



REPORT OF THE AFRICA FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE MINISTERIAL PLANNING MEETING 18-20 JUNE 2002

The Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (AFLEG) Ministerial Planning Meeting took place in Brazzaville, the Republic of Congo, from 18-20 June 2002. The meeting brought together 73 participants from 27 countries, representing governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. The meeting was co-hosted by the Government of the Republic of Congo and the World Bank; sponsored by the Governments of France, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US); and facilitated by Jeffrey Sayer, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-International), and Jean Prosper Koyo, World Forestry Congress.

Over the course of the three day meeting, participants met in Plenary and working group sessions to: share knowledge and address issues of forest law enforcement and governance (FLEG) in Africa and globally; identify priority issues; and develop recommendations for a ministerial declaration on FLEG for African forests.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FLEG INITIATIVE

In May 1998, the G-8 launched an action programme on forests, which gives high priority to eliminating illegal logging and illegal timber trade. The action programme seeks to complement actions undertaken at regional and international levels, and states the G-8's commitment to identifying actions in both producer and consumer countries.

The G-8 action programme motivated a partnership on forest law enforcement for East Asia between the World Bank, the UK and the US, which led to the FLEG East Asia Ministerial Conference in September 2001. The Conference adopted a Ministerial Declaration, whereby participating countries commit themselves to, *inter alia*, intensify national efforts and strengthen bilateral, regional and multi-lateral collaboration to address forest crime and violations of forest law, and create a regional task force on forest law enforcement and governance to advance the Declaration's objectives. The task force convened a follow-up meeting for the implementation of the Declaration in Bali in May 2002.

Over the last decade, African governments have raised the issue of sustainable forest management (SFM) in various fora. For example, at the Yaoundé Summit in 1999, Heads of State from countries of the Western Congo Basin committed themselves to work together to ensure that forests remain a renewable economic resource and a reservoir of biodiversity. More recently, Ministers from several countries

in Africa expressed interest in focusing specifically on issues of FLEG, and the AFLEG process aims to galvanize high political level commitment in Africa in order to strengthen capacity for forest law enforcement, in particular with regard to illegal logging and hunting, associated trade and corruption. The AFLEG process is expected to produce a Ministerial Declaration stating this commitment.

Several international forest-related agreements and organizations have recently addressed issues that may be relevant to the AFLEG initiative:

- In November 2001, the 31st session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-31) adopted a decision on forest law enforcement in the context of sustainable timber production and trade.
- In March 2002, the second session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF-2) developed a Ministerial Message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) that, *inter alia*, calls for immediate action on domestic forest law enforcement and international trade in forest products. In addressing progress in combating deforestation and forest degradation, UNFF-2 also highlighted the vital role of initiatives to strengthen law enforcement, and urged governments to address law enforcement and illegal logging.
- In April 2002, the sixth Conference of the Parties (COP-6) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted an extended work programme on forest biodiversity, including activities relating to forest law enforcement and governance, and agreed to develop case studies on the effects of insufficient forest law enforcement on biodiversity.
- In May 2002, ITTC-32 adopted a decision on forest law enforcement in Africa to undertake data collection on the forests in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Republic of Congo, aimed at improving forest concession management and ensuring conservation in protected areas. ITTC-32 also decided to promote SFM in the Congo Basin through, *inter alia*: participating in a WSSD "Type 2" partnership initiative; organizing a workshop to develop a regional applied research programme; and contributing to the development of a regional strategy aimed at improving the management of forest concessions.

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OPENING SESSION

Giuseppe Topa, the World Bank, emphasized the importance of forest laws and said that without the rule of law there is no development and no future for the environment. He stressed that weak governance and the failure of legal systems are the main constraints to effective forest conservation, management and development, and noted that the US\$10-15 billion of revenues lost each year due to illegal logging could be used for education and health programmes. Topa called attention to the depletion of African forests without correlative creation of local wealth, economic growth and development, and urged the AFLEG process to demonstrate a will to make a difference in this regard.

He said improvement of FLEG cannot be expected from African countries alone, and that the World Bank and other donors should improve the quality and level of dialogue and support. He emphasized that the issue of forest loss in Africa should be approached comprehensively and holistically, that stakeholders must work in collaboration to find mutually beneficial solutions, and that special interests should not get in the way of the greater good. He highlighted the World Bank's multiple roles in assisting governments to address FLEG issues, and said the Conference provides an opportunity to define the road ahead for African forests.

Henri Djombo, Minister of Forest Economy of Congo, welcomed participants to Brazzaville and thanked the meeting's sponsors. Noting the unique nature of the initiative, he said the meeting should prepare a document for the forthcoming AFLEG Ministerial Conference. Highlighting the global role of African forests, he identified political situations, population pressures and human resource constraints as obstacles to forest law enforcement and SFM, and stressed that success depends on political will. He welcomed the shift in forest discussions from ecological protest to integration with development approaches, and noted that the sustainable development paradigm had led to new forest laws and institutional reorganization.

Djombo highlighted the rational and sound use of forest ecosystems to ensure sustainable income for local communities and suggested involving local communities as important custodians in combating illegal logging. He expressed hope that the meeting would identify obstacles and propose a way forward, and underscored the importance of NGO contributions. He suggested the AFLEG Ministerial Conference be held in conjunction with the meeting of the African Timber Organization (ATO) in Kinshasa in October 2002, and declared the meeting open.

Note: As of July, 2002, the date and location of the Ministerial Conference has not yet been determined. The World Bank estimates that the date will most likely be 6-9 months after the Brazzaville planning meeting.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

GLOBAL ISSUES RELATING TO FLEG: Jürgen Blaser, the World Bank/ITTO, highlighted law enforcement and governance as a cross-cutting and cross-sectoral issue, and emphasized the inherent vulnerability of the forest sector to illegal forestry activities. He identified four main categories of problems: unauthorized deforestation and forest degradation, including tenure issues; illegal activities of forest operators, including illegal activities within legal concessions; corruption involving officials and other stakeholders; and illegal forest activities, including timber theft, smuggling, and illegal trade of wood and non-wood forest products.

He identified factors contributing to illegal activities, including: lack of transparency and accountability; faulty policy and legal frameworks; inappropriate macro-economic policies such as perverse subsidies; insufficient enforcement; and insufficient knowledge. He underscored that the impacts of illegal activities in the forest sector are ecological, economic and social, and suggested that strategies to address FLEG issues in the forest sector include: analysis of the nature

and cause of the illegal activities; efforts to fight corruption; high-level support for introducing appropriate measures; and participation of civil society and the private sector. He further advocated long-term strategies with measures to assess progress. Stressing that such strategies must include non-forest sectors, Blaser called for integrated policy reforms, institutional strengthening, involvement of civil society, and data generation and analysis.

Blaser identified measures to combat illegal harvesting and trade, including market transparency, certificates of origin, consumer information, verification of legally produced forest products, and certification of forest management. Regarding improving forest law enforcement, he suggested: effective control; collaboration with civil society and the private sector; preparation of credible verification and certification schemes; and adequate training, equipment and remuneration of forest law enforcement staff. Regarding improving sector governance, his proposals focused on prevention, detection and suppression.

CONSIDERATIONS FROM A G-8 COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE: Jan McAlpine, the US, said that the issue of illegal logging was introduced into the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests six years ago. Recalling early difficulties in discussing and tackling the issues of FLEG, she highlighted the Asia FLEG Ministerial Conference as a unique and moving conference, and she emphasized the "historic" nature of the Ministerial Declaration.

Recalling that the primary responsibility to enforce laws belong to sovereign States, she stressed that timber importing countries also have responsibilities in ensuring legally harvested timber. She said that importing and exporting countries must work cooperatively to ensure legality, and highlighted a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UK and Indonesia regarding verification of legally harvested timber. While acknowledging the importance of SFM, she suggested the AFLEG initiative focus on legality rather than sustainability. McAlpine outlined a recent US initiative on combating illegal logging, which includes: harnessing technologies; protecting sensitive and critical forest areas; harnessing market forces; and coordinating international law enforcement efforts.

THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN FLEG EXPERIENCE: Untung Iskandar, former Director General of forests in Indonesia, presented the results of the September 2001 Asia FLEG Ministerial Conference. He said that discussions had been frank and covered a wide-range of issues, and highlighted the resulting Ministerial Declaration and its annexed list of actions for implementation. Issues to be addressed at the national level include: political and legislative actions; decentralization; institution and capacity building; concession policy; conservation and protected areas; public awareness; and transparency and participation. At the regional and international levels, the proposed actions relate to: information and expertise sharing; trade and customs; and research.

Iskandar said that the Declaration emphasizes international support to address prevention and take measures against forest crimes, and emphasized that such support should be "tailor made" to country policies. He highlighted the MoU between Indonesia and the UK to prevent the flow of illegal logs to the UK and to build capacity to improve the prevention of illegal logging and its associated trade. Noting limited funds, he said countries should prioritize actions needed to prevent forest crimes, illegal logging and illegal trade, and highlighted Indonesian forest authorities' cooperation with the police and the navy to stop the transport of illegal logs. He emphasized the need to establish timely and reliable statistics, and said that Indonesia subscribe to the statistics format developed by ITTO. Noting European countries' decision to only buy legally harvested logs from Asia, he highlighted Indonesia's adoption of ITTO's criteria and indicators for sustainable tropical forest management to stem illegal logging.

CONSIDERATIONS IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT: Jean Prosper Koyo, World Forestry Congress, stressed Africa's dependence on primary sectors such as forestry, and emphasized that laws must take into account regional and national differences. He questioned the feasibility of protecting and restoring the environment without addressing

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the issue of poverty, and said that international conventions should facilitate improvements rather than adding implementation burdens on countries with limited human capacity. He advocated involvement of all stakeholders in law development and enforcement, and called for integrated policies and realistic laws. Noting that wood consumption for fuel accounts for more wood consumption than for timber in Africa, he underscored the difficulty in addressing the scarcity of wood through legislation. He stressed the need for addressing the roots of the problems concerning FLEG rather than the consequences, and called for: laws and programmes that adopt a participatory approach; diversification of economic activities; coherence between laws in different sectors; trained staff; and decentralization and improvement of governance.

REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS

On Tuesday afternoon, participants divided into three regional working groups to: examine the problems and issues related to FLEG; identify underlying causes; and explore possible ways of addressing the problems. The working groups presented their results to Plenary on Wednesday morning.

CENTRAL AFRICA: The group of Central African countries identified the following problems regarding FLEG: inconsistency between forest laws and other laws; lack of adaptation to socio-economic policies; lack of integration of the forest sector into rural development; inadequate participatory management of forests; conflict between modern law and traditional customary law; and inadequate decentralization of forest management. The constraints identified included: poverty; economic and financial crises; weak mobilization of financial means; lack of land allocation plans; and insufficient infrastructure and communication.

In discussing the root causes of the problems and the constraints, the group highlighted: inadequate staff in the forest administration; corruption of policy makers and staff; slow administrative procedures; weak penalties for forest crimes; inadequate cooperation between stakeholders; lack of transparency; pressures exerted by multinational companies; armed conflict; and institutional instability.

The group outlined a suite of possible solutions, including: capacity building of forest administrations; development of mechanisms for stakeholder consultation; promotion of integrated management of forests; development of forest zoning; development of partnerships between states and other stakeholders; development and diversification of wood processing in producer countries; promotion of multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches; recognition and protection of local communities' rights; guarantee of equitable exploitation revenues; and establishment of instruments for tax and fee collection.

In the ensuing debates, some participants drew attention to the negative impacts of structural adjustment programmes, and others noted concerns regarding the effects of forest administration decentralization.

SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICA (INCLUDING LIBERIA, NIGERIA AND GHANA): Regarding measures to address inadequate political will, the Southern and Eastern Africa group stressed public awareness, and management of conflicts of interest of politicians. On the lack of transparency and information sharing, the group advocated: increased access to information; regional information sharing, including blacklisting of "bad actors"; independent verification; and use of the media. The group noted a lack of capacity to enforce laws, and suggested: increased budgets for equipment, infrastructure and technical capacity building; technical and financial assistance from donors and NGOs; and improved collaboration with the police and other authorities.

The group also highlighted the need for improved fairness and effectiveness of laws and policies, and proposed recommendations such as: revision of inappropriate laws and policies, including stakeholder consultation processes; development of more rational penalties; and turning over management authority to local communities. Political

instability and conflict were identified as major impediments to law enforcement, and the group emphasized preventing and halting conflicts, and including forest components in post-conflict programmes.

Regarding inadequate cooperation between countries, the group suggested cooperative solutions and bilateral agreements. To improve forest management, the group emphasized inventory systems and development of mechanisms to compile information. Inadequate distribution of forest benefits was also noted, and the group suggested developing mechanisms for sharing benefits at all levels as well as partnerships between stakeholders for extension and awareness raising programmes.

As a cause of corruption, the group identified inadequate incentives and motivation of staff, and suggested improving the conditions of forest administration staff to encourage a sense of pride in their work. In the ensuing debates, participants discussed: the responsibility of countries; the impacts of armed conflicts; and the role of civil society.

WEST AFRICA: In reviewing problems and their causes in West Africa, the group highlighted: informal use of forest resources; environmental refugees; inappropriate legislation; poor land allocation and ecological zoning; conversion of forest lands; structural adjustment programmes; lack of incentives for forest law enforcement; institutional instability; lack of transparency; low political support to the forest sector; lack of information sharing; insufficient involvement of stakeholders; and corruption.

Proposed solutions to these included: policies that take into account concerns of stakeholders and regional and international commitments; harmonized land use laws; human, technical and institutional capacity building; coalitions between different actors; collaborative multi-stakeholder enforcement; rational land utilization; inventories of resources and building of databases; and design and implementation of information, education and communication programmes.

In ensuing discussions, participants discussed: forest law enforcement as a discipline in forest-related schools, political will for revising laws, decentralization, and education.

CASE STUDIES ON NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ISSUES

On Wednesday morning, country case studies were presented and discussed in Plenary.

GLOBAL FOREST WATCH: Jean-Gael Collomb, Global Forest Watch (GFW), highlighted the role of information in supporting implementation and enforcement of forest laws. He stressed the menace and financial loss posed by unsustainable practices such as illegal logging, corruption and illegal trade. He said that the lack of information on logging practices impedes sustainable choices by consumers, and described efforts in Cameroon to improve transparency through the use of independent observers when granting licenses and for field control.

He noted the difference between compliance and enforcement, the latter relating to monitoring and control issues. He said that increased publicity of concession locations, operators' identities and good management practices improves enforcement by facilitating monitoring and creating a sense of accountability of all stakeholders.

Collomb then described the GFW project of the World Resources Institute which is operating in Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Gabon, Indonesia, Russia, the US and Venezuela, and will soon expand to Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Republic of Congo. He explained that the project aims to promote SFM through accessibility of information, including by dissemination on the Internet and that in Africa, the GFW assists countries to establish and update a regional database on logging permits, annual cutting zones and protected areas, and to establish adequate management measures and assess existing ones through the use of indicators.

He identified as obstacles to the efficient use of information by public authorities for enforcing laws: lack of decision-maker and enforcement staff capacity to use the collected data; private interests; and lack of transparency. He called for regional harmonization, private-public partnerships, and stronger governmental commitment, including through a ministerial declaration.

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COMMUNITY FORESTRY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Mahouna Tchiwanou, Director of Forests and Natural Resources of Benin, presented the successes of participatory forestry management plans in Benin and their contribution to better implementation of forest laws and strengthening of forestry governance in Africa. He recalled the role of colonialism in the abandonment of well-functioning traditional management practices through the creation of protected areas and resultant exclusion of local communities from forest management.

He outlined national efforts to enhance forest law enforcement and improve participative SFM since 1990. He described four steps in the establishment of participative forestry management plans:

- preparation, including: information to and training of stakeholders; socio-economic and environmental studies; creation of adequate infrastructures; creation of management units; and case-studies;
- elaboration of and amendments to the plan by technical committees and local communities;
- adoption of the plan and conclusion of management contracts between communities and governments; and
- implementation and monitoring, through: creation and improvement of infrastructures; popularization of management plans; collection of information; elaboration of annual work plans; and training of stakeholders.

He said plans should integrate principles of community participation, accountability, pluralism, and transparency. He highlighted improvements in forest governance after the adoption of such a plan in Benin, including beneficial economic effects and improved capacity.

INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE IN TIMBER AND LAW

ENFORCEMENT: Felix Essame, ATO, stressed the reevaluation of forests and forest products through appropriate forest management and trade. He noted the marginalization of Africa in international timber trade due to the shift of market interest towards the East, the decrease in exports, and increased market competitiveness. He stressed the need for structural changes to respond to importing countries' needs, through improved forest governance and the use of incentive measures.

He highlighted work on: non-discriminatory trade, tariff and non-tariff obstacles; improvement of access to and transparency of markets; the promotion of use and trade in lesser known species; the role of product substitution on the environment; and the evaluation of forest goods and services and their trade. He stressed the need for knowledge of the structure and function of forests ecosystems and of the impact of human activities on forests. He recommended capacity building and strengthening of institutions as a priority and stressed the need for coordination of policies and actions on forests at the international and regional levels. He lamented uncoordinated actions on certification and flagged transportation systems and political situations as impediments to SFM.

PRIVATE SECTOR ISSUES: PROBLEMS OF ILLEGAL FOREST PRACTICES: Jean-Jacques Landrot, Interafrican Forest Industry Association (IFIA), highlighted the private sector's commitment to solving problems relating to FLEG, and described illegal logging as a multi-faceted problem embracing: crime against forests, including predatory forest practices; crime against States, including non-declaration of salaries; and crime against competitors through market distortion.

He said that problems of FLEG should be treated at the roots, and called for: addressing countries' timber processing capacity to avoid overcapacity; strengthening and improving government administrations; increasing control and sanctions; educating the public and NGOs; and building investor confidence through good governance to attract "good" investors. Opposing creation of international tools, he said that illegal logging and corruption should be addressed nationally, and highlighted the forest sector's will to monitor and control operations.

POACHING: Richard Malonga, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Congo, introduced an initiative in Northern Congo to address forest conservation and exploitation. He highlighted a MoU between the government, the WCS and local communities, underscored the need for regulation of hunting in relation to forestry activities, and outlined agreed principles, including: a hunting ban in natural salt areas; prohibition of meat export to other areas; development of a forest zoning system; designation of hunting areas for local communities; and organization of hunters. He emphasized public awareness and education as a successful component of the project, and noted research efforts to determine the population density of animals in the area. He said that the amount of meat sold on markets had decreased significantly, and highlighted attempts to provide alternative meat sources through cattle breeding, poultry raising and fish farming.

ISSUES-BASED WORKING GROUPS

On Wednesday afternoon, participants divided into four working groups to address cross-cutting issues identified by regional working groups: legal frameworks; information; conflict situations and post-conflict situations; and capacity building. Later in the afternoon, the working groups presented their recommendations to Plenary.

LEGAL FRAMEWORKS: On legal reforms, the group recommended assessment of existing laws to harmonize environmental and forestry laws through identification of a reference law and definition of a micro-framework. Concerning community involvement, the group recommended a participatory approach and the legal acknowledgement of customary laws. Regarding decentralization, the group highlighted devolution of power to and inclusion of the private sector, NGOs and others in operational functions. The group stressed adaptation of the decentralization process to local situations.

On enforcement, the group stressed: accessibility of laws to stakeholders; adoption of appropriate mechanisms and strengthened control systems; penalization of non-compliance; public services closer to local communities; independence of the judiciary; transparency; and good horizontal and vertical information flow. The group suggested that public-private partnerships be dynamic and voluntary, and emphasized identification of relevant actors' roles and conclusion of formal agreements. The group recommended that different codes of ethics be defined for each type of actor and be voluntarily accepted, and suggested that the codes be used to improve laws' content.

INFORMATION: The group recommended: collecting national data and establishing mechanisms for the exchange of information; reinforcing capacity of the public and private sectors for disseminating information; strengthening civil society's role in forestry; developing a culture of transparency for the management and use of forest resources; awareness raising on perverse effects of illegal logging and practices through the media and other means; undertaking and developing all stakeholders' participation in the decision-making process and management of forests to ensure transparency and elimination of corruption; informing the public on forests' delimitation; and using detection systems and monitoring.

In ensuing discussions, participants raised the issue of confidentiality of some information and the means to reconcile confidentiality and publicity. The rapporteur stressed the time constraint on the working group to elaborate categories of public/confidential information. Participants also noted regional cooperation for the management of data and improvement of information management regarding secondary forest products.

CONFLICT SITUATIONS AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS: On institutions and laws, the group noted the negative impacts of displaced populations on natural resources, including the plundering of natural resources, institutional failure and break down of the rule of law, and the impossibility of monitoring forests laws in this context. The group recommended following environmental guidelines when establishing refugee camps, providing alternative sources of energy,

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convening inter-ministerial committees to jointly tackle refugee issues and identify priorities, and requesting financial support from international donors to rehabilitate degraded areas.

The group recommended increasing efforts to prevent conflict and activities that perpetuate wars such as the supply of arms and financial support to rebel groups. The group stressed the international community's role in monitoring movements and imposing sanctions on instigators of conflicts and called for exporting and importing countries to commit to trade only forest products verified as legal.

Concerning market access of forests products from conflict areas, the group noted that revenues from such products are used to finance and perpetuate armed conflicts, and recommended declaring illegal all forests products from conflict areas. Alternatively, the group suggested that governments verify the legality of those products' origin through appropriate mechanisms, and noted the need for legitimate governments, transparency and accountability.

On transitional periods between war and restoration of normality, the group noted an upsurge in crime and identified difficulties in controlling the movement of populations and arms. Participants recommended: setting funds aside for rehabilitation of forests; reviewing policies for strengthening SFM; establishing resettlement programmes that respect the environment; encouraging investment in SFM including through incentive and investment guarantee schemes; regional cooperation for mobilization of resources and studies of effects of population movements; and programmes to exchange war veterans' guns for something more meaningful.

The group also identified decentralization as a key issue and stressed the need for government commitment to decentralize management of forest activities, taking into account prevailing political, social and economic situations.

During ensuing discussions, participants noted that the issue of conflict situations and forests is delicate and discussed the consequences of declaring forest products from conflict areas illegal on international trade and countries' economies. Recognizing the political aspects of such a decision, participants agreed that action is needed and suggested that penalties be imposed only on products from areas outside legal governments' control. One participant highlighted Madagascar's decision to stop trade in forest products in cases where controlling origin is impossible. The need for a certification system, cooperation between neighboring States, incentives to governments for adopting measures, and revaluation of tropical timber, was also noted.

CAPACITY BUILDING: Regarding institutions and laws, the group's recommendations included: capacity building of institutions related to forest law enforcement; cooperation between institutions involved in forest law enforcement; integration of forest policies into countries' general policy framework; coordination among the forest and other sectors' administrations; and involvement of stakeholders in forest law enforcement. The group also advocated partnerships between developed and developing countries concerning capacity building on emerging issues such as non-timber forest products. Regarding training, the group emphasized training of forest staff as well as of stakeholders in other institutions, the private sector, and civil society. The group also advocated regional and sub-regional cooperation to create synergies and avoid duplication.

On technologies and infrastructure, the group recommended: improving equipment and technologies to monitor forest activities and follow-up on forest management; rehabilitating infrastructure including border checkpoints; and using national forest funds to recruit staff and develop capacities within structural adjustment programmes. The group also emphasized the need for establishing a framework for partnerships between the public and private sectors.

In the ensuing debate, one participant emphasized on-the-job training of forest staff in the private sector, and another participant highlighted the joint responsibilities between the State and the private sector in education. Participants also discussed the potential of national forest funds for capacity building.

POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF A MINISTERIAL DECLARATION AND PROCEDURE FOR THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

On Wednesday evening, the facilitators prepared a text on possible elements for a Ministerial Declaration based on the priority issues identified, and building on the structure of the Bali Ministerial Declaration. On Thursday morning, government delegates met in a closed session to discuss the draft, and to address procedural issues concerning the AFLEG Ministerial Conference. The civil society and private sector representatives met in a parallel session to discuss and develop common positions regarding the draft. In the afternoon, the results of the groups' deliberations were presented and discussed in Plenary.

Sayer reported that the governments' discussions on draft elements for the Ministerial Declaration had provided useful feedback on how to develop it further, and said that the governments had agreed that the meeting's organizing committee would take the process forward by: producing a new draft on the basis of the discussions in both English and French; inviting comments from all governments invited to the meeting; producing a draft Ministerial Declaration based on the feedback received; and deciding on the date and venue for the AFLEG Ministerial Conference. He emphasized that there might be a need for another expert meeting prior to the Ministerial Conference.

Presenting the results of the civil society/private sector discussions, a NGO representative highlighted that forest crimes pose a direct threat to biodiversity in Africa and the rest of the world, and emphasized the impacts on fauna. He called for initiatives to reinforce the cooperation of authorities within and between countries to prevent circulation of illegally harvested wood and forest products, and suggested establishing advanced notification in timber trade. He proposed adopting measures to prevent trade in forest products coming from conflict zones outside governments' control. He stressed that investors should support and adhere to actions against illegal use of forests, and called for assessment of the commitment of investors to this goal. Noting their important role in law enforcement, he suggested capacity building for professional trade unions.

A Liberian NGO lamented the unhindered trade in conflict timber, and said that in the absence of peace there can be no law enforcement. Noting that local populations rarely benefit from trade of timber from conflict areas, he called on the international community to deem illegal all timber from such areas, adding that revenues from such timber trade are often used to buy arms. Stating that discussions on conflict timber are still at an early stage, the US said that the AFLEG process provides an avenue for dialogue. She urged NGOs and the private sector to provide input to the draft Ministerial Declaration. An IFIA representative recommended all international trading companies stop working with companies involved in arms trafficking. The US proposed, and participants agreed, to issue a press release on the meeting, reflecting its importance in the AFLEG process.

CLOSING SESSION

Guy Suzón Ramangason, Madagascar, presented a synthesis of the meeting's achievements, including proposals for actions supporting governments' commitment through partnerships, transparency of information, and mechanisms for verifying the legality of forest products. Alassane Diawara, the World Bank, stressed the importance of sending a strong message to stop the crisis of lawlessness in resource use in Africa. He emphasized the collective responsibility to find solutions, and called for resource management to reduce poverty and ensure the quality of life for present and future generations.

Gaston Mfoutou, Cabinet Director of the Ministry of Forest Economy of Congo, on behalf of his Minister, Henri Djombo, commended the meeting's success. He reiterated Minister Djombo's commitment to regional and international cooperation for capacity building for the forestry sector. He thanked the donors, organizers and participants, and closed the meeting at 5:30 pm.

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DRAFT ELEMENTS FOR A MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

The meeting produced draft elements for a AFLEG Ministerial Declaration. The elements include:

- fair and equitable implementation of forest laws;
- economic incentives to those that depend on and illegally exploit forest resources;
- reforms of land tenure, licensing, subsidies and processing capacities;
- immediate and coordinated national, regional and international action against breaches of forest laws, including illegal logging, illegal trade and corruption;
- cooperation between national law enforcement authorities;
- elimination of export and import of illegal timber, including the creation of a notification system;
- information collection, dissemination, and accessibility;
- strengthening of civil society's role in the decision making process and the implementation of forests laws;
- transparency;
- awareness raising, particularly in conflict areas;
- monitoring;
- creation of a special regional team on implementation of forest laws and forest governance;
- assessment of the needs for reform and harmonization of laws on forests, the environment and land ownership;
- establishment of framework laws;
- taking into account customary laws and local practices;
- information collection on community rights over trees, animals and lands, and their recognition;
- decentralization of forest management;
- partnerships;
- code of ethics;
- conflict situations;
- laws and institutions;
- training and incentives; and
- technological capacities and infrastructure.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

CONTRIBUTION OF CRITERIA AND INDICATORS TO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: A WAY FORWARD:

This Conference, organized as a follow-up to recommendations made by the Expert Meeting on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (Rome, 2000) will be held from 22-26 July 2002 in Guatemala City, Guatemala. For more information, contact: Glenda Lee, Coordinator, Local Organizing Committee; tel: +502-379-9830; fax: +502-475-4407; e-mail: cici2002@inab.gob.gt; Internet: <http://www.inab.gob.gt/>

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

The summit will take place from 26 August to 4 September in Johannesburg, South Africa. For more information, contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA; tel: +1-212-963-5949; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org; Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON LAND USE MANAGEMENT, EROSION AND CARBON SEQUESTRATION:

This meeting will be held from 24-28 September 2002 in Montpellier, France. For more information, contact: Eric Roose; tel: +33-0-467-41-6265; fax: +33-0-467-41-6294; e-mail: roose@mpl.ird.fr; Internet: <http://www.ird.fr/>

CONFERENCE ON BRINGING BACK THE FORESTS – POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR DEGRADED LANDS AND FORESTS:

This conference will be held from 7-10 October 2002 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to address solutions to rehabilitation challenges in the forests and grasslands of Asia and the Pacific. For more information, contact: Alias Abdul Jalil, Malaysia Forest Research Institute; tel: +60-3-6272-2516; fax: +60-3-6277-3249; e-mail: fore-conf@apafri.upm.edu.my; Internet: <http://apafri.upm.edu.my/reconf/index.html>

CITES COP-12: This meeting will take place from 3-15 November 2002 in Santiago, Chile. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; e-mail: cites@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.cites.org/eng/news/calendar.shtml>

33rd SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL

TIMBER COUNCIL: The 33rd session of the ITTC will be held from 4-9 November 2002 in Yokohama, Japan. For more information, contact: International Tropical Timber Organization; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.org.jp; Internet: <http://www.itto.org.jp/>

CONFERENCE ON ADVANCES IN FOREST MANAGEMENT – FROM KNOWLEDGE TO PRACTICE: This conference will be held from 13-15 November 2002 in Edmonton, AB, Canada. For more information: Internet: <http://www.ualberta.ca/sfm>

FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CRIC): This meeting will be held from 18-29 November 2002 in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: CCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2802; fax: +49-228-815-2898/99; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; Internet: <http://www.unccd.int/cop/cricl/menu.php>

SYMPOSIUM ON HISTORY AND FOREST BIODIVERSITY - CHALLENGES FOR CONSERVATION: This symposium, sponsored by IUFRO, will be held from 13-15 January 2003, in Leuven, Belgium. For more information contact: Sofie Bruneel, Laboratory for Forest, Nature and Landscape Research, Catholic University of Leuven; tel: +32-16-32-97-21; fax +32-16-32-97-60; e-mail: sofie.bruneel@agr.kuleuven.ac.be; Internet: <http://www.agr.kuleuven.ac.be/lbh/lbnl/forestbiodiv/>

SECOND INTERNATIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION ON THE ROLE OF PLANTED FORESTS: This meeting will be held from 28-30 April 2003 in Vienna, Austria. For more information, contact: Peter Mayer, liaison Unit Vienna; tel: +43-1-710-7702; fax: +43-1-710-77-0213; e-mail: liaison.unit@lu-vienna.at; Internet: <http://www.mcpfe.org/>

THIRD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF-3): This meeting will be held from 26 May 2003 to 6 June 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact Mia Soderlund, UNFF Secretariat; tel: +1-212-963-3262; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: unff@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.htm>

12th WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS: This congress will be held under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) from 21-28 September 2003 in Quebec City, Canada. For more information, contact: World Forestry Congress 2003 Secretariat; tel: +1-418-694-2424; fax: +1-418-694-9922; e-mail: secgen@wfc2003.org; Internet: <http://www.wfc2003.org/>

SIXTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CCD COP-6): CCD COP-6 will be held from 19-30 October 2003 in Bonn, Germany. For more information, contact: CCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898/99; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; Internet: <http://www.unccd.int/>