

FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL AND ASSOCIATED SESSIONS OF THE FOUR COMMITTEES: 5-10 NOVEMBER 2007

The forty-third Session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) and the Associated Sessions of the four Committees (Finance and Administration; Economic Information and Market Intelligence; Forest Industry; and Reforestation and Forest Management) will be held in Yokohama, Japan, from 5-10 November 2007. Major topics to be addressed during this session include: the Biennial Work Programme 2008-2009; developments in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) regarding forests and climate change; CITES listing proposals and enhanced cooperation with ITTO on ramin and mahogany; and preparations for entry into force of ITTA, 2006. The ITTC will receive a report on the implementation of the ITTO Yokohama Action Plan 2002-2006, and will consider the draft Yokohama Action Plan 2008-2013.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ITTC

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 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 during 1993-1994. The successor agreement, the ITTA, 1994, was adopted on 26 January 1994, and entered into force on 1 January 1997. It contains broader provisions for information sharing, including

on non-tropical timber trade data; allows for consideration of non-tropical timber issues as they relate to tropical timber; and includes the ITTO Objective 2000 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.

In 2003 negotiations began on a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994. The ITTA, 2006 was adopted by the UN Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to ITTA, 1994 in Geneva on 27 January 2006. The ITTA, 2006 builds on the foundations of the previous agreements, focusing on the world tropical timber economy and the sustainable management of the resource base, simultaneously encouraging the timber trade and improved forest management. It also allows for the consideration of non-tropical timber issues as they relate to tropical timber.

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 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 60 members, including the European Community (EC), which are divided into two caucuses: producer countries (33 members) and consumer countries (27 members). The ITTO's membership represents 90% of world trade in tropical timber and 80% of the world's tropical forests.

The governing body of the ITTO is the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC), which includes all members. Annual contributions and votes are distributed equally between the producers and consumers. The Council is supported by four committees, which are open to all members and provide advice and assistance to the Council on issues for consideration and decision: Economic Information and Market Intelligence; Reforestation and Forest Management; Forest Industry; and Finance and Administration. The ITTC performs, or arranges for the performance of, all functions necessary to carry out the provisions of the ITTA, 1994.

ITTC-38: The 38th session of the ITTC convened in Brazzaville, Congo, from 19-21 June 2005. Participants deliberated on, *inter alia*: ITTO missions to Liberia and Gabon; *ex-post* evaluations of project work, including on transboundary protected areas; phased approaches to certification; and the State of Tropical Forest Management report. Participants also discussed ITTO's support to the Conference of Ministers in Charge of Forests in Central Africa, and approved US\$7.6 million in project funding.

ITTC-39: The 39th session of the ITTC met from 7-12 November 2005, in Yokohama, Japan. During the session, delegates discussed a range of issues, including: ITTO Objective 2000; negotiating a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994; and phased approaches to certification. Delegates approved 11 projects and one pre-project, pledged US\$5.2 million in project financing, and adopted a decision requesting the ITTO Executive Director to implement a list of thirty Biennial Work Programme activities and to seek voluntary contributions to finance these.

ITTC-40: The 40th session of the ITTC met from 29 May to 2 June 2006, in Mérida, Mexico. Delegates proposed the formation of a committee on wildlife trafficking, and received a report on the status of tropical forest management. The Council approved 18 projects and three pre-projects and allocated US\$3.9 million in project funding. The Council also decided to allocate US\$200,000 to help fund the First Parliamentarians Meeting on the Management of Central African Forests in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

ITTC-41: The 41st session of the ITTC met from 6-11 November 2006, in Yokohama, Japan. The Council approved 13 new projects and granted funding for 11 projects and seven pre-projects. Additional funding from the European Commission was allocated to support capacity building in ITTO member states for the implementation of CITES listings of timber species. The Council adopted terms of reference for selecting a new Executive Director, but postponed a decision on whether to agree to waive all of Liberia's arrears to the ITTO until ITTC-42.

ITTC-42: The 42nd session of the ITTC met from 7-12 May 2007 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. After much heated debate, the Council selected Emmanuel Ze Meka (Cameroon) as the new Executive Director of the ITTO. Delegates also discussed issues concerning operational, project and policy work, including: forest law enforcement in the context of sustainable timber production and trade; CITES listing proposals; ITTO guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests; civil society/private sector partnerships for sustainable forest management; and developments in the UNFCCC regarding forests.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

FAO/ITTO CONFERENCE ON WOOD-BASED

BIOENERGY: The FAO and the ITTO hosted an international conference on wood-based bioenergy in Hannover, Germany, from 17-19 May 2007. Participants discussed the use of logging and wood-processing residues and dedicated bioenergy timber plantations for energy generation. They agreed that the international community should support the development of efficient and cost-effective wood-based bioenergy in tropical countries and that the wood-based bioenergy sector needs to be developed on the basis of sustainable forest management.

CITES COP-14: The fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 3-15 June 2007, in The Hague, the Netherlands. Forest-related developments included the listing of Brazil wood in Appendix II, meaning that trade in the species will be tightly controlled while trade in finished products will remain exempted. Other timber species, including Spanish cedar and two species of rosewood, did not receive the same protection, but delegates agreed to establish a working group composed of officials from range states to consider alternative ways to protect the trees. CITES delegates also agreed to a US proposal to draw up an official memorandum of understanding to strengthen the relationship between the convention and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

FAO/ITTO WORKSHOP ON FOREST LAW

ENFORCEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA: FAO and ITTO co-sponsored a regional workshop to promote better forest law compliance in the Central American region from 27-29 June 2007, in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The workshop brought together over 60 experts from nine countries to discuss regional experiences in dealing with illegal logging and illegal timber trade, and included a special address by Honduran president José Manuel Zelaya Rosales.

FAO/ITTO WORKSHOP ON FLCG IN SE ASIA: A regional workshop on improving forest law compliance and governance in Southeast Asia, organized by the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the FAO and the ITTO, was held in Manila, the Philippines, from 11-13 September 2007. Participants identified obstacles to improving compliance and governance, and formulated recommendations to surmount these barriers.

ITTO MEETING ON NON-TIMBER FOREST

PRODUCTS: ITTO hosted an international conference to promote the development of tropical non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and services in Beijing, China, from 23-28 September 2007. Participants shared experiences in promoting tropical NTFPs in domestic and international trade, and made recommendations on policy and other measures to promote their sustainable production and sustainable provision of forest services.

FAO CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF ASIAN

FORESTS: The Food and Agriculture Organization hosted a conference on "The future of forests in Asia and the Pacific: Outlook for 2020," from 16-18 October 2007, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, as part of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission's Forestry Sector Outlook Study. Participants assessed the likely changes in societal demands on forests and ways to address the emerging challenges and opportunities. UN forestry experts said that Asian countries would need to make dramatic adjustments in how they manage forests in the face of rapid globalization.

DAILY MEETING COVERAGE AND SUMMARY REPORT

The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* will be providing daily web coverage of this meeting at: <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/ittc43/>

A full summary and brief analysis will be available on Tuesday, 13 November 2007.