com>. For information on the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, send e-mail to <enb@iisd.org>.



the main tasks of the CPF outlined in ECOSOC resolution 2000/35: to support the UNFF and contribute to its MYPOW; and to enhance cooperation and coordination among its member organizations. She expressed hope that the CPF will be operational by UNFF-1, and said the CPF should coordinate inputs to the UNFF and take full account of UNFF discussions in the work of the bodies represented in the CPF. JAPAN suggested that the CPF should be based on the ITFF and play an integral role in coordinating actions. He said the important task of the CPF is developing monitoring and reporting systems for the UNFF. BRAZIL commented that the main role of the CPF is to assist the UNFF in implementation of the MYPOW and the PoA. The US suggested that strategies are needed to encourage CPF organizations to reorient their priorities toward the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and highlighted the work of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) in this regard. The G-77/CHINA suggested that the CPF should be compact, but engage in consultations with regional commissions, private sector entities and other relevant stakeholders.

AUSTRALIA said clear terms of reference are needed for the CPF to ensure that it works efficiently and effectively. The FAO reiterated that the CPF was formed to support the UNFF's work, assured delegates the CPF will work in a transparent manner and build links with other interested parties, and called for support and guidance from the UNFF. The US highlighted potential collaboration with the private sector and NGOs.

FOSTER INTERNATIONAL AND CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION: On cross-sectoral cooperation, the GLOBAL FOREST POLICY PROJECT pointed out the importance of non-forest sector matters in the UNFF's work, highlighting the agriculture, transport and energy sectors. BRAZIL stressed the importance of, *inter alia*, financial resources, education, institutional capacity building, management training, and scientific research for SFM, and called for a comprehensive handling of the economic, cultural and social aspects of forests. She urged enhancing the international competitiveness of sustainably-harvested forest products, as this could entice governments to enact legislation to promote sustainable forest policies. She stressed that new and additional financing is critical and called for an international forest fund.

The EU suggested that the UNFF facilitate information flows to raise awareness of available resources, and indicated that at the recent meeting in Oslo on financing SFM a range of mechanisms for financing SFM available at the national level was identified. She drew attention to the role SFM plays in economic growth and reducing poverty. With regard to technology transfer, she acknowledged the need to build national capacity. She supported the work underway on traditional forest-related knowledge under the Convention on Biological Diversity. With regard to trade, she said measures to promote sustainably-harvested forest products and to address illegal logging should be the responsibility of governments and suggested they be based on certification programmes.

The G-77/CHINA noted that many actions to be taken at the country level have been identified, but that the capacity to take these actions at the national level does not exist. Commenting on the suggestion that financial mobilization must happen at the national level, he said this is not realistic in poor indebted countries. He said that SFM will only be discussed and not implemented until guidelines are developed on how to improve capacity, technology development and the flow of resources.

MEXICO called to address international trade in support of SFM within the context of globalization at the UNFF, and said addressing finance, science and technology are critical to gaining the commitment of the developing world. INDONESIA said strengthening international cooperation for technology transfer and capacity building is essential, and suggested that NFPs provide a policy tool for facilitating international cooperation at the national level. EGYPT said finance cannot be discussed in the abstract, but must be linked to thematic clusters, and called attention to the need to assist low forest cover countries (LFCCs). Regarding trade in support of SFM, NEW ZEALAND agreed that development of a system of mutual recognition, such as market-based certification, would have potential in assisting the role of trade in SFM.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE SECRETARIAT'S LOCATION

In the morning, Chair Mubarak explained that he had been engaging in bilateral consultations with the governments who had offered to host the Secretariat, as well as with the EU and the G-77/China, and announced that an informal group open to all countries would convene on the matter. Jag Maini noted that the previously requested comparative financial analysis of the proposals to host the Secretariat would be made available later in the day.

The informal group convened in parallel to Plenary. COSTA RICA remarked that hosting the Secretariat in San José would help bridge the gap between political decisions taken at the international level and practitioners' implementation of these decisions on the ground, as it would be located in an ecological setting that would facilitate, *inter alia*, research and training, and would allow greater participation of stakeholders in policy creation and assessment. SWITZERLAND reiterated the benefits of situating the Secretariat in Geneva, including synergy with other international bodies, access to the UN facilities there and financial support from the Swiss government. Informal and bilateral consultations continued on this matter throughout the day.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The decision on the UNFF Secretariat's location, the one outcome required of the organizational session, is proving to be tricky due to the number of good offers on the table and the many considerations which must be balanced, such as financial support, accessibility for governments and proximity to other bodies. Nonetheless, it is rumored that a compromise package that would link the decision on the Secretariat's location with the decision on the venues for UNFF sessions is in the works and soon to emerge from the bilateral and informal discussions.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal consultations will resume in the Trusteeship Council Room at 10:00 am. Before resuming discussion of the programme elements relating to functions of the MYPOW, the Bureau will report on the results of informal consultations regarding the location of the UNFF Secretariat. Following this, delegates will discuss programme elements relating to the function "foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas." In the afternoon, delegates are expected to discuss programme elements relating to the function "strengthen political commitment." Delegates will then address the review of the international arrangement on forests to be undertaken in five years as well as the schedule of the MYPOW.