



**SUMMARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
EXPERT CONSULTATION, "PUTTING THE IPF  
PROPOSALS FOR ACTION INTO PRACTICE  
AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL"  
29 JUNE - 03 JULY, 1998**

The International Expert Consultation on "Putting the IPF Proposals for Action into Practice at the National Level," took place from 29 June – 3 July 1998 in Baden-Baden, Germany. The Consultation was the culmination of the International Forum on Forests (IFF) Government-led Six-Country Initiative. The Initiative, undertaken by Finland, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Uganda and the United Kingdom, aims to improve the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action at the national level through the elaboration of recommendations based on the results of a case study exercise involving countries from the six participating countries and the International Expert Consultation.

The Consultation was attended by 109 experts from 37 countries, representing governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and development agencies. Over the course of the week participants met in plenary, participated in a panel discussion and took part in four parallel working groups. They heard and compared experiences from the case study exercise and developed ideas and recommendations on implementing the IPF Proposals for Action at the national level. Participants also took part in sustainable forest management excursions to three different forest sites in the surroundings of Baden-Baden.

The primary outcome of the Consultation was a summary report of the weeks discussions, conclusions and recommendations. This Report of the International Expert Consultation will be submitted as a conference paper to the second meeting of the IFF to be held 24 August - 4 September 1998 in Geneva. The Report contains twenty-two conclusions and ten recommendations pertaining to the international and national level.

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SIX-COUNTRY  
INITIATIVE AND RECENT  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL FOREST-RELATED  
DECISIONS**

The Six-Country Initiative was established at the first session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF-I) held in October 1997 in New York. It was catalyzed by the German delegation's interest in cooperating with partners from the North and the South in an initiative to support the work on Programme element I.a of the IFF Programme of Work, Promoting and facilitating the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action. Finland, Honduras, Indo-

nesia, Uganda and the United Kingdom, in close collaboration with the IFF Secretariat, UNDP and FAO, agreed to join Germany in a Government-led initiative. The objectives of the Six-Country Initiative "Putting the IPF Proposals for Action into Practice at the National Level" were to enhance implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action at the national level and to develop guidance from country experiences for consideration at IFF-2.

The premise of the Initiative is that the IPF Proposals for Action represent significant progress and consensus on a wide range of forest issues agreed upon at the intergovernmental level and that countries are now under a political obligation to implement the proposals at the national level. The Initiative was based on a two-step approach: first, case studies were undertaken in the six participating countries and a synthesis report was produced on the national experiences, conclusions and recommendations; and second, the International Expert Consultation was held to discuss the case studies and build consensus on recommendations for implementing the Proposals. A Technical Support Group, coordinated by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), was established to assist in the preparation and implementation of the entire Initiative process.

**SIX-COUNTRY INITIATIVE PREPARATORY MEETING**

The Initiative was launched at a preparatory meeting held from 3 - 5 February 1998 in Bonn, Germany. The meeting aimed to achieve a common understanding of the objectives, results and the activities of the Initiative. Participants expressed expectations that the Initiative would: help national level actors to understand internationally agreed decisions and how to implement them at the national level; bring the national and international agendas closer together; and improve the process and products of the IFF and other international fora in terms of clarity, effectiveness and consensus.

**THE CASE STUDY EXERCISE**

The six participating countries conducted case studies from February -- April 1998. The case studies assessed the IPF Proposals against national settings with regard to the institutional arrangements of the public and the private sector, the political and socio-economic situation and the ecological context of each country. To facilitate and provide a systematic structure for the case studies, the Technical Support Group compiled a Practitioners' Guide for implementing the IPF Proposals for Action. The guide provides an annotated version of the Proposals which identifies those Proposals that call for action at the national level and presents them in an accessible format. A Synthesis Report of the case studies was produced that reflects the national experiences, conclusions and recommendations of the six countries. The Synthesis Report highlights that, *inter alia*: conservation and sustainable manage-

ment of all types of forests is the overarching objective of all co-sponsoring countries; the methodology for assessing the IPF Proposals is recommended to other countries; and while the term "implementation" of the Proposals does not mean their direct "transformation" into national action, a process of assessment, interpretation and planning needs to take place.

### **RECENT INTERGOVERNMENTAL FOREST-RELATED DECISIONS**

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development's (CSD) open-ended *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) was established in 1995 to pursue consensus and coordinated proposals for action to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The IPF focused on 12 Programme elements under five chapter headings, on: implementation of UNCED forest-related decisions; international cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer; research, assessment and development of criteria and indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management; trade and environment; and international organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments. Its objective was to submit final conclusions and policy recommendations to the CSD at its fifth session (CSD-5) in April 1997. The Panel met four times from 1995 - 1997 and adopted a final report at its fourth session in February 1997, which it submitted to CSD-5. The report contains approximately 140 Proposals for Action under its 12 Programme elements, including a call for continued inter-governmental forest policy dialogue. However, IPF delegates could not agree on a few major issues such as financial assistance and trade-related matters, or whether to begin negotiations on a global forest convention. On these and other elements, the IPF forwarded a range of options to the CSD in its report. CSD-5 adopted the IPF's report and forwarded a set of recommendations based upon its findings to the UN General Assembly Special Session to conduct an overall review and appraisal of progress in implementing the UNCED agreements since the 1992 Earth Summit (UNGASS).

The UN General Assembly, at its nineteenth special session in June 1997, decided to continue the intergovernmental policy dialogue on forests through the establishment of an *ad hoc* open-ended Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) under the aegis of the CSD. In addition, the General Assembly decided that "the Forum should also identify the possible elements of work toward consensus on international arrangements and mechanisms, for example, a legally-binding instrument." The Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1997/65, established the IFF, which will report to the CSD at its eighth session in 2000.

The IFF held its organizational session from 1 - 3 October 1997 at UN Headquarters in New York. Delegates agreed on a programme of work, consisting of the following three categories: I) promoting and facilitating the implementation of the IPF's proposals for action, and reviewing, monitoring and reporting on progress in the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests; II) considering matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the IPF process (financial resources, trade and environment, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, forest-related work of international and regional organizations, and other issues requiring further clarification); and III) identifying elements, building a global consensus and engaging in further action on international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests

### **REPORT OF THE MEETING OPENING PLENARY**

The International Expert Consultation was opened by Gerdi Staiblin, Minister for Rural Affairs of the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg, on 29 July 1998. She welcomed the participants to the consultation and said that all countries must establish country-specific approaches to sustainable forest management (SFM), with international agreements providing a common basis. Ernst Wermann, Director of Forests, Forestry Department, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry (Germany) addressed the participants and emphasized that Germany's drive for discussions on a global forest convention will not delay other urgent measures on forests such as the IPF Proposals for Action. He noted that Germany's federal structure incorporates different forest situations with various institutional and legal arrangements and stressed that Germany would expect any international agreement to leave scope allowing federal states to implement them in accordance with their needs.

Hans-Peter Schipulle, Head of the Environment, Natural Resources and Forestry Division of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (Germany), spoke on behalf of Michael Bohnet, Deputy Director General of BMZ. He highlighted: the need for IPF Proposals to strengthen national policies and international cooperation; the reversal of deforestation through holistic and cross-sectoral processes, such as Germany's new rural holistic and multi-sectoral development aid activities which are based on partner country needs and priorities; and comprehensive policy frameworks, including national forest programmes (NFPs). He underlined the importance of wide cooperation for achieving consistent national forest plans and as a basis for improving international cooperation on forests. He stated that Germany is prepared to respond to countries' proposals for putting the IPF Proposals for Action into practice at the national level.

Ambassador Bagher Asadi (Iran) and Ambassador Ilkka Ristimäki (Finland), IFF Co-Chairs, gave a joint keynote address, highlighting the international significance of the IPF's Proposals for Action and endeavors toward their implementation. Ambassador Asadi noted that the proposals call for action at the national level and underscored that they do not represent a coherent plan of action, but are to be used by countries according to their national plans and priorities. Ambassador Ristimäki stressed the importance of the international donor community and noted that many developing countries have been left with inadequate international support for their forest-related activities. He highlighted the FAO Forestry Advisers Group's (FAG) role in placing high priority on NFP and said this had led to wider participation of both developed and developing countries. He noted that there is now international consensus on the need for a comprehensive forest policy framework for all forests, that both developed and developing countries have responsibilities to fulfill and that successful sustainable management at the global level requires participants to consider provision of adequate financial and technical support to developing countries. In closing, he asked participants to consider how to develop participatory approaches in the post-IPF period, how to ensure an impact from the IPF Proposals for Action at the highest levels and how to establish new partnerships with regional organizations, development banks, NGOs and the private sector.

Christian Mersmann (GTZ) presented the provisional agenda and introduced the Working Document for the meeting, which contained key findings of the synthesis report of the six national case studies and objectives and questions to guide the working groups. He thanked the participants of the Six-Country Initiative for their cooperation on the case studies, and IFF, UNDP and FAO for their continued support. He explained that the report of the meeting would be submitted to the UN Secretary General for

presentation at IFF-2 as a formal conference paper, and that an additional document detailing the process would also be submitted as a background document.

### **PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE SIX-COUNTRY INITIATIVE CASE STUDIES**

On 29 July, a panel composed of representatives from Finland, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Uganda and the United Kingdom, discussed the results of their case studies on the implementation of IFF Programme element I.a, Promoting and facilitating the implementation of the IPF's Proposals for Action. The panel discussion, moderated by Consultation Co-Chairs Untung Iskander (Indonesia) and Hans-Peter Schipulle (Germany), focused on the results of the Synthesis Report on the national case studies. To frame the discussion, members of the Technical Support Group presented information on: the methodology used to assess the IPF Proposals for Action; elements of national forest-related policy frameworks; and the evaluation of the relevance and value of the Proposals.

Astrid Skala-Kuhmann (Germany) presented the methodology for the case study exercise. She explained that participating countries were asked to assess and critically test the Proposals against the national setting in a participatory manner, taking into consideration the institutional arrangements of the public and private sectors as well as the political, socio-economic and ecological context of each country. She enumerated the following key questions considered during the exercise: which Proposals are relevant to the national context; which actions are already in place and their effectiveness; how practicable the individual proposals are and their associated potentials and constraints; what contributions the national experiences can make to the international discussion on SFM; and to what extent international support is needed to complement national actions. She said the case studies revealed that the Practitioner's Guide is a useful tool and that the participatory nature of the process was especially valuable, and had demonstrated that the Proposals should be regarded as integral to forestry sector activities rather than as a parallel process.

A representative from Indonesia highlighted: the formation of a consultative group on Indonesian forests; establishment of a task force; development of a national case study with results and proposals for forestry development projects to support implementation of the Proposals; and evaluation of IPF proposals as of high, medium and low relevance. Problems in implementation included: land use policies favoring forest consumption; deficient macro-economic incentives for SFM; lack of participation by forest-dependent people; lack of coordination within and between forest-relevant sectors; and a need for C&I. A representative from Germany reported that the Baden-Württemberg process found almost all the Proposals for Action relevant and completely or partially implemented. The process involved stakeholder round-table discussions on each Proposal and on assessment of the case study, with continuing discussions planned for the future.

A representative from Honduras reported that with Finnish assistance they had reviewed the documents in relation to their national goals. He stated that a review of Honduras' 1996 National Forestry Action Plan was undertaken as part of the process, with broad stakeholder participation, and responses to international agreements were found to be often lacking. He recommended an international effort to promote accountability for agreements signed while bearing in mind the context of national sovereignty. Finland reported that a network of authorities from a broad range of backgrounds had distributed information about international processes. He recommended looking for a way to make such an exercise easier and the use of a more holistic approach rather than a proposal-by-proposal approach.

A representative from Uganda said that because of its limited resources, the main challenge was to make the IPF Proposals for Action compatible with priority areas within the government, such as poverty eradication. He described difficulties confronted in involving the private sector in the study due to time limitations and the dispersed locations of private forest owners. The study found 50% of the 149 Proposals to be relevant. A representative of the UK emphasized the importance of bridging the gap between international commitments and national practitioners and their activities on the ground. She said the number of ministries that share responsibility for forests was a challenge for the case study, and highlighted the usefulness of a mapping exercise that detailed all agencies and groups involved in forestry in the UK.

A representative of Finland expressed the desire to find practical tools for implementing the IPF Proposals in order to consolidate areas of consensus, and highlighted the need to reach consensus on issues still pending. He noted that guidance from Governments to multilateral and bilateral processes relevant to forests and development cooperation is needed. He called for mainstreaming the Proposals into policy statements and NGO programs, and identification of C&Is for monitoring their implementation. He noted: the Forest Partnership Agreement approach; the overlap and fragmentation of the work of international and multilateral organizations; and the lack of a coherent structure for financing.

Tapani Oksanen (Finland), presented the main elements of national forest-related policy frameworks. He noted that many country-specific NFP definitions depend on: administrative structures, the role of the forest sector, the role of government, NGOs and the private sector, development needs and priorities, and historical factors. He pointed to common trends, including: a decrease in traditional sectoral approaches; increasing reliance on market-based instruments; greater roles for NGOs and the private sector; a focus on decentralization and participation; and macro-economic reforms and globalization.

A representative from Finland presented an overview of its NFP and its coordination with other programmes. He highlighted the use of public fora and monitoring as mechanisms for implementation. A representative from Indonesia noted a strong correlation between Indonesia's five-year development action plan and Indonesia's implementation of the IPF proposals for action.

A representative from Honduras highlighted its new agenda, which emphasizes sustainable development and environmental protection. He stressed that agrarian reform is important to improve quality of life for forest communities. He explained that the five elements of its forest programme, which evolved through a process of consensus building, are interlinked. He stressed that Honduras' have a global perspective and are not based on what is happening in Honduras alone. He underscored that technical assistance is highly valuable.

A German representative reported that, feedback at the sub-national level is becoming increasingly important for the federal government as international agreements and commitments become more numerous. He said that the federal government sets a framework within which the federal states act. He highlighted that this decentralized system allows for more involvement of civil society. The high level of collaboration between ministries that are involved in forests was also noted. He emphasized the interactive development of plans between the state and federal governments. Noting that while this works well, he said that bridges between national and sub-national levels and stakeholder participation must be strengthened.

A representative of the UK noted the lack of a British NFP and reported on the involvement of numerous sections of society in sustainable forestry, including Parliament, Government agencies, sub-national authorities and entities, NGOs, and the corporate

sector. Three points were highlighted: multiple strategies and plans offer opportunities to define how non-forestry organizations can contribute to sustainable forestry; the forestry community should examine the contribution to sustainable forestry that a variety of public funds can make; and there is merit in establishing NFPs to help forest activities compete for available funds.

Uganda reported that its NFP was not established until recently, and that forest resources were fragmented between many institutions with institutional rivalries. He highlighted: a new "umbrella" forestry sector programme to harmonize work related to NFPs; capacity building; the transfer of responsibilities through decentralization and privatization; and donor coordination problems and investment issues. Common issues in the studies were noted, including the need for: flexibility; involvement of diverse stakeholders; consideration of the process of globalization; stronger international cooperation; and an international framework.

Stephen Bass (UK) introduced criteria for assessing the relevance and value of the IPF Proposals, including compatibility with national forest policy and legislation, institutions and programmes addressing Proposals, international obligations, development cooperation policy and other policies such as poverty alleviation. On the value of the IPF Proposals, he said they provide political moment for promoting national efforts, a checklist and a bridge to integration with other sectors. He cited possible benefits from mapping institutions and initiatives on both national and international levels to clarify areas of compliment and overlap and to assess relevance, obligations and opportunities. He underscored the importance of better communication between national and international communities and stakeholder participation. He concluded that the Proposals are a key step in SFM process once internalized at the national level.

The UK said communication was improved between the national and international levels and between practitioner on the ground and negotiators as a result of the Proposals. The representative from Uganda said that to determine international relevance, they looked at limited resources and donor mood to identify what is implementable. He said one issue for Uganda was the legal and technical "international jargon" of the Proposals which limits the relevance as it was difficult to understand what the Proposals mean.

A representative from Finland highlighted its priorities to ensure broad national participation, harmonize the implementation of NFPs and maintain a holistic approach that interlinks national and international factors. He said constraints included uncertainty surrounding sectoral planning and methods for implementing international environmental agreements. A representative from Honduras stressed the importance of accountability to the global process as well as the need to balance national and international priorities. He noted that there was not enough involvement of some stakeholders, including women, ethnic groups and forest dwellers.

Co-Chair Schipulle opened the floor for comments on the Synthesis Report with reference to questions on: methodologies and participatory mechanisms for evaluating the IPF Proposals for Action; instruments such as NFPs to implement the Proposals; and the value and relevance of the IPF Proposals versus the main problems or constraints in implementation. A participant from FAO noted that the Intergovernmental Task Force on Forests (ITFF) studied implementation of the Proposals for Action and identified lead agencies for ten of the eleven elements. He stated that this partnership has worked relatively well, noting that funding constraints inhibit cooperation while extra funding facilitates it.

An ITTO representative commented that the German and British cases serve as a model for many countries in similar situations. He supported mapping activities of international organizations in order to address duplication. A representative of Sweden

warned that coordination should not be pursued at the expense of the benefits of various experiences and perspectives. She noted that if money is short donor activities need to be coordinated better and synergy effects pursued.

A participant from the World Bank cautioned that national and international bodies should focus their efforts to coordinate, by considering their objectives, who should undertake an activity and whether it can really make a difference. A representative from the IFF Secretariat said the IPF had achieved a great deal with coordination, particularly in serving as a point of reference so that governments give a coherent message to international organizations. A representative of Finland proposed discussion on an "international forest instrument" for implementation of the IPF Proposals at the international level.

A participant from the Global Forest Policy Project noted that implementation is essential at all levels and commended Honduras and Indonesia on their honest assessments of their efforts to implement the Proposals. He called for more consideration on how to assess the relevance of Proposals in light of varying stakeholder perspectives and noted that to call some Proposals irrelevant after a two-year negotiating period challenges the purpose of negotiating international agreements.

A representative from Australia highlighted its preliminary assessment of implementation of the Proposals which was undertaken using a slightly different methodology. He said that the relevance and priority of all the Proposals both domestically and internationally was assessed by determining what would have the most impact. He said the assessment found about half of the IPF Proposals for Action to be relevant for Australia and that existing programmes cover most of these Proposals. He noted that some important issues such as fire management are not addressed by the Proposals.

A representative of the World Resource Institute asked about participation of various stakeholders and shifting perceptions as to the relevance of some Proposals. In response, a representative from Finland said that sustained stakeholder involvement was difficult for smaller NGOs because of their limited resources, but that larger NGOs with resources were able to sustain participation. A representative of Honduras noted that frequently NGOs and indigenous peoples are not involved because governments and private sectors fear a threat to their power.

A representative of a German NGO called for improving participation in all the case studies, particularly of national-level NGOs in Germany's case, and for consideration of consumption as an underlying cause of deforestation. A representative of the World Rainforest Movement emphasized the need to include consultation with local communities and indigenous peoples. A representative of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development noted that this process appears more government-dominated than truly consultative. A participant from the European Confederation of Private Forest Owners also expressed doubts about participation as it is practiced in general, asking whether balance is sought in the attempt to achieve consensus, whether non-representative groups are addressed and whether the process could be more transparent.

A participant from the Indonesian Eco-labelling Institute commented that participation issues exist within the conduct of the study itself and at the level of consultation between all stakeholders on formulating and implementing policy. He asked for more information on the Indonesian process of consulting with civil society, noting that Indonesian NGOs are frequently wary of being co-opted by attending meetings. Representatives of Finland, Indonesia and Germany gave clarifications on their participatory processes.

One participant pointed out that monitoring and reporting is already done in other processes, and that more time is needed for developing strategies to implement the IPF Proposals and for judging constraints on implementation. Another participant called for analyzing the costs of implementation.

### WORKING GROUP SESSIONS

On 30 June to 2 July, participants met in four parallel working groups which all addressed the three main objectives of the expert consultation as set out in the Working Document: an improved understanding of ways and means to address the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action in the national context; an improved understanding of the political/strategic and operational value of the Proposals in the national context; and an improved understanding of how to increase the effectiveness of international processes in the context of the issues contained in the Proposals. Each working group comprised approximately 25 participants chosen for balance between government, NGO and private sector representatives. Working groups were moderated by: Stephen Bass (United Kingdom), Claus-Michel Falkenberg (Germany), Bernd Liss (Germany), Nena Soeprapto (Indonesia), Cornelia Sepp (Germany), Philippe Alirol (Switzerland), Maria Fernanda Espinoza (Ecuador) and Astrid Skala-Kuhmann (Germany). The conclusions and recommendations of each group were presented by a rapporteur from each group in Plenary on Thursday morning.

*Objective 1:* Improved understanding of ways and means to address the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action in the national context

**Implementation and methodology for assessment:** Participants suggested, *inter alia*: regional workshops on practical steps; use and dissemination of the Practitioner's Guide or a simplification of the Proposals; focal points to oversee forest work; projects focusing on Proposal implementation; local-level awareness-raising and implementation exercises; incorporation of the Proposals into ongoing activities; review of national forest policies; a common international strategy and formula for prioritization; and maintenance of continuity and institutional memory. Participants strongly preferred country-led mechanisms for implementation. One participant recommended a bottom-up approach for elaborating a national strategy.

While many felt the Six-Country Initiative process was valuable, others were more circumspect. Participants agreed that more time was needed for full stakeholder involvement. One participant considered the methodology a possible framework for assessment, not a template, which should take into consideration differences between countries. Another voiced concern about the cost of such an initiative. Another noted the opportunity costs of not implementing the Proposals. A focus on national priorities, but with justification as to why some Proposals are not relevant, was also suggested.

**Participants concluded that:** the methodology in the case studies is only one possible logical structure for assessment; adequate time, resources and participation are needed; countries should group the Proposals around relevant issue areas; the Six-Country Initiative methodology is a helpful framework if adapted to specific country conditions; and practitioners need the Practitioner's Guide or a simplification of Proposal language.

**Working group recommendations included:** IFF encouragement to all countries to undertake such a systematic exercise with sufficient time for a full participatory process; use of the Practitioner's Guide as a tool; a more user-friendly presentation of the Proposals; implementation of the Proposals through existing national processes; and use of the Six-Country Initiative model as a guide but not a blueprint.

**Necessary instruments, mechanisms and participatory processes:** One participant noted that poor countries have different needs than rich ones. Participants generally agreed that NFPs or other policy frameworks are the primary instruments, defined nationally within the broader context of national planning and updated to comprise the IPF proposals. One participant recommended formation of permanent bodies for implementation. Suggested entities included: national focal points; national committees on sustainable development; national stakeholders' fora; task forces; and/or working groups. Some suggested mechanisms for improving SFM rather than for implementing the Proposals *per se*, mostly at the national level. Ideas included: harmonized legal and policy frameworks; capacity building; identification of constraints on SFM; elements of international cooperation such as linkages to international agreements and ongoing national processes; and the need for harmonized definitions.

One participant acknowledged that there is no single universally applicable instrument. He stressed diagnosing whether barriers to implementation are due to lack of ideas, political will or resources. Comments acknowledged three needed tasks: awareness building, national decisions on whether dialogue is necessary and improvement of the international dialogue.

**On participatory processes, participants discussed:** long-term needs; involvement of the private sector; roles of different sectors; weighting of different stakeholders' inputs; the lack of means for participation; difficulties in participation for unorganized stakeholders; decentralized forest planning; bottom-up problem identification and analysis; different levels of participation including empowering, advisory and consultative; the need for transparency and access to information; and the use of market research techniques.

Regarding involvement of sectors other than forestry, participants suggested a wide range of groups and subject areas, including eco-tourism, indigenous groups, rural development, health, soil, water, planning, trade, environment, social and cultural affairs, land use, economic enterprises, education, finance, biodiversity and conservation. Others stressed intersectoral planning, mediation between sectors, cross-sectoral mechanisms including participation and partnership, cross-sectoral linkages to justify support for forestry.

Participants concluded there is a need for: a forum/fora for debate on general forest issues; national focal points to guide assessments; awareness building; and assistance to some countries for implementation. There is wide variance between policy, legal and institutional frameworks and between forms of participation.

**Recommendations called for:** action to raise awareness of the IPF Proposals; dialogue to address underlying causes; a national-level body or forum, such as a mechanism to structure participation or for conflict resolution; an intersessional task force; increased coordination with other sectors/stakeholders; review of legislative frameworks inside and outside the forest sector; continuity of country representatives in international negotiations; stakeholder determination of Proposal relevance; use of existing processes or mechanisms when possible; use and review of NFPs or equivalent frameworks for assessment and implementation of IPF Proposals, and reform of NFPs as necessary; sub-national intersectoral planning; and ensured financial support for countries and civil society.

**Targets, standards, criteria and indicators:** Participants debated whether indicators pertained specifically to implementation of the Proposals (identification of a lead agency, review of Proposals and steps taken in the national implementation process) or to SFM and the general state of forests (forest cover and deforestation rate *per annum*). One participant suggested calling IPF

indicators "progress indicators." Others felt C&Is for SFM and IPF progress indicators are too closely related to distinguish them. A call was made for the IFF to do a comparative analysis.

Many participants called for agreed standards, criteria, and indicators. Some felt that criteria should be internationally agreed, with indicators developed at the national level, while others favored developing progress indicators at both levels. Participants agreed that national indicators should receive priority. One participant stressed that NFPs must contain a measurable framework.

Participants suggested disaggregating the Proposals. One participant made a distinction between global environmental priorities such as carbon sequestration and biodiversity, and national-level programmes. C&Is in other international agreements and regional processes and their value at all levels were highlighted, but one participant noted criteria at the local level should not hinge on the international level.

The working groups concluded that: national goals, policies and targets are more important than international benchmarks, as implementation of Proposals is different for different nations; the Proposals require many types of criteria; there is no universal concept of criteria for SFM; targets and indicators cannot be derived directly from the Proposals; and international targets cannot be formed by aggregating national targets.

**Working group recommendations called for:** IPF Proposal implementation according to internationally agreed norms; national C&Is, to be developed with stakeholder participation; use of existing C&Is as far as possible; and use of either C&Is for SFM or progress indicators for implementation of Proposals at the national and international levels.

**Monitoring of implementation:** During group discussions, several participants cautioned against proliferation of reporting obligations under various commitments and against distraction from national priorities. One participant recommended reporting at the national level. Another called for monitoring at the national level and reporting at the international level. Another participant warned against creating a "reporting monster," but others noted that reporting helps identify key issues for international attention and that international reporting can catalyze implementation. Others stressed the importance of accountability in reports, and one suggested some form of third party review.

**Conclusions drawn included that:** monitoring is primarily a national responsibility; incentives are needed for ensuring monitoring and reporting; separate reporting systems are inappropriate and current reporting at international levels is inefficient; feedback on reports is needed; results rather than actions should be monitored; and reporting systems should not be duplicated.

**Working groups recommended action to:** avoid unnecessary reporting burdens; report only on key issues; require NFPs to contain measurable frameworks; develop national ways of assessing implementation of Proposals within the context of monitoring NFPs; use existing monitoring and reporting systems, focus on national priorities, or consider streamlining forest-related reporting systems; consider a peer-review system of assessment of reporting; and explore appropriate modalities for international reporting on Proposal implementation based on nationally developed monitoring systems.

**Further international action:** One participant drew attention to the omission of forest fire management from the IPF proposals and, noting that somewhere between 10 and 30% of carbon emissions comes from forest fires, highlighted the potential benefits from cooperation with the UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol on carbon sequestration. One participant underlined the importance of cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), specifically to work on indicators for biodiversity and a new CBD forest

program. Another called for an instrument such as a clearing-house mechanism to address the overlapping and contradictory nature of international environmental regimes.

The groups concluded that a number of issues such as carbon sequestration, forest fire management, trade and environment, biodiversity and targets/criteria are not resolved by the IPF Proposals. They stressed the need for international support and greater political will.

Participants recommended identifying linkages, conflicts and compatibilities among international forest-related instruments in order to coordinate efforts. They also called for greater political will.

*Objective 2:* Improved understanding of the political/strategic and operational value of the proposals in the national context

**Impact and Relevance of IPF at the National Level:** In discussion on whether national forest policy was influenced specifically and uniquely by the IPF process, participants noted benefits including changes in forest concession rights, harmonization of land use and forest planning, increased community involvement in forest management, changes in legislation and law enforcement, greater private sector involvement and an emphasis on traditional forest-related knowledge. One participant noted that the IPF had provided NGOs with information that could be used to validate their requests for government action. Another predicted that one benefit would be to give forests credibility in competing with other sectors for attention and support at the national level. Others stated that it was too soon to judge whether the IPF had influenced forest developments in their countries.

Several delegates stressed that the negotiation process at the UN level does not necessarily have broad implications for action at the national level. One participant said the number of overlapping international processes confuse civil society and discourage participation. In general, the communication gap between diplomats negotiating at the international level and technical people working in the field was noted, and the need for local initiatives and popular information to disseminate conclusions from international fora to the local level was underscored. Various recommendations on how to improve communication between the levels, including a mandatory intersessional outreach process for the IFF, were made.

While still inadequate, some participants noticed an improvement in stakeholder participation throughout the IPF process. One participant highlighted a national initiative to consider and address all international conventions in the aggregate at the national level. Another participant, noting the limited representation of stakeholders at the Consultation, questioned the authenticity of participatory approaches. One participant suggested that a meeting on a specific issue such as trade or certification would have drawn more participants from industry.

Working group participants also discussed the political relevance and implications of the Proposals at the national level. One participant questioned the value of a global approach to forestry management and noted that in several countries the issues are already on the table at the national level, making it unclear whether the international process provides any impetus to nations. One participant said that many countries that developed NFPs are discouraged because promises of international assistance for implementation have not been fulfilled.

Conclusions highlighted that: the post-Rio process, including the IPF, created political support for SFM through high-level political awareness-raising; intersessional meetings facilitate information sharing among stakeholders; and the impact of IPF Proposals is improved if participation is ensured.

**Recommendations called for:** linking national fora to international affairs; mapping international initiatives to improved understanding of their interrelationships; promoting distribution of Proposals in popular form and in various languages; linking implementation of the Proposals to sustainable development planning at the national level; and creating domestic mechanisms for implementation of the Proposals and future IFF results.

**The IPF/IFF as Catalyst for Cross-Sectoral Integration:** Regarding whether the IPF/IFF process creates political momentum for the forestry sector to address issues beyond sectoral confines, many participants agreed that the forestry sector has been insular in the past and characterized the Proposals as a positive step towards integrating the forestry sector into the agriculture and transportation sectors. One participant stressed that declining ODA made integration of forestry into other sectors critical, and said foresters should be proactive in pursuing collaboration with other sectors. A trend toward integrating forestry into land use management was noted and participants considered possible avenues for collaboration with the UNFCCC, CBD and Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), recommending that the IPF Proposals be used to bridge initiatives. Opinions varied as to whether this should be done by the IFF or at the national level. One participant said that a permanent international forest body would be necessary to facilitate such integration.

One participant recommended an instrument to coordinate efforts, avoid duplication of effort and create synergies among international bodies and agreements. Another said that such an instrument should also be applied at the national level and on specific issues. Differences in legal status and relationships between agreements were recalled, and it was suggested that a legally binding agreement on forests was needed to put forests at the same level as other issue areas. There was consensus on the need to determine the interrelation of such agreements, but not on how this should be done or at what level.

Conclusions drawn from discussions noted a trend towards integration of forestry into other sectors such as energy and agriculture, the potential for holistic proposals to facilitate cross-sectoral cooperation and the constraints on the Proposals' political momentum beyond sectoral confines due to their voluntary nature.

Recommendations focused on strengthening the forestry sector's influence over other sectors at the national level and collaboration with the CBD or UNFCCC in areas of overlap.

**Stakeholder Involvement:** In discussions on stakeholder involvement, participants focused on how stakeholders contribute, systems for participation, raising awareness among stakeholders and mechanisms for facilitating stakeholder participation. Several participants underscored the value of stakeholder participation in the planning and decision-making stages of projects and processes. Participants also discussed the importance of participation for a sense of involvement in or "ownership" over NFPs and the Proposals. One participant noted that it was too late for stakeholders to feel ownership for the IPF Proposals as they were negotiated without their participation. One participant stressed that token stakeholder participation alone is not enough, but rather that real dialogues must also be developed and sustained.

Discussions on mechanisms for strengthening stakeholder involvement centered around financial support. One person noted that funding for NFPs has been declining since 1993 and another participant agreed that NFPs should be a priority for aid. Participants commented on the importance of ODA for stakeholder inclusion in project development in developing countries. Participants suggested possible ways to finance stakeholder participation, including mandated contributions, government support of partici-

pation, donor financing for delegates from developing countries to attend meetings such as the IFF and for the creation of national networks to strengthen national forest dialogue.

**Conclusions noted that:** efficient and manageable participation is a real challenge in most countries; balanced representation is difficult to achieve, some country representatives at negotiations are not connected to national forest processes; and some countries lack sufficient human and financial resources to participate in IPF/IFF negotiations in a sustained and effective manner.

**Recommendations made on this topic called for action to:** develop a culture of and mechanisms for participation; provide financial support for participatory processes; support intersessional processes to enrich international negotiations from national and sectoral perspectives; secure representative participation of all relevant stakeholders in decision-making processes through the establishment of decentralized and long-term fora; self-selection by stakeholder groups or democratic administrative and political structures; elaborate a user's guide to the IPF Report; promote capacity building within civil society to enhance participation in the NFP process; develop national positions through consultations and partnerships prior to and following IFF negotiations; include representatives of different stakeholders on delegations to the IFF; and ensure support from donors and international organizations for national fora or networks to improve national dialogue and broaden participation.

*Objective 3:* Improved understanding of how to increase the effectiveness of international processes in the context of the issues contained in the proposals

**Interlinkage between National and International Processes:** Participants considered how to organize the elaboration of national positions and priorities and how the results of international processes could best be linked with the implementation of the IPF Proposals. One participant highlighted the importance of groups at the national and international levels informing one another about their positions. Another participant said that much of this communication could take place within mapping exercises, based on the UK's example, to determine what is going on the international level. One participant said that consideration at the international level should not be situation specific to each country, but rather key elements such as participation that are universally helpful. It was suggested that a stock-taking process for the approximately 100 NFPs would identify constraints as well as useful elements.

One delegate said that if we want concrete results we must discuss specific topics. Another participant called for a more structured exchange of information and for better feedback from reporting at the international level.

One participant said that a national forum is helpful for formulating coherent positions and for maintaining a perspective on the relationship between various processes at the national, regional and international levels, and highlighted her experience with a national forum that considers forest-related agreements including the ITTO, IFF, the EU forest strategy and others. One participant suggested that this should occur at the international level, in a pre-existing agency. One participant stressed that more should be done to coordinate conventions which are negotiated in isolation from one another, especially if there is to be a convention on forests.

Delegates addressed the topics to be discussed at IFF-2 and in other processes, based on experiences in assessing the Proposals at the national level and at the International Expert Consultation. One participant pointed out that the IFF has a very limited life and will not be able to address the issue beyond the year 2000. Another participant questioned whether there are other needs beyond the Proposals that need to be considered at the international level.

**Recommendations on this topic included:** use of NFPs to develop national positions, objectives and mechanisms; improved feedback loops between national and international initiatives; a systematic approach to IPF Proposal assessment and planning such as the Six-Country Initiative; a holistic international feedback mechanism on the IPF; a process for implementing the Proposals for Action beyond the planned duration of the IFF; and further coordination and exploration of means for collaboration and coherent action by international institutions.

### PLENARY

On 2 July, participants met in plenary to hear reports on the results of the working group outcomes and to comment upon their conclusions and recommendations. One participant noted that a recommendation for GEF funding on forests could mean taking money away from other programs. Delegates agreed it was not the purview of this conference to make recommendations to the GEF. Objections were also made to the mention of a global instrument within a recommendation on implementation of IPF proposals. Another participant argued, however, that the IFF should look into flexible arrangements for a coordinated global program. Participants were reminded that the aim of this conference was not to seek consensus but to bring out new ideas. One participant noted that many NFPs have a forum where there is some participation and suggested that these could be used for IPF discussion. Some participants expressed concern over the IFF's capacity to provide leadership in cooperation with other international instruments because it is a temporary body, and called for a permanent forum to do this.

Following the plenary the drafting group convened to synthesize the various conclusions and recommendations into the Report of the Consultation. Drafting group members included: Stephen Bass (United Kingdom), Untung Iskandar (Indonesia), Libby Jones (United Kingdom), Andrej Laletin (Russia), Bernd-Markus Liss (Germany), Christian Mersmann (Germany), Tapani Oksanen (Finland), Hans-Peter Schipulle (Germany), Susanne Schmidt (UNDP), Cornelia Sepp (Germany) and Markku Simula (Finland).

In Plenary on 3 July, Co-Chair Iskandar opened discussion on the draft of the Report of the International Expert Consultation. Co-Chair Schipulle underlined the expert, as opposed to official, nature of the meeting and encouraged participants to concentrate discussion on developing the key ideas of the report rather than negotiating text.

One participant noted that the need for ongoing international support of the Proposals was not emphasized in the report, and submitted text to be included. Another participant requested a reference to the development of a holistic and legally binding mechanism on forests as one of the issues to be addressed at the international level.

In response, several participants expressed hesitation about opening a discussion on a legally binding agreement. Another noted that the IPF outcome is not the only holistic approach to forests internationally and that more international instruments may be needed. One participant underscored that there are several alternatives to a legally binding agreement and questioned why a reference to such a mechanism must be made. One participant suggested a reference to an international ongoing process instead. One of the conclusions, noting that the international forest regime may not be adequate and is in need of follow-up, was modified to address the participants' concern. The conclusion refers to a need for "follow-up beyond IFF with a view to secure continued structured policy dialogue at the international level."

Omission of language on the CCD was noted and a call was made for its inclusion in connection with all references to the relevance of the UNFCCC and the CBD. Participants also called for specific references to the Ramsar Convention and the Kyoto

Protocol. One participant cautioned against referring specifically to the Kyoto Protocol's mechanisms for forestry financing in a recommendation on the IFF Work Programme, as it is still unclear what the Kyoto agreement means for forests and carbon sinks. This wording was replaced with a more general call to consider the possible implications of the Protocol for SFM.

Regarding monitoring and reporting, one participant reminded the group that there is already an obligation for the IPF to report to the CSD. He also proposed adding "enhancement" to language referring to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. One participant added that countries require useful feedback from the international institutions as an incentive to improve national monitoring and reporting. One participant called for a reference to third party review as a monitoring mechanism. Another participant opposed including this in the conclusions, so it was mentioned in the report in relation to working group discussions.

Another participant suggested adding language emphasizing self-selection of non-governmental groups for enhancing participation and called for "coordinating" instead of "consolidating and harmonizing" international instruments. He asked that a reference to certification and labeling be deleted as it had not been discussed at the Consultation. This was accepted.

One participant called for deletion of statements that participation alone cannot ensure effective implementation of Proposals and that other aspects of good governance have to be addressed. Another participant noted that Australia's report on its assessment of IPF Proposal implementation was omitted from the Report, and a paragraph briefly summarizing Australia's experience was inserted.

Under assessment and implementation, one delegate requested including text on implementation in sectors other than forestry. On improving the work of the ITFF, one participant noted constraints deriving from a shortage of flows of extra-budgetary funding from the donor community. He recommended that a world forest program to increase support for NFPs be considered, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition. One participant called for language on the need for an international body to improve implementation. This suggestion received some support.

Several participants supported a recommendation for preparing a guide to the IPF report in clear and accessible terms, that would be translated into major languages and distributed widely. A call for language on assistance in starting the assessment and implementing processes and for innovative financing mechanisms was also included.

One participant stressed that topics such as certification, forest fires and airborne pollutants should be appended to the list of issues to be addressed through international-level action. Another participant, recalling that the IFF Programme is already established, pointed out language stating that many of the items in the list were contained in the IFF Programme categories II and III, and cautioned against including extraneous elements or issues in the list, as it could alienate delegates at IFF-2. Another participant emphasized that the IFF should be flexible enough to address pressing issues such as forest fires. The reference to the IFF Programme was removed so that these issues could be listed. Several participants also supported adding conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity to the list.

In the afternoon, the plenary discussed the Executive Summary of the Report, containing two opening paragraphs and six points which highlight the key conclusions and recommendations.

On a recommendation on internalizing, assessing and integrating the Proposals into national processes, existing national "action-oriented" processes were specified. One participant noted



that “management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests” and “sustainable forest management” are internationally agreed terminology but “conservation and sustainable management of all types of forests” is not. A sentence calling for a similar approach to be taken with the results of other international agreements and initiatives was modified to reflect that the outcomes of other conventions and processes should be taken into account.

On a recommendation promoting systematic assessment of the Proposals similar to that of the Initiative, a suggestion that it has been “found” to be an important tool was accepted, along with a suggestion to “recommend” that “other” countries undertake “a similar” assessment within national processes and priorities, rather than asking “all” countries to undertake “the” assessment. A proposal to add language on “setting up a focal point to guide and coordinate the assessment and implementation” led to acceptance of an addition on setting up a national coordinating mechanism for similar activity. One participant pointed out that the suggestion to simplify or improve the Practitioner’s Guide and to cluster Proposals into groups was not included in the Summary.

On a recommendation to determine the relevance of the Proposals at the national level, national “constraints” was changed to “conditions.” A proposal to change NFPs as “the most” important vehicle to “an” important vehicle for implementation of the Proposals received much debate. Several delegates pointed out that “national forest programme” refers to a generic approach incorporating different frameworks such as programmes, policies and plans. However, another participant maintained that the NFP is seen as the most important vehicle only “in many countries,” which was accepted. A suggestion to add language on including a measurable framework defining targets and indicators of progress to facilitate implementation was not accepted.

In a recommendation on awareness building and stakeholder participation, one participant objected to an implication in the text that all stakeholder participation is about raising awareness among stakeholders. He stressed that participation is more than just awareness building, and requested that the two ideas be placed in separated sentences for clarity.

On the relationship and communication between the international and national levels, one participant requested modification of text recommending that the results of international processes be “formulated” in a clear manner, as this gives a negative connotation of international negotiations, and the reference was deleted. One participant proposed replacing text which called for putting “effective two way participation” into place with a recommendation that the IFF consider inviting an independent body to prepare an easy-to-understand version of the IPF report for dissemination to the public. This proposal was rejected by other participants.

Regarding a recommendation calling for the international community to assist developing countries and those with economies in transition, one participant requested a specific reference to assistance with initiating an analysis of the Proposals. Another participant proposed inserting text specifying “effective and efficient means to assist” cooperation. The final version recommends that the international community establish well-coordinated, efficient and effective means to assist developing countries and those with economies in transition in initiating analysis of the Proposals and establishing innovative financial mechanism for their implementation.

One participant called for adding a point to emphasize inter-linkages with other international instruments and initiatives, with special reference to the Kyoto Protocol. The overall idea was supported, but many participants opposed a specific reference to the Kyoto Protocol only.

One participant underscored a desire to include a reference to the further elaboration of an international binding instrument on forests. In response, another participant counseled that the IFF is already required to consider this as part of its programme of work, and that the IFF will need to address this issue regardless of whether it be included in the Report. The final text highlights the need for “effective follow-up beyond the IFF with a view to secure a continued, structured policy dialogue at the international level, including issues to be dealt with under IFF Category III.”

### **CLOSING PLENARY**

At the final plenary the Chair introduced the revised Report of the International Expert Consultation, noting that it contained indirect references to the possibility of developing a legally-binding instrument by reference to Category III of the IFF Work Programme. The Report and Executive Summary were adopted by acclamation.

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Asadi, Co-Chair of the IFF, noted the innovative procedures which had been utilized at the meeting and the informative nature of the Report adopted, which he denoted as “the Baden-Baden contribution.” He explained that the two IFF Co-Chairs had not participated in deliberations, so as not to distort the outcome, and desisted from making any value judgment on the content of the document. However, he expressed the view that the document would contribute to a higher understanding within the IFF of the IPF Proposals for Action and issues pertaining to their implementation at the national level. He stated that the beauty and relevance of the Baden-Baden report will go far beyond IFF-2 and be useful for the entire IFF process and beyond.

Co-Chair Schipulle expressed the hope that the outcomes of the Consultation would be used at IFF-2 to arrive at an enhanced and more encompassing understanding of the Proposals for Action with the intention of moving toward maximum implementation. He asked for feedback from countries on the utility of looking for propitious mechanisms and expressed eagerness to deliberate on the Baden-Baden findings under IFF programme element I.a in Geneva.

One participant, speaking on behalf of NGOs, noted the achievements obtained at the Consultation, and, recalling that what has been discussed over the last five years is a small step compared with the action that must be taken in the field, encouraged expedited action towards implementation of the Consultation results. One participant commended the meeting for addressing “how we will we do what we said we were going to do” and providing the first real suggestion for a way forward since UNCED. Co-Chairs Iskandar and Schipulle thanked the many people who made the Consultation possible, including the secretariat, drafters, moderators and the Technical Support Group. In closing, Christian Mersmann said that the Initiative had drawn the international and national levels a bit closer and had provided a successful step forward.

### **SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE IFF**

The Report of the International Expert Consultation describes the Consultations’ findings on aspects of implementing the Proposals, including mechanisms, stakeholder participation and standards, monitoring and reporting, and improvement of the effectiveness of international processes in implementing the Proposals. The Report draws twenty-two conclusions and makes ten recommendations towards improving implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action at the national and international levels. The following is a summary of these recommendations.

**Recommendations at the national level call for:**

Countries to undertake a systematic assessment of the Proposals for implementation in the context of their national processes for SFM, adapting the experiences of the Six-Country exercise to their situations, with an improved Practitioner's Guide

Countries to implement the Proposals in the context of their NFP or similar instrument in a coordinated, participatory manner, with: measurable targets and indicators; continuing review of the policy framework for inter-sectoral planning, coordination and implementation; and adequate resource allocation

Countries to set a focal point to guide and coordinate assessment and implementation of the Proposals, including facilitating participation and liaising with the international level

Mechanisms for stakeholder participation to be improved, building on existing arrangements and applying a step-by-step approach beginning with awareness-raising on participation opportunities and the international agenda

Countries to develop ways of organizing monitoring and reporting on Proposal implementation, possibly including implementation process and results, within the context of monitoring NFPs

**Recommendations at the international level call for:**

Results of international processes to be communicated in a clear and practical manner, ensuring adequate participation of persons and institutions involved in the management of the forest sector at national and sub-national levels and key stakeholder groups

The methodology of the Six-Country exercise, including the Practitioners' Guide, to be made available to other countries, with the Guide improved for use as appropriate in national assessment processes

The IFF to consider inviting an independent body to prepare a comprehensible guide to the IPF report and its Proposals in all major languages, for broad dissemination

The international community to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in assessing and implementing the Proposals as needed, using NFPs as a framework for channeling development assistance, particularly for building up participatory mechanisms and innovative financing instruments

The IFF to encourage voluntary reporting to CSD on progress in implementation, and to develop a common methodology, based on national experiences and monitoring systems, for monitoring and reporting, which can serve as a tool for effective feedback

The IFF to consider the possible implications of the Kyoto Protocol for SFM

The IFF to assess the role and potential of international instruments in supporting national implementation of the Proposals.

**THINGS TO LOOK FOR**

**XXI IUFRO WORLD CONGRESS:** This meeting of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) will be held from 7 - 12 August 2000 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For more information contact the Chair of the Organizing Committee, Forest Research Institute, Kepong, 52109 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; fax: +603-636-7753; e-mail: iufroxxi@frim.gov.my; Internet: <http://frim.gov.my/iufro.html>

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INVENTORY AND MONITORING OF FORESTED ECOSYSTEMS:** This meeting will be held in Boise, Idaho, US from 16 - 20 August 1998. The meeting will provide a forum for the exchange of information and new technologies pertaining to inventory, monitoring, and modeling of forested ecosystems. For more information

contact: Mark Hansen, USDA Forest Service, 1992 Folwell Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108; fax: +1 (612) 649-5285; e-mail: [hanse034@maroon.tc.umn.edu](mailto:hanse034@maroon.tc.umn.edu); Internet: <http://dendron.fr.umn.edu/burk/boise/>

**IUFRO/FAO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT:** This meeting will be held from 24 - 28 August 1998 in Melbourne, Australia. For more information contact: David Flinn, Centre for Forest Tree Technology, Australia; e-mail [d.flinn@dce.vic.gov.au](mailto:d.flinn@dce.vic.gov.au)

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON FORESTS:** The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) will hold its first substantive meeting (IFF-2). From 24 August - 4 September in 1998 Geneva. IFF-3 will be held in February/March 1999 in Geneva. The third session will be held in February/March 2000 in a venue to be determined. For more information contact the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, Two United Nations Plaza, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10017 USA; tel: +1 (212) 963-6208; fax: +1 (212) 963-3463; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/iff.html>

**INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION ON RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN FORESTRY:** This meeting will be held from 7 - 10 September 1998 in Ort/Gmunden, Austria and will be sponsored by Indonesia and Austria in cooperation with IUFRO, CIFOR, FAO and the IFF Secretariat. The First Steering Committee meeting was held in Vienna, Austria, 27 - 28 November. The second meeting of the Steering Committee was held 1 - 3 April at CIFOR in Bogor, Indonesia. For information contact: Heinrich Schmutzenhofer, IUFRO Secretariat, tel: +43-1-8770151; fax: +43-1-8779355; e-mail: [hschmutz@forvie.ac.at](mailto:hschmutz@forvie.ac.at); or Ingwald Gschwandtl, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Vienna, Austria, tel: +43-1-21323 ext. 7207; fax: +43-1-21323 ext 7216; e-mail: [ingwald.gschwandtl@bmlf.gv.at](mailto:ingwald.gschwandtl@bmlf.gv.at)

**NGO/GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA INITIATIVE ON UNDERLYING CAUSES OF DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION:** This meeting will be held from 30 November - 4 December 1998 and will be hosted by Costa Rica and organized by NGOs and the Government of Costa Rica in cooperation with UNEP. The Organizing and Steering Committees met in New York from 19 - 21 February 1998. The second meeting of the Steering Committee will take place in May in Bratislava, Slovakia on the margins of the 4th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. For information contact: Global Secretariat, Ms. Simone Lovera, email: [slovera@nciucn.nl](mailto:slovera@nciucn.nl)

**25TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL:** This meeting will be held from 3-9 November 1998 in Yokohama, Japan. For more information contact: International Organizations Center, 5th Floor, Pacifico-Yokohama, 1-1-1, Minato-Mirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama, 220 Japan; tel: +(81-45) 223-1111; fax: +(81-45) 223-1110; [Itto@mail.itto-unet.ocn.ne.jp](mailto:Itto@mail.itto-unet.ocn.ne.jp); Internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

**EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE THE MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF FORESTS:** In support of IFF Category III, a small expert meeting with government nominated experts both from the north and from the south, as well as international experts invited in their personal capacity is envisaged for the end of January 1999 (four days), in San Jose, Costa Rica. Support for this initiative in the form of partnerships with other countries is being sought. For information contact: Ms. Patricia Chavez, the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations, tel: +1 (212) 986-6373; fax: +1 (212) 986-6842.