



UNFF-3 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 27 MAY 2003

On Tuesday, UNFF-3 engaged in a full-day multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD) on forest health, economic aspects of forests, and maintaining forest cover. In the evening, delegates participated in an informal consultation on the *ad hoc* expert groups.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE MORNING SESSION

Chair Hossein Moeini Meybodi (Iran) opened the dialogue by encouraging participants to engage in interactive discussion. Pekka Patosaari, Coordinator and Head of the UNFF Secretariat, introduced a note on the MSD from the UN Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2003/2) and informed the meeting about a newly launched Internet-based forest information communication tool, Forests-L, operated by the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

FOREST HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY: Alexander Buck, International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), representing the scientific and technological community major group, elaborated on the linkages between forest health, air pollution, climate change, forest fires, invasive species, and pests and diseases.

Sandra Kesse, Green Earth Organization, representing the women's major group, stressed the need for, *inter alia*: a standardized definition of forest health; improved monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR); policy-relevant science; and utilization of local knowledge. She recommended that governments, *inter alia*, develop indicators for, and disseminate information on: forest health and productivity; foster intersectoral collaboration; promote technology transfer; and strengthen research capacity.

FINLAND agreed on the need for a standard definition of forest health. AUSTRIA said there is a need to raise awareness about forest issues. SENEGAL stressed the negative effects of invasive species and biodiversity loss. ITALY said it is necessary to integrate forest health and productivity with conservation. COLOMBIA stressed the need for maintaining biodiversity, utilizing the ecosystem approach, and incorporating socio-economic aspects into definitions of forest health and productivity.

CANADA called for long-term policies for dealing with natural disasters, and said that, since the public benefits from privately owned forests, it should contribute to forest management. GERMANY called for focused monitoring activities and noted the limitations of stakeholder involvement in the technical development of MAR methods. The NETHERLANDS stressed the need for greater attention to biodiversity issues and interlinkages between climate change and forest health and productivity.

Marcial Arias, Alianza Mundial de los Pueblos Indígenas y Tribales de los Bosques Tropicales, representing the indigenous peoples' major group, recommended that the UNFF and the

Collaborative Partnership on Forests recognize, *inter alia*: indigenous peoples' rights, including land ownership rights, and the right to participate in forest-related decision making at all levels and in MAR; the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Labour Organization and other relevant conventions related to indigenous peoples; and the need for definitions and concepts reflecting indigenous peoples' perspectives.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS: James Griffith, World Business Council on Sustainable Development, representing the business and industry major group, highlighted the major groups' role in recognizing the economic viability of forests as the key in achieving sustainable forest management (SFM). He underlined the importance of: secure property and land tenure rights; fair market conditions and reliable legal frameworks; mechanisms to compensate forest owners and local communities for the costs of providing non-marketable goods and services; and cross-sectoral strategies for SFM.

Representing the farmers and small forest landowners major group, Esa Härmälä, Confederation of European Forest Owners, stressed the importance of scientific research and cost-benefit analyses, and said that forest-dependent people lack knowledge of policy processes and market mechanisms.

MAINTAINING FOREST COVER FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS: Gareth Hinchley, International Forestry Students' Association, representing the children and youth major group, identified lessons learned during the implementation of various IPF/IFF projects, and advocated, *inter alia*: secure land tenure rights; the use of national forest programmes (NFPs) for achieving SFM; the valuation of forest goods and services; and investment in research.

Representing the non-governmental organizations major group, Andrei Laletin, Friends of the Siberian Forests, identified key issues for maintaining forest cover, and noted a lack of collaboration between the forestry sector and other relevant sectors. Stressing the need for stakeholder participation in MAR, he noted weak government support for SFM. He recommended, *inter alia*, identifying barriers to cross-sectoral cooperation and assisting countries in strengthening their capacity for long-term strategic planning.

LESOTHO stressed women's contributions to the forestry and agricultural sectors. FINLAND, supported by AUSTRIA, NORWAY and NEW ZEALAND, said that economic viability is a prerequisite for SFM. NORWAY and CANADA called for more cooperation between government and family forest owners. BELGIUM said that forest owners should seek interactive cooperation with society. NEW ZEALAND underscored the potential role of planted forests in achieving SFM. PERU highlighted the roles of the private sector and the state in regulating forest management, and the need for strengthening law enforcement capacity. IRAN outlined its alternative land-use management plans.

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MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE AFTERNOON SESSION

In the afternoon, delegates addressed questions prepared by the major groups on, *inter alia*, NFPs, sustainable livelihoods, cross-sectoral policy development, land tenure, non-timber values, and capacity building, and heard three case studies on forest health and productivity, maintaining forest cover and economic aspects of forests.

On NFPs, CANADA described its approaches to stakeholder involvement, including a series of national consultations and the creation of a national forest coalition.

On sustainable livelihoods, INDIA highlighted its efforts to empower local communities and utilize economic valuations to increase the value of forest products. SENEGAL described its forest-related legislation and community-based management of forests. COLOMBIA described cross-sectoral cooperation and civil society's involvement in the development of forest and land use plans. ZIMBABWE described how forest concessions and utilization programmes help to ensure economic benefits for local communities. NORWAY outlined its efforts to enhance stakeholder participation, noting a private-sector initiative on information and competence building. IUFRO said that the development of NFPs should be a learning process characterized by public participation. The US shared its experiences in developing a nation-wide multi-stakeholder strategy for reducing fire risks.

On maintaining forest cover for present and future needs, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) highlighted its projects that promote women's participation in SFM in Ghana. FINLAND recommended focusing on the restoration of multifunctional forest ecosystems, rather than on plantations. CHILE said plantations have a number of positive effects and challenged the view that they contribute to the destruction of natural forests. SENEGAL added that plantations help combat desertification and biodiversity loss. The WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT/FRIENDS OF THE EARTH (FOE) stated that monocultural plantations benefit pulp and paper industries, but have negative social and environmental consequences. NEW ZEALAND said that both natural and planted forests have important functions to perform.

INDIA said it created a national forestry commission to consider cross-sectoral forest-related issues. IRAN stressed the role of local communities and the industrial timber sector in devising implementation strategies.

Regarding the issue of land-tenure, SWEDEN highlighted the increasing participation of women in forest management in many countries. The GLOBAL FOREST COALITION/FOE pointed out New Zealand's experience in giving land tenure to indigenous people, and said that plantations do not protect indigenous forests. The FOREST PEOPLES' PROGRAMME/FOE noted that the quality of participation in policy formulation is of fundamental importance.

On non-timber services, the UNITED KINGDOM said that the value of non-timber services changes over time, and announced the preparation of a national report on the non-economic values of forests. The US said agroforestry activities provide important non-timber services. INDIA said afforestation programmes contribute to recreation and employment. BRAZIL outlined activities that promote agroforestry by small land owners, including self-certification, and highlighted the importance of: defining land tenure rights under a national legal framework; ensuring effective participation of small land owners in decision making; and recognizing the non-monetary aspects of poverty.

On the issue of capacity building, AUSTRALIA highlighted initiatives involving indigenous peoples in developing national forest strategies. He suggested enhancing research, marketing and communication efforts to improve community understanding and acceptance of SFM. FINLAND, CANADA, and the representative

of the children and youth major group stressed the need to involve youth in the global forest policy discussion and raise youth awareness of sustainability issues. The ITTO identified action-oriented programmes enhancing SFM capacity of member countries in cooperation with the private sector and civil society.

CASE STUDIES: Alexander Buck, IUFRO, presented a case study on forest health and productivity. Describing an air pollution study, he concluded that: the area of global forests at risk from air pollution is expanding; monitoring strategies should be based on an ecocentric approach; and multidisciplinary and multitrophic research is necessary. Sandra Kesse, Green Earth Organization, presented a case study on maintaining forest cover. She noted improved farming practices through agroforestry, and identified increased forest conservation awareness; enlargement of productive forest areas; and enhanced involvement of women as the project's main achievements. Markus Romer, WBV-Kempton, presented a case study on the role of a forest owners' association that supports the use of wood for energy production and yields regional economic benefits from forest use.

INFORMAL CONSULTATION ON THE AD HOC EXPERT GROUPS

In the evening, delegates held informal consultations on the composition of the three *ad hoc* expert groups, and the number and timing of their meetings. A group of developing countries indicated it would accept limited composition of the expert groups on approaches and mechanisms on monitoring, assessing, and reporting (MAR) and on financing and transfer of environmentally sound technologies (EST), but insisted that the expert group on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests have universal membership and make consensus-based decisions. Another group argued that universal participation may compromise the efficiency of the expert group, and supported limited composition. Participants informally agreed that the MAR and EST expert groups will have limited membership, and suspended discussion on the parameters expert group membership.

Regarding the number and timing of meetings, one group suggested that the parameters expert group begin work after UNFF-4, while some developed countries said that work should start in 2003. Participants informally agreed to hold meetings of the MAR and EST expert groups in 2003, and that the parameters expert group should complete its final report before before UNFF-5, in order to give governments time to consider its recommendations.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Reflecting on the MSD, one major group representative said he was thrilled to participate in the dialogue, but noted that insufficient funds could obstruct their future involvement. One delegate noted that the MSD represents a significant improvement in communication between governments and the major stakeholder groups on forest policy issues. Yet, others were disconcerted by the low attendance in the afternoon. Expressing concern about the low developing country attendance at UNFF-3, one developing country opined that UNFF has become a forum for developed countries, and questioned the legitimacy of the outcomes of this process.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: UNFF-3 will convene in Plenary from 10.00 am - 1:00 pm to hear statements on enhanced cooperation from the inter-governmental organizations. UNFF-3 will meet in Plenary from 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm to address substantive items on forest health and productivity.