



## THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL AND RELATED COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 12-17 MAY 2003

The thirty-fourth session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-34) will meet from 12-17 May 2003, in Panama City, Panama. The session will consider, *inter alia*: CITES listing proposals; the role of phased approaches to certification for sustainable forest management (SFM); civil society and private sector partnerships for SFM; measures to improve project formulation and appraisal; preparations for negotiating a successor agreement to the 1994 International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA, 1994); progress on achieving the Year 2000 Objective; issues affecting market access for tropical timber; forest law enforcement in the context of sustainable timber production; progress in implementing ITTO's 2003 work programme; matters related to Article 16 regarding the ITTO Executive Director and staff; review of, and contributions to, the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund; and the Fellowship Programme.

The 32nd sessions of the ITTC's Committees on Economic Information and Market Intelligence (CEM), Forest Industry (CFI), and Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF) will also meet to, *inter alia*: consider the report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals; hold the ITTO 2003 market discussion; consider reports on completed projects and pre-projects; conduct *ex-post* evaluations; review projects, pre-projects and activities in progress; consider project and pre-project proposals; and discuss policy work. The ITTC's Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) will convene its 13th session to review, *inter alia*: contributions to the administrative budgets for 1986-2003; the status of the Administrative Account for 2003; resources of the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund; the auditor's report for the 2002 financial year; and proposed amendments to the Financial Rules to implement a biennial work programme and indicative administrative budget.

The Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the negotiation of a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994, established by ITTC Decision 8 (XXXII), will hold its first session immediately following ITTC-34 on 20-21 May 2003, also in Panama City.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ITTA

The International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) was negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The negotiations aimed at: providing an effective framework for cooperation and consultation between countries producing and consuming tropical timber; promoting the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber and the improvement of structural conditions in

the tropical timber market; promoting and supporting research and development to improve forest management and wood utilization; and encouraging the development of national policies for the sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests and their genetic resources, and maintaining the ecological balance in the regions concerned.

The ITTA was adopted on 18 November 1983 and entered into force on 1 April 1985. It remained in force for an initial period of five years and was extended twice for two-year periods. The Agreement was renegotiated in 1993-1994. The successor agreement to the ITTA (ITTA, 1994) was adopted on 26 January 1994, and entered into force on 1 January 1997. The ITTA, 1994 contains broader provisions for information sharing, including non-tropical timber trade data, allows for consideration of non-tropical timber issues as they relate to tropical timber, and includes the Year 2000 Objective to enhance members' capacity to implement a strategy for achieving exports of tropical timber and timber products from sustainably managed sources by the year 2000. The ITTA, 1994 also established the Bali Partnership Fund to assist producing members in achieving the Year 2000 Objective. Initially concluded for three years, the 1994 Agreement was extended for an additional three-year period, which will end on 31 December 2003.

The ITTA established the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), headquartered in Yokohama, Japan, which provides a framework for tropical timber producer and consumer countries to discuss, exchange information and develop policies on issues relating to international trade in, and utilization of, tropical timber and the sustainable management of its resource base. The ITTO has 57 members divided into two caucuses: producer countries (31 members) and consumer countries (25 members, including European Community member States). The ITTO membership represents 95% of world trade in tropical timber and covers 75% of the world's tropical forests.

**ITTC-31:** The 31st session of the ITTC met in Yokohama, Japan, from 29 October-3 November 2001. The Council adopted decisions on: forest law enforcement; developing a draft workplan on mangrove forest ecosystems; establishing a database of statistics on the trade of bamboo and rattan; and assisting the development of auditing systems for the implementation of Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for SFM. At the session, members pledged US\$8.96 million to fund work for the promotion of tropical forest conservation and sustainable development, and the Council approved and financed several projects.

**ITTC-32:** The ITTC held its 32nd session in Bali, Indonesia, from 13-18 May 2002. The Council provided funds to facilitate input from, and participation of, a civil society advisory group (CSAG) in projects and during Council sessions. The Council also adopted decisions on: the ITTO's contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development; a revised Mangrove Work-



plan; guidelines for the restoration and management of degraded and secondary tropical forests; forest law enforcement in Africa; SFM in the Congo Basin; certification; and preparations for negotiating a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994. Member States pledged US\$8.129 million to fund selected projects and pre-projects, and the Council approved 19 projects and 10 pre-projects.

**ITTC-33:** The 33rd session of the ITTC met from 4-9 November 2002, in Yokohama, Japan. The Council adopted the ITTO's 2003 work programme, and decisions on: public relations, education and outreach; partnerships for SFM; prevention and management of forest fires; measures to reduce costs and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization; extension of the ITTA, 1994; and preparations for negotiating a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994. The Council approved 12 projects and 15 pre-projects. No pledges were made to fund selected projects and pre-projects. At the session, the CSAG held a panel discussion on the certified forest products marketplace.

### INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

#### EXPERT CONSULTATION ON TRADE AND SFM:

**IMPACTS AND INTERACTIONS:** At this Expert Consultation, which took place from 3-5 February 2003, in Rome, Italy, participants discussed the impacts of current trade policies and market developments on SFM, and the impacts of SFM on trade patterns and market share. They addressed, *inter alia*, trade of forest products and services, trade measures and policies, governance, forest land use, industry structure, and extra-sectoral influences.

**CICI-2003:** The International Conference on the C&I for SFM was held from 3-7 February 2003, in Guatemala City, Guatemala. The Conference adopted conclusions and recommendations on: strengthening the elaboration and application of C&I for SFM; promoting political commitment to the use of C&I; strengthening institutional capacity and stakeholder partnerships for implementing C&I and facilitating information exchange among stakeholders; and contributing to the United Nations Forum on Forests' (UNFF) work and international initiatives on C&I related to sustainable development.

#### TRANSBOUNDARY CONSERVATION WORKSHOP:

The Workshop on Increasing the Effectiveness of Transboundary Conservation Areas (TBCAs) in Tropical Forests convened from 17-21 February 2003, in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand. Participants considered domestic initiatives, and ways of improving the effectiveness and expansion of coverage of TBCAs.

**UNFF COUNTRY-LED INITIATIVES:** The ITTO has supported several UNFF country-led initiatives, including the Expert Meeting on the Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies for the Sustainable Management of Mangrove Ecosystems in Latin America and the Wider Caribbean (3-5 March 2003, Managua, Nicaragua), which assessed the status of environmentally-sound technologies and approaches to improve technology transfer, and addressed regional strategies for the conservation and sustainable management of mangrove forests. The ITTO also supported the International Expert Consultation on the Role of Planted Forests in SFM (24-30 March 2003, Wellington, New Zealand), which considered, *inter alia*, ways to maximize the contribution of planted forests to global SFM, and to support countries in implementing actions promoting SFM. The ITTO also participated in the UNFF Country-led Initiative on Lessons Learned in Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) Proposals for Action (17-20 March 2003, Viterbo, Italy). At this meeting, participants considered, *inter alia*, approaches to monitoring and implementing the Proposals for Action, and stakeholder collaboration to improve countries' monitoring, assessment and reporting capacities.

**WORKING GROUP ON PREPARATIONS FOR NEGOTIATING A SUCCESSOR AGREEMENT TO THE ITTA, 1994:** The Working Group met in Bern, Switzerland, from 7-11 April 2003. Participants reviewed responses by ITTO member countries on various aspects of the negotiation of a successor agreement to ITTA, 1994, including: the new agreement's scope; the organization, duration and frequency of Council sessions, and issues related to the Secretariat's work; funding mechanisms; and the process for the PrepCom. They also considered new and emerging issues relevant to the ITTC process and ITTO's relationship with other international organizations.

**WORKING GROUP ON CIVIL SOCIETY/PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FOR SFM:** The Working Group, held in Yokohama, Japan, from 16-18 April 2003, considered, *inter alia*: procedures for developing, submitting and processing partnership proposals; guidelines for selecting partnership proposals; and guidance on monitoring and evaluating partnerships.

**MCPFE-4:** The Fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe took place from 28-30 April 2003, in Vienna, Austria. Participants adopted the Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration and resolutions on: strengthening synergies for SFM through cross-sectoral cooperation and national forest programmes; enhancing the economic viability of SFM; preserving and enhancing the social and cultural dimensions of SFM; conserving and enhancing forest biodiversity; and climate change and SFM.

**TWELFTH MEETING OF THE IAG:** The Informal Advisory Group held its 12th meeting on 11 May 2003, prior to ITTC-34. Participants discussed, *inter alia*: the scope of the IAG's role; issues regarding preparations for negotiating a successor agreement to ITTA, 1994, including funding; ways to enhance project funding; and draft elements of decisions submitted by members on measures to reduce costs and improve the ITTO's efficiency and effectiveness. The IAG also proposed that ITTC-34 consider and adopt decisions on, *inter alia*: project implementation management; preparations for negotiating a successor agreement to ITTA, 1994; training for C&I and reporting; cooperation with other organizations; the administrative account; C&I; CITES listing of bigleaf mahogany; and coverage of ITTC sessions and negotiating conferences by the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*.

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**COUNCIL SESSION:** ITTC-34 will open at 10:00 am in the Miramar Ballroom. Delegates will address organizational matters, hear reports and statements and consider keynote presentations on the role of phased approaches to certification to promote SFM, to be delivered by Markku Simula, and on partnerships for SFM, to be delivered by Barney Chan, Chair of the Working Group on civil society/private partnerships for SFM.

**JOINT COMMITTEE SESSION:** A joint committee session will be held from 4:00 – 4:30 pm in the Miramar Ballroom to consider the report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals.

**COMMITTEE SESSIONS:** From 4:30 – 6:00 pm, the CEM and CFI will hold a joint session in the Marina Grand Salon, and the CRF will convene in the Miramar Ballroom.

**PRODUCER AND CONSUMER GROUP MEETINGS:** The Producer Group will meet in the Miramar Ballroom from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. The Consumer Group will convene at the same time in the Marina Grand Salon.