



THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL AND RELATED COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 20-23 JULY 2004

The thirty-sixth session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-36) will meet from 20-23 July 2004, in Interlaken, Switzerland. Delegates to ITTC-36 will discuss, *inter alia*: listing proposals for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); preparations for negotiating a successor agreement to the 1994 International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA, 1994); progress reports on the study of forest law enforcement and governance in Malaysia and Honduras; phased approaches to certification in selected producing member countries; developments in UN Framework Convention on Climate Change/Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UNFCCC/IPCC) discussions regarding forests; efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to better raise awareness of the purpose and activities of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO); and the promotion of sustainable forest management (SFM) in the Congo Basin. Delegates will also participate in a panel discussion jointly organized by the Trade Advisory Group and Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) entitled "Forest Law and Governance: Combating Illegal Logging and Associated Trade."

The thirty-fourth 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; consider reports on completed projects and pre-projects; conduct *ex-post* evaluations; review projects, pre-projects and activities in progress; and consider project and pre-project proposals. The ITTC's Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) will convene its fifteenth session to review, *inter alia*, the status of the Administrative Account and resources of the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund.

Immediately following ITTC-36, the United Nations Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the ITTA, 1994 will convene from 26-30 July 2004 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

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) to: provide an effective framework for cooperation and consultation between countries producing and consuming tropical timber; promote the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber and the improvement of structural conditions in the tropical timber

market; promote and support research and development to improve forest management and wood utilization; and encourage the development of national policies for the sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests and their genetic resources and for 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 three-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 ITTA, 1994 was extended twice for three-year periods and is scheduled to expire on 31 December 2006.

The ITTA established the International Tropical Timber Organization, headquartered in Yokohama, Japan, which provides a framework for tropical timber producer and consumer countries to discuss, exchange information about 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 also administers assistance for related projects. The ITTO has 58 members divided into two caucuses: producer countries (33 members) and consumer countries (25 members, including European Community member states). The ITTO membership represents 95 percent of world trade in tropical timber and 75 percent of the world's tropical forests.

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. At the session, the CSAG held a panel discussion on the certified forest products marketplace.

ITTC-34: The thirty-fourth session of the ITTC met from 12-17 May 2003, in Panama City, Panama. The Council adopted 11 decisions on: projects, pre-projects and activities; the management of the administrative budget; the Asia Forest Partnership; criteria and indicators (C&I) for SFM; matters related to Article 16 of the



ITTA, 1994 concerning the Executive Director of the ITTO and staff; negotiations for a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994; cooperation between ITTO and CITES on broad-leaf mahogany; the management of project implementation; the Biennial Work Programme and Administrative Budget; phased approaches to certification; and the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber. Delegates also approved nine projects and eight pre-projects.

ITTC-35: The thirty-fifth session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-35) took place from 3-8 November 2003, in Yokohama, Japan. The Council adopted decisions on: projects, pre-projects and activities; management of the Administrative Account for 2003; an Executing Agencies Account; and the ITTO Biennial Work Programme for 2004-2005. The Council also approved 16 projects and four pre-projects.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

EXPERT CONSULTATION ON CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT:

This expert consultation on C&I for SFM was held from 2-4 March 2004, in Cebu City, the Philippines. Nearly 50 experts from over 30 countries and the nine on-going C&I processes gathered to make recommendations on how to enhance the implementation of C&I for SFM, including improving liaison and communication between C&I processes and promoting common understanding of terms. The meeting, hosted and chaired by the Government of the Philippines and sponsored by ITTO and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), arrived at a series of concrete recommendations, including the establishment of an international advisory group on C&I to address technical and policy issues common to the processes; assistance from established to newer processes; and support for the establishment of process secretariats where these do not already exist.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TROPICAL FORESTS: PRIVATE SECTOR EXPERIENCES:

The International Conference on Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests: Private Sector Experiences, a joint initiative of the Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia and the ITTO, convened from 13-15 April 2004, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Conference participants reviewed private-sector experiences in SFM in the tropics and discussed ways that success stories could be expanded to other companies and community groups. The conference was the culmination of a three-year ITTO-funded project searching for private-sector success stories in the three tropical regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Several obstacles to SFM were identified, including: decreasing donor contributions to SFM; illegal logging and illegal trade of timber products; unnecessary bureaucratic procedures, such as overlapping regulations between state, federal and other government levels; corruption; and the short-term nature of many timber concessions.

INTERLAKEN WORKSHOP ON DECENTRALIZATION, FEDERAL SYSTEMS IN FORESTRY AND NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMMES:

The workshop on decentralization, federal systems in forestry and national forest programmes (NFPs) convened in Interlaken, Switzerland, from 27-30 April 2004. This UNFF country-led initiative was launched by Switzerland and Indonesia and conducted by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and Intercooperation. Participants at the workshop adopted a series of recommendations for consideration at UNFF-4, including to: develop a common understanding of the concepts and definitions to facilitate dialogue on forestry decentralization; promote dissemination of appropriate information to enhance understanding of forestry decentralization; formulate approaches for maintaining protected areas while

enabling traditional use by local people; develop principles to guide institutional choice for equitable representation; promote the valuation of, and compensation for, forest environmental services; analyze the implications of decentralization for the development of NFPs; strengthen stakeholders capacity; and promote partnership among various stakeholders and sectors for human and institutional capacity building as well as the involvement of NGOs and other major groups as equal partners in planning, monitoring and implementation activities.

UNFF-4: The fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF-4) was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 3-14 May 2004. At the meeting, delegates considered progress in implementation in the following thematic areas: social and cultural aspects of forests; traditional forest-related knowledge; forest-related scientific knowledge; finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies; and monitoring, assessment and reporting and C&I. The Forum also considered issues common to each UNFF session, including enhanced cooperation and coordination with other international organizations, and intersessional work.

CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF CENTRAL AFRICAN FORESTS: Central African forestry officials along with representatives from the donor community, including the US, France, Italy, Germany, FAO and the African Development Bank, met from 25-26 June 2004, in Brazzaville, Congo, to develop a regional strategy for the sustainable management of the ecosystems of Central African countries, especially the Congo Basin forest. The Conference of Ministers in Charge of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) is recognized by the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, which was launched at the WSSD, as the central policy- and decision-making body for the conservation and sustainable management of forests in Central Africa.

1ST WORLD CONGRESS ON AGROFORESTRY: Participants from over 80 countries met at the inaugural World Congress on Agroforestry from 27 June – 2 July 2004, in Orlando, Florida, US, to discuss current trends and developments in the field of agroforestry. Delegates to the congress issued the Orlando Declaration, which recognizes, *inter alia*, that agroforestry will greatly enhance the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by improving household incomes and human health and promoting gender equity and environmental sustainability. The declaration calls upon the CBD, CCD, UNFCCC and UNFF to endorse the role of agroforestry in accomplishing their objectives and urges countries to incorporate agroforestry into their poverty eradication strategies.

FOURTEENTH INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP: On 19 July 2004 the fourteenth Informal Advisory Group of the ITTO met in Interlaken, Switzerland in advance of ITTC-36 to discuss issues relevant to ITTC-36, including potential decisions on: the length of ITTC sessions; the dates and venues of future ITTC sessions; and projects and pre-projects.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

OPENING SESSION: Delegates will convene the opening session of ITTC-36 from 10:00 am – 1:30 pm in Theater-Saal to adopt the agenda, hear opening statements, admit observers and consider the report of the Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal for Project Proposals on measures to improve project formulation and appraisal.

JOINT COMMITTEE SESSION: Delegates will convene in the Joint Committee from 1:30 – 2:30 pm in Theater-Saal.

CEM/CFI: Delegates will convene in the CEM-CFI from 3:30 – 6:30 pm in Ballsaal.

CRF: Delegates will convene in the CRF from 3:30 – 6:30 pm in Theater-saal.