



UNFF-2 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 12 MARCH 2002

On the seventh day of UNFF-2, delegates met briefly in a contact group on criteria for reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in the morning. Delegates met throughout the day and late into the night in a contact group to continue negotiations on the ministerial message, and in informal consultations on the UNFF *ad hoc* expert groups. The following is a summary of discussions and the status of the ministerial message and the draft terms of reference for the *ad hoc* expert groups as of 10:30 pm.

CONTACT GROUP ON CRITERIA FOR THE REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT ON FORESTS

Stefan Leiner (European Community) chaired a brief meeting of a contact group on the review criteria. He proposed that delegates comment on a document distributed on Friday, 8 March which reflected Working Group I's discussion on the criteria on Thursday, 7 March. Several developing countries stressed that UNFF-2 must first finalize work on the *ad hoc* expert groups and the ministerial message, which are of higher priority, before discussing criteria. One developing country recalled the UNFF-1 decision that criteria should be considered at UNFF-2 if possible, taking into account that priority should be given to the substantive agenda items. A group of developed countries underscored the importance of making progress on criteria. Delegates did not discuss the document on criteria, and the meeting was adjourned.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE UNFF AD HOC EXPERT GROUPS

Delegates then resumed informal consultations on the draft terms of reference for the UNFF *ad hoc* expert groups, chaired by Patricia Chaves (Costa Rica).

EXPERT GROUP ON APPROACHES AND MECHANISMS FOR MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING (MAR): Scope and Work Programme:

Delegates debated at length "review of the effectiveness" as a component to be considered by the expert group, ultimately deciding not to specify the components in the "scope and work programme," but to address them under the tasks of the expert group. Instead, they agreed that the expert group "shall provide scientific and technical advice to the UNFF on approaches and mechanisms for its work on monitoring, assessment and reporting."

Tasks: Delegates debated if the expert group should assess existing "reporting requirements," "mechanisms for MAR" or both, agreeing that it should assess existing "reporting requirements" and "monitoring and assessment procedures" in order to identify strengths, weaknesses and duplications.

EXPERT GROUP ON FINANCE AND TRANSFER OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TECHNOLOGIES (ESTs):

Tasks: Delegates discussed and decided to bracket a proposal that the expert group consider various tasks relating to finance in 2003 and relating to EST transfer in 2004. On tasks related to transfer of ESTs, delegates agreed that the expert group should "review and assess existing initiatives on the transfer of ESTs and knowledge diffusion for the promotion of SFM among countries, sectors and stakeholders, including through North-South, North-North, and South-South cooperation, and through programmes of CPF members." Delegates also agreed that this review "should include an analysis of incentives that promote, and obstacles that inhibit, transfer of forest-related ESTs," but bracketed whether this would apply specifically to developing countries. On recommending ways to improve transfer of forest-related ESTs, a group of developing countries preferred recommending "mechanisms and agreements" to improve such transfer "to developing countries." One developed country preferred recommending "ways" to improve EST transfer, "taking into consideration the needs of developing countries." Both options were bracketed.

EXPERT GROUP ON PARAMETERS OF A MANDATE FOR DEVELOPING A LEGAL FRAMEWORK: Scope and Work Programme:

Chair Chaves proposed, and delegates amended, language stating that the "expert group shall provide scientific and technical advice," and that its work "should be undertaken within the context of ECOSOC Resolution E/2000/35 and relevant outcomes of UNFF sessions, in particular those referring to the creation and scope of the *ad hoc* expert groups."

Tasks: Developed country delegates advocated that the expert group begin its work after UNFF-4, rather than after UNFF-3. Delegates agreed to consider the expert group's tasks before addressing its timing. A developed country delegate proposed, and others opposed, that the expert group "examine," rather than "assess," existing binding and non-binding instruments and processes relevant to forests. Delegates agreed that the group should: analyze opportunities, complementarities, gaps and duplications; and consider reports prepared by countries, CPF members and the UNFF Secretariat. They did not agree on whether it should consider "outcomes of UNFF sessions" or "reports, bearing in mind the outcomes of the UNFF sessions."

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Delegates agreed to consider other outcomes of the international arrangement on forests, including, *inter alia*: efforts of countries to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action; the outcomes of the other *ad hoc* expert groups; UNFF country- and organization-led initiatives and previous relevant initiatives; and forest-related work by CPF members. They also agreed that the expert group should review experiences of existing forest-related organizations, multilateral environmental agreements, and regional processes, focusing on complementarities, gaps, and duplications. Delegates debated at length whether the expert group would report to UNFF-4 or UNFF-5, and ultimately agreed to delete the text, as it would be taken up under the section on duration of work, which remained outstanding.

CONTACT GROUP ON THE UNFF MINISTERIAL MESSAGE

Delegates met in a contact group on the UNFF ministerial message, chaired by Ositaadinma Anaedu (Nigeria), and continued negotiations based on a revised compilation text.

Delegates decided to rename the ministerial message "UNFF Ministerial Declaration and Message to the WSSD." Delegates agreed that strengthening cooperation on finance, trade, transfer of ESTs and capacity building is essential for ensuring SFM in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, rather than in "all" countries. Delegates agreed to underscore the unique character of the international arrangement on forests and commit to strengthening the UNFF's leading role. They were unable to agree on making the UNFF a success "in accordance with the criteria to be adopted at UNFF-2," and this text was bracketed.

On text highlighting concern about the continuing high rate of worldwide deforestation and forest degradation, delegates agreed to add a reference to "land degradation." On the sovereign right of States to utilize, manage and develop their forests in accordance with their development needs, delegates agreed that this is consistent with the other Forest Principles. Delegates reached consensus on text stating that SFM of both natural and planted forests is important to achieving sustainable development. On financing for SFM, many countries supported language on ODA as a requirement to achieve internationally agreed development goals, in particular to foster SFM, stating that the development goals should be in line with those in the Millennium Declaration. Some developed countries preferred internationally agreed "sustainable" development goals. Despite considerable debate, delegates were unable to agree on whether to include text on achieving "other agreed objectives related to sustainable development" or "other agreed sustainable development objectives." On text stating that the linkages between forests, poverty, governance, law enforcement, production and consumption patterns, and international cooperation are crucial to addressing the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, delegates bracketed "governance" and deleted "law enforcement."

On the role of SFM in achieving sustainable development in all countries, delegates agreed not to specify developing countries in particular. Delegates agreed to stress the need for the UNFF to promote synergies with related Rio conventions, exchange country experiences and engage in a dialogue with CPF members. Delegates reached consensus on text calling on the CPF to support the UNFF's work and contribute actively to implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and inviting CPF members to ensure that priority areas are addressed by their governing bodies.

Delegates agreed to encourage cooperation between the CBD and UNFF Secretariats in areas of mutual interest. They also reached consensus on text on the preparation of an action-oriented revised CBD programme of work on forests and biodiversity to be considered at COP-6, although they could not agree whether to "note" or "welcome" its preparation; and agreed to delete a reference to the January 2002 Workshop on Forests and Biological Diversity in Ghana.

Delegates agreed that the WSSD represents a unique opportunity to strengthen political commitment and promote international cooperation, and agreed to call for concrete and specific initiatives to achieve sustainable development and promote partnerships among interested governments and stakeholders, including private sector involvement.

Delegates could not agree on whether to "invite" or "commend" the WSSD to address an ensuing list of issues. Delegates did agree that the WSSD should advance SFM as a critical means to eradicate poverty, reduce land and resource degradation, and improve food security and access to safe drinking water and affordable energy. They also agreed that it should endorse SFM as a priority on the international political agenda. On ODA, delegates could not agree whether to include language encouraging the effective use of ODA by developing countries and acknowledging the efforts of all donors, and the text remains in brackets. Regarding action on illegal trade, many developed and developing countries supported a proposal calling for immediate action to address forest law enforcement, unsustainable timber harvesting and illegal trade of wood and non-wood forest products, including forest biological resources, with the support of international cooperation for human and institutional capacity building for national legislative enforcement. Alternatively, one developed country proposed calling for immediate action to address the underlying causes of illegal trade and provide support through increased international cooperation for capacity building to enable forest law enforcement. Despite extensive discussion and various proposals for compromise formulations, no agreement was reached, and versions of both alternatives remain in brackets.

On partnerships and international cooperation, delegates agreed that the WSSD should: call for initiatives to address the needs of areas that suffer from poverty and deforestation; strengthen international cooperation on finance, transfer of ESTs, trade and capacity building to ensure SFM; and create and strengthen partnerships to facilitate the provision of increased financial resources, transfer of ESTs, trade, capacity building, forest law enforcement and governance, and integrated land and resource management to implement SFM, including the IPF/IFF proposals for action. Delegates also agreed to call on countries and the CPF to accelerate implementation of the proposals for action and intensify efforts on reporting to the UNFF to contribute to an assessment of progress in 2005. Delegates agreed to pledge continued commitment to the international arrangement on forests and involvement in the UNFF, and to hold a ministerial segment at UNFF-5 in 2005 to review the effectiveness of the international arrangement.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As UNFF-2 turned up the heat, both literally and figuratively, in the contact group negotiating the ministerial message, the tide turned from divergence and deadlock to compromise and cooperation and, to many delegates' satisfaction, nearly fulfilled the difficult task of completing the ministerial message. Some observers, however, noted with dismay that this had been accomplished by stripping the message of much of its substance. Furthermore, concerns that some delegations were stalling consideration of the criteria for reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests were heightened, as attempts to address this issue in a contact group were foiled again on Tuesday morning. Some believe this reflects an unwillingness by some countries to evaluate the international arrangement because they fear it may result in a less than favorable assessment, which could eventually strengthen arguments in favor of a forest convention.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE WITH CPF MEMBERS: Beginning at 10:00 am in Conference Room 1, ministers will engage in a dialogue with heads of CPF member organizations, focusing on critical issues related to forests as well as guidance to the CPF.