



SUMMARY OF THE FOURTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE 28-30 APRIL 2003

The fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE-4), also called the "Vienna Living Forest Summit," was held at the Hofburg Palace, Vienna, Austria, from 28-30 April 2003. It was attended by Ministers responsible for forests and high-level representatives of 40 European countries and the European Community, as well as representatives of four observer countries, and 22 international governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Conference provided an opportunity to discuss and take decisions on the future of the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe.

Conference participants adopted the Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration "European Forests-Common Benefits, Shared Responsibilities," and five Resolutions on: strengthening synergies for sustainable forest management (SFM) in Europe through cross-sectoral cooperation and national forest programmes (nfps); enhancing the economic viability of SFM in Europe; preserving and enhancing the social and cultural dimensions of SFM in Europe; conserving and enhancing forest biological diversity in Europe; and climate change and SFM in Europe. Other highlights of the Conference included: a tree-planting ceremony; the opening of an international exhibition "Forest.Art"; a multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD); a signing ceremony for the Vienna Declaration; and an excursion to the Danube Floodplain National Park.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MCPFE

MCPFE-1: The first Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe took place in Strasbourg, France, on 18 December 1990. Recognizing increasing threats to European forests and the need for cross-border protection, participants agreed to initiate scientific and technical cooperation in Europe, and the incorporation of scientific data into political action. They adopted a General Declaration and six Resolutions on: a European network of permanent sample plots for monitoring of forest ecosystems; conservation of forest genetic resources; a decentralized European Data Bank on forest fires; adapting the management of mountain forests to new environmental conditions; expansion of the EUROSILVA Network of research on tree physiology; and a European network for research into forest ecosystems.

MCPFE-2: MCPFE-2 was held in Helsinki, Finland, from 16-17 June 1993. Building on the Strasbourg Resolutions and responding to many of the forest-related decisions adopted at the 1992 United

Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, participants adopted a General Declaration and four Resolutions on: general guidelines for SMF in Europe; general guidelines for the conservation of the biodiversity of European forests; forestry cooperation with countries with economies in transition; and strategies for a process of long-term adaptation of forests in Europe to climate change.

FOLLOW-UP OF THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE: At the fifth Expert-Level Meeting on the follow-up of the Helsinki Conference, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 8-9 December 1997, delegates adopted the Work Programme on the conservation and enhancement of biological and landscape diversity in forest ecosystems 1997-2000. The Work Programme was a joint initiative of the MCPFE and the pan-European Ministerial Process "Environment for Europe," defining objectives and actions in the field of biological diversity as an essential element of SFM.

MCPFE-3: MCPFE-3 was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 2-4 June 1998. The Conference emphasized socioeconomic aspects of SFM and confirmed important outcomes of the Helsinki follow-up. Participants adopted a General Declaration and two Resolutions on: people, forests and forestry – enhancement of socioeconomic aspects of SFM; and pan-European criteria, indicators and operational level guidelines for SFM.

FOLLOW-UP OF THE LISBON CONFERENCE: At the second Expert-Level Meeting on the follow-up of the Lisbon Conference held in Vienna from 28-29 October 1999, participants adopted the MCPFE's Work Programme, constituting a key element of the follow-up of the Lisbon Conference and setting out concrete actions for the implementation of the MCPFE commitments.

MCPFE EXPERT-LEVEL MEETING: The MCPFE Expert Level Meeting was held in Vienna, Austria, from 12-14 February 2003, to finalize the documents for MCPFE-4. Delegates approved the Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration and five Resolutions. Participants also adopted the Framework for Cooperation between the MCPFE and Environment for Europe/ Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS), to be forwarded for adoption by MCPFE-4 and the Fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" to be held in Kiev, Ukraine, in May 2003.

REPORT OF MCPFE-4

OPENING OF THE MEETING

On Monday, the Conference opened with a tree-planting ceremony at the Museumsquartier. European Ministers and high-level representatives planted trees representative of their countries and symbolic of the European forest.

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Josef Pröll, Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria, and Co-Chair of MCPFE-4, opened MCPFE-4 and welcomed delegates to Vienna. He highlighted that European forests are repositories of rich biodiversity, and called for continuous improvement of SFM and a focus on protected areas. Co-Chair Pröll drew attention to the many challenges faced by European forests and the forest sector, underscoring the serious impacts of, *inter alia*, air pollution and climate change. He noted that sustainably managed forests contribute to sustainable development, and called for strengthening cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships.

Franz Fischler, EC Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, said the Vienna Declaration and resolutions reflect the multifunctional character of forests and the importance of SFM, and would provide a sound platform for further policy development. He outlined ongoing efforts to implement MCPFE commitments in the EU, and stressed remaining challenges related to: the EU's enlargement; climate change and biodiversity protection at the global level; and the need for good governance.

Czesaw Szeziak, Poland's Minister of the Environment and Co-Chair of MCPFE-4, called for jointly developed projects to improve forest sustainability and management. He highlighted the EU's forest strategy, and national and regional forest programmes as examples of integrated solutions.

Co-Chair Pröll, stressed the importance of forest protection and sustainable management, and the need for international cooperation. He explained that the Vienna Living Forest Summit would focus on: cross-sectoral cooperation and nfps; the economic viability of SFM in Europe; social and cultural aspects of SFM; biodiversity conservation in European forests; and the role of SFM in connection with climate change. The MCPFE-4 agenda was then adopted by acclamation.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

On Monday, a MSD was held, chaired by Jagmohan Maini, former Head and Coordinator of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat. The MSD provided a platform for the non-governmental observer organizations to express their experiences and views on the issues to be addressed by the Conference.

Chair Maini stressed the MCPFE's political commitment and dynamic character, and noted that MCPFE participants have actively contributed to and guided international forest policy deliberations. He highlighted forest issues' transboundary dimensions and cross-sectoral character, noting that forests are multifunctional and provide social, economic and environmental benefits. He underscored the need for long-term political commitment at the international level, and an open decision-making process involving all stakeholders. He then welcomed statements from the five major groups: forest owners; forest industry; social NGOs; environmental NGOs; and the scientific community.

Esa Härmälä, President of the Confederation of European Forest Owners, on behalf of forest owners, commended the MCPFE as a forum for open dialogue and stressed the need for long-term SFM strategies. He expressed concern over the inadequately defined concepts of an "ecosystem approach" and "landscape restoration." He noted challenges faced by forest owners in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries and the need for voluntary cooperation of family forest owners. He also stressed the need to develop the market potential of non-market benefits and to secure property and land tenure rights.

João Soares, Chairman of the Confederation of European Paper Industries, on behalf of the forest industry, outlined the economic and employment benefits derived from forest resource use. He emphasized the need for wood availability and sustainable use, promotion of wood and wood products, and mutual recognition of certification schemes.

Edgar Kastenholz, Secretary General of the European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs, spoke on behalf of social NGOs representing forestry workers, staff and entrepreneurs. Noting that the economic

viability and social security of the forestry workforce is at risk, he called for action to, *inter alia*: maintain a viable workforce to contribute to SFM; promote the organization of and cooperation by social and economic stakeholders; maintain traditional knowledge; encourage skills development and environmental knowledge through training; and implement occupational health and safety standards in nfps.

Underscoring that SFM alone cannot adequately protect European forests, Duncan Pollard, Head of the European Forest Programme at WWF International, speaking on behalf of environmental NGOs, stressed the importance of "protection" within the MCPFE process. He noted that many countries have not fulfilled the Helsinki commitments to establish a coherent network of climax, primary and other special forests. Pollard drew attention to gaps in the existing forest protected areas networks and called for prioritization of the issue within the MCPFE.

Risto Päivinen, Director of the European Forest Institute, on behalf of the scientific community, stressed the need for mechanisms to provide scientific input into MCPFE, and to integrate research in follow-up work. He called for establishing a European network of NGOs modeled on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) Network for stakeholders. He noted the scientific community's role in monitoring progress towards SFM and in facilitating the implementation of MCPFE commitments, recommending that research should be an integral part of all stages of an nfp process. He suggested organizing a conference to bring together policy makers and the scientific community as part of the follow-up process. He said the potential of forest resources to provide social and economic benefits in a sustainable manner is under-utilized, and stressed the need for research, education and awareness raising, especially in CEE countries.

In the ensuing discussion, MCPFE-4 Co-Chair Pröll drew attention to a strong resolution on enhancing forest biodiversity, and stressed that protection and sustainable management are not competitive but interdependent. He also said certification is a market issue and falls outside MCPFE-4 discussions.

Lars Sponheim, Minister of Agriculture of Norway, stressed the importance of an economically-viable forest sector as a prerequisite for SFM, and noted that Norwegian forest policy has benefited from public-private partnerships. Janusz Dawidziuk, Poland's General Director of State Forests, noted that the Polish people oppose forest privatization. Elliot Morley, Minister of Fisheries, Water and Nature Protection of the UK, highlighted national efforts to reconcile two certification schemes and promote the concept of SFM.

Emile Frison, Director General of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, highlighted the importance of forest genetic diversity and drew attention to the European Forest Resources Programme. Risto Seppälä, President of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), stressed the need for implementation and the development of a mechanism to monitor success. He noted that the interface between science and policy does not always function well, and highlighted IUFRO's Task Force devoted to enhancing the science-policy interface.

Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), outlined FAO's work on: SFM implementation and reporting; the environmental and economic aspects of forest utilization; and nfps as a means for implementing SFM. He also highlighted FAO's assistance to countries for managing their protected areas, and its role in research and education to support policy development and good governance.

Closing the session, Chair Maini noted that many of the expressed concerns were already addressed in the Vienna Declaration, and underscored the widespread opinion that the MCPFE is a useful forum for dealing with complex forest issues.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS

On Tuesday afternoon, Chair Maini presented a Summary of the MSD, prepared in consultation with representatives of the major groups and the General Coordinating Committee (GCC). Participants took note of the Summary, which will be included in the MCPFE-4 proceedings.

REPORTS ON THE STATE OF EUROPE'S FORESTS IN 2003 AND ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MCPFE COMMITMENTS

On Monday afternoon, Peter Mayer, Head of the MCPFE Liaison Unit Vienna, presented the reports on the state of Europe's forests in 2003, and on the implementation of MCPFE commitments. He outlined the key messages of the state of Europe's forests report, prepared by the MCPFE Liaison Unit Vienna, the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and FAO, including that: forest resources in Europe are increasing; forest health and vitality are still critical; productive functions are maintained; most protected forests are managed for the conservation of their biodiversity; and protective forests, as well as other socioeconomic functions are important.

Regarding the report on the implementation of MCPFE commitments, which outline national and pan-European activities from 1998 to 2003, he stressed lessons learned at the national level, including the benefits gained through dialogue and participation, and challenges resulting from the diversity of stakeholders and forest owners. He also outlined pan-European implementation activities carried out in the framework of the MCPFE 1999 Work Programme on: dialogue with society; socioeconomic issues; biodiversity and conservation; and planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. He reported successful implementation of 36 out of 41 measures, which was made possible through the cooperation of many institutions and organizations.

EUROPEAN COUNTRY, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND OBSERVER COUNTRY STATEMENTS

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: Martins Roze, Minister of Agriculture of Latvia, noted that the MCPFE process has contributed to a common understanding of the role of forests. He stressed that forests are essential for sustainable development in CEE countries, and recommended that forests be considered in the context of other national policies. He drew attention to the major contribution of forests to Latvian economic stability, and highlighted Latvia's participatory approach to land and institutional reform and forest policy formulation that resulted in the National Forest Cluster Programme.

Lars Sponheim, Minister of Agriculture of Norway, discussed the need for policy measures to promote new markets and products. He highlighted the need for cooperation with all stakeholders, and called for the MCPFE to explore innovative ways to involve other sectors in its work at national and pan-European levels.

Juha Korkeaoja, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland, underscored the importance of nfps, cross-sectoral cooperation and enhancing the economic viability of SFM, and highlighted Finland's efforts in biodiversity conservation.

Alois Ospelt, Minister for Environment, Agriculture and Forestry of Liechtenstein, highlighted the usefulness of regional processes, including the MCPFE. He called for integrated forest policies, and the further development and practical implementation of criteria and indicators (C&I).

Fernand Boden, Minister of Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development of Luxembourg, underscored the need for cross-sectoral cooperation and emphasized the importance of enhancing the economic viability of SFM. He called for public awareness raising regarding the protective role of forests, and increased investment for the forest sector.

Renate Künast, Federal Minister of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture of Germany, noted that Europe's history has a close connection to forests. She stressed the need to maintain forest ecosystems for

future generations and ensure that economic benefits remain available in the long term. She offered bilateral collaboration to combat illegal logging.

Franz Fischler, EC Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, stressed the importance of economic viability for the forest sector, and outlined EC actions with regard to MCPFE commitments, including: the 1998 European Forestry Strategy; cooperation with CEE countries; forest research activities undertaken as part of the 5th Community Framework Programme for Research; efforts to pursue forest protection and SFM at the global level; and efforts to combat illegal logging. He outlined challenges related to the EU's enlargement process.

Fernando Bianchi de Aguiar, Secretary of State for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries of Portugal, highlighted the country's implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme through partnerships and synergies, and emphasized the decisive influence of the MCPFE in developing its national forest policy. He also noted the launch of a national action programme to protect the productive potential of national forests, and increased participation of stakeholders in the decision-making process. He stressed the need for a holistic perspective to link the policies and programmes of relevant sectors.

Gabriella Lindholm, Swedish Ambassador to Vienna, stressed the importance of the forest sector's economic viability, and the contribution of forests to rural and regional development. She prioritized good governance and the prevention of illegal activities, and stressed the need for equal emphasis on timber production and forests' environmental aspects.

Agron Duka, Minister of Agriculture and Food of Albania, drew attention to key forest issues in Albania, including the need for institutional capacity building, enhanced economic efficiency, and improved forest law enforcement to combat illegal forest activities. He called for technical and financial assistance from the international community to address these issues.

Roger Fichant, Walloon Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Affairs in Belgium, described the country's forest management practices, highlighting efforts to conserve biological diversity and to enhance economic viability through the provision of subsidies.

Meglana Plugtsheva, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Bulgaria, said Bulgaria aims to ensure the economic and ecological sustainability of its forests, create new forests, and support private forest owners. She highlighted Bulgaria's network of protected areas and natural parks, and its national strategy for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity.

Zsolt Simon, Minister of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic, stressed the need to concentrate on the requirements for developing nfps based on inter-sectoral approaches. He highlighted global developments for biodiversity protection and prioritized public awareness and promotion of SFM.

Jaromir Vasicek, Vice Minister for Forestry of the Czech Republic, stressed the need for cross-sectoral approaches, and noted that the forestry sector could provide long-term support for ecological functions and biodiversity protection. He highlighted the importance of exchanging scientific information, and improving communication, coordination and cooperation, and emphasized cooperation with the Environment for Europe process.

Ivica Grbac, on behalf of Boidar Pankreti, Croatia's Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, noted challenges in creating an nfp and establishing national certification standards. He stressed the contribution of forests to the national economy, and highlighted sustainable management, application of research results, and respect for international regulations and local communities' rights.

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Jens Peter Simonsen, Deputy Director General of the Danish Ministry of the Environment, emphasized the need to enhance economic viability, forest biodiversity and the protective functions of forests, noting that these issues can be addressed simultaneously. He outlined successful examples of cross-sectoral cooperation in Denmark, including collaboration with the water and energy sectors.

Villu Reiljan, Estonia's Minister of the Environment, emphasized the importance of sharing knowledge and experiences between countries.

Elliot Morley, Minister of Fisheries, Water and Nature Protection of the United Kingdom, drew attention to the alarming rate of global forest degradation and deforestation, and stressed the need for implementation. Noting the EC Communication on Forest Law Enforcement, he highlighted efforts to combat illegal logging and international trade in illegal products, and a campaign to promote wood as an environmentally-sound product.

Juan del Álamo Jiménez, Secretary General of Environment of Spain, highlighted adoption of an nfp and a national strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. He stressed the need to reinforce cooperation, including with the Environment for Europe process, and promote the economic value of forests.

Nicolai Kruk, Chairman of the Committee of Forestry of the Council of Ministers of Belarus, noted an increase in national forest cover due to efforts over several generations, and problems related to pests and nuclear contamination. He outlined national experiences related to developing a forest code, monitoring the status of forests, and maintaining forests' social aspects.

Tengiz Uchaneishvili, Deputy Chairman of the State Department of Forestry of Georgia, highlighted bilateral cooperation with Germany and Italy on establishing a national park and enlarging Georgia's chestnut forest, respectively. He stressed the country's large forest cover and rich biodiversity, as well as economic difficulties, and the need for international funding to implement the MCPFE commitments.

Christos Alexandris, Ambassador of Greece to Vienna, praised MCPFE's role in influencing forest policies in Europe and worldwide, and stressed the importance of common actions, saying that the European forest has no boundaries. He then outlined domestic action related to establishing an nfp, and identifying and implementing C&I for SFM.

Timmy Efthymiou, Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment of Cyprus, outlined the country's recently implemented nfp, which includes a new forest policy statement, a rural betterment strategy and an action plan. He also mentioned national action regarding protected areas, provision of information to the public, implementation of SFM pan-European criteria, and international cooperation.

Noting that global challenges require action at national and regional levels, Imre Németh, Hungary's Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, drew attention to the pan-European process as an example of successful multi-level cooperation. Outlining the multiple benefits provided by forests, Minister Németh underscored the need to properly value the material and non-material benefits of forests in order to provide a sound economic background for SFM.

John Browne, Minister of State, Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources of Ireland, said Ireland is committed to increasing its forest cover and developing its forest sector in accordance with SFM principles.

H.E. Osman Pepe, Minister of Forestry of Turkey, stated that SFM contributes to the national economy and improves the life of rural people. He highlighted that Turkey is about to finalize its nfp, and that it aims to increase and enhance its parks and protected areas.

Leo Boccardi, Permanent Representative of the Holy See to the International Organizations in Vienna, stressed that humans are responsible for their choices and the consequences of their actions. Noting that

children demonstrate a love and respect for nature, he emphasized that education can be an effective method of environmental protection and underscored the need to consider future generations.

Thorstur Eysteinnsson, Deputy Director of the Iceland Forest Service, stressed problems related to reduced forest cover, such as massive soil erosion, and highlighted reforestation efforts on degraded land and allocation of increased funding for forest research.

Jean-Yves Perrot, Director of the Cabinet, Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Rural Affairs of France, noted that the MCPFE's success has surpassed expectations and serves as a model for the world. He outlined national efforts, including a forest code, a leaflet on SFM indicators and the need for a certification system adapted to domestic circumstances.

Giovanni Alemanno, Minister of Agricultural and Forest Policies of Italy, emphasized that forests are one of the most extensive living ecosystems and contain a wealth of genetic information. He stressed the need to strengthen synergies through inter-sectoral cooperation and nfps, and to integrate forest policies with land management policies.

Mykola V. Kolisnychenko, Head of the State Committee of Forestry of Ukraine, noted an increase in its forest cover, and outlined action underway to conserve genetic resources, develop an early warning system for forest fires, promote ecologically viable technologies and conserve biodiversity.

Explaining that the pan-European process was a major driving force for Lithuania, Arunas Kundrotas, Minister of Environment of Lithuania, said national-level efforts to strengthen SFM are of crucial importance and described Lithuania's achievements in this regard. He highlighted the country's recent efforts to improve forest governance and law enforcement, increase afforestation, and engage stakeholders.

Hein van Asperen, on behalf of Cees Veerman, Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands, stressed the importance of the relationship between forests and biodiversity and between forests and water. He called for priority consideration of the relationship between water and forest management at MCPFE-5.

Ovidiu Ionescu, Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests of Romania, highlighted the Ministry's support to small forest owners through technical assistance and fiscal measures. He drew attention to drought and desertification problems in Romania and difficulties relating to efforts to increase forest coverage. He also highlighted Romania's work on forest monitoring, data collection and C&I development.

Valery Roshchupkin, the Russian Federation's First Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, stated that global forest policy must be implemented at the national level, and outlined his country's efforts to develop forest legislation, C&I, and action plans that take into account relevant international policies.

Drawing attention to the humanization of forestry, Andrzej Szujecki, on behalf of Czeslaw Slezziak, Minister of Environment of Poland, called for advancing the fields of forestry sciences and education in the domains of intersectoral and international relations to ensure that forestry is multifunctional. He noted that Poland will host MCPFE-5 in Warsaw, and said that preserving the sustainability of forests is the overarching aim of forest policy in Poland.

Werner Schärer, Director of the Swiss Forest Agency, stressed the need to examine international cross-sectoral issues and their impact on the goal of sustainability. He said the MCPFE is an important platform for dealing with urgent issues and finding innovative solutions, and urged further proactive steps.

Ingwald Gschwandtl, on behalf of Josef Pröll, Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria, said the MCPFE has had a decisive impact on national forest policy. He referenced: the new national forestry law, which incorporates the SFM

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definition and focuses on biodiversity conservation; initiation of the Austrian Forest Dialogue, based on the principles for nfps; and the publication of a survey on forest protected areas.

Andjelka Mihajlov, Minister for the Protection of Natural Resources and the Environment of the Republic of Serbia, on behalf of Serbia and Montenegro, highlighted the advancement of forestry legislation, the innovation of research and planning methodologies, and further education and training as priority tasks for Serbia and Montenegro. She said the country is working toward harmonizing its environmental regulations with relevant EU Directives.

Franc But, Slovenia's Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, said Slovenia is implementing its MCPFE commitments through its nfp, and welcomed the Vienna Resolutions relating to climate change and biodiversity. He stated that education and training is a prerequisite for effective SFM, and noted cooperation with forest owners as a challenge for Slovenian forestry.

OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS: Eladio Fernández-Galiano, Council of Europe, underscored the importance of the Vienna Resolution on enhancing biodiversity, noting that it will contribute to the implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation. Jean-Claude Monin, President of the European Observatory of Mountain Forests, highlighted the multiple benefits of mountain forests, underscoring that such forests are particularly vulnerable to negative environmental impacts.

Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General of the FAO Forestry Department and Chair of the CPF, overviewed FAO's role in providing technical support, information and advice, and managing and conserving forests. He presented the outcomes of the March 2003 meeting of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), which took place in Rome, and drew attention to the National Forest Programme Facility, which supports the implementation of nfps in developing countries.

Amha Bin Buang, Assistant Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) outlined ITTO's mandate and work regarding the sustainable management of tropical forests and promotion of international trade in tropical timber. He also referenced ITTO's policy work and projects on, *inter alia*, C&I for SFM, timber certification, conservation reserves, forest law enforcement and governance, and illegal logging.

Jacques Carrette, on behalf of the Montréal Process on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests, presented progress on the participating countries' first Forest Report, which uses the Process' adopted C&I to present the state of, and trends in, forests at the national level. He noted progress in reporting forest information, an inability to report on all indicators, and the Process' benefits as an international forum for collaboration.

Brigita Schmögnerová, Executive Secretary of the UNECE outlined UNECE's achievements in forest and timber issues since 1948, and stressed the challenges facing the forest sector in Europe, including developing a cross-sectoral approach and tackling the specific problems of countries with economies in transition.

Ivonne Higuero, on behalf of Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, commended the MCPFE for building on the momentum of the WSSD by translating relevant elements of the Plan of Implementation and Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development into the Vienna Declaration. She urged Ministers to adopt a resolution on biodiversity, which contained a commitment to halt biodiversity loss in the region by 2010.

Pekka Patosaari, Coordinator and Head of the UNFF Secretariat, stated that the MCPFE process demonstrates that regional cooperation fosters SFM by addressing critical forest issues and translating policies into concrete actions on the ground. Drawing attention to the international challenge of focusing forest interventions on poverty reduction

and sustainable livelihood goals, he noted that the UNFF is seeking partners to assist in promoting SFM through regional initiatives in developing countries.

Tamas Marghescu, Regional Director of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), expressed disappointment with the Vienna Declaration, commenting that it inadequately addresses the "protection" of forests. He called on Ministers to fulfil the Helsinki commitments by increasing forest protected area coverage. Noting that IUCN is working to develop guidance for applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to forest protected areas in Europe, he urged Ministers to take this guidance into account to ensure full comparability between the MCPFE and IUCN classification systems.

OBSERVER COUNTRIES: Jacques Carrette, on behalf of Herb Dhaliwal, Minister of Natural Resources Canada, stated that the Vienna Declaration and Resolutions reflect, for the most part, Canada's own commitment to SFM. He stressed the importance of addressing illegal logging, taking into account the needs of local communities, and of promoting the environmental superiority of wood products. He underscored Canada's commitment to developing and implementing national C&I to measure forest conditions and track progress in SFM.

Mark Edwards, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry of Australia, highlighted Australia's commitment to SFM and took note, with interest, of the emphasis that MCPFE-4 placed on cross-sectoral linkages, broader economic issues, and the social and cultural dimensions of forests.

Ichio Kumagai, Japan's Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, outlined Japan's efforts to establish a new policy framework to ensure sustainability of the multiple functions of forests, and to develop a comprehensive recycling strategy. He emphasized that illegal logging and associated trade are major obstacles to SFM, and expressed Japan's commitment to combat them.

Sally Collins, Associate Chief of the US Department of Agriculture Forest Service, stressed the importance of SFM as an essential tool for sustainable development, cross-sectoral partnerships, the multiple benefits arising from forests, and transparent and participatory decision making. She referenced challenges related to fragmentation of ownership in the US, and announced the upcoming release of the US's first national report on sustainable forests. She also outlined international efforts to promote SFM, including the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

SIGNING CEREMONY AND CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

On Tuesday afternoon, a signing ceremony was held, during which Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Signatory States signed the Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration and the Vienna Resolutions.

Fernando Bianchi de Aguiar, Secretary of State for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries of Portugal, underscored the MCPFE's contribution to achieve mutual understanding and discover the continent's wealth of diversity. He then invited Spain to replace Portugal in the GCC, which has the task to facilitate and coordinate the work of the MCPFE. Juan del Álamo Jiménez, Spain's Secretary General of Environment, accepted the invitation to work with Austria, Poland and Norway in the framework of the GCC.

MCPFE-4 Co-Chair Slezziak stressed that Europe represents one of the few examples of forest cover expansion, while other forest regions are diminishing or being degraded at an alarming pace. He noted that forest management is an important instrument to improve the situation of people and the environment, and has a value of its own. MCPFE-4 Co-Chair Pröll presented the meeting's outcomes, goals and future steps, and stressed that implementation on the ground will provide a measure of the meeting's success. He gavelled the meeting to a close at 6:00 pm.

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DANUBE FLOODPLAIN NATIONAL PARK EXCURSION

On Wednesday, delegates participated in an excursion to the Danube Floodplain National Park, a Park which protects one of the last large riparian wetlands in Europe. While strolling through the forest and along the Danube River, delegates heard presentations on: the Austrian Forest Dialogue, as a framework for developing the Austrian Forest Programme; a forest owner's perspective on earning a livelihood from forestry; forests and culture in the Danube Floodplain region; forest biodiversity in the region; and climate change and forestry.

SUMMARY OF THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND RESOLUTIONS

VIENNA LIVING FOREST SUMMIT DECLARATION: EUROPEAN FORESTS-COMMON BENEFITS, SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

The Declaration includes a preamble and commitments on: benefiting rural livelihood and urban societies; building strong partnerships; tackling global challenges; and putting MCPFE commitments into action.

The preamble recognizes: that living forests are a basis of life on Earth; the multiple benefits of forests; that forest sector policies contribute to sustainable development and are influenced by major cross-sectoral decisions; the need to continue the forest protection efforts by strengthening SFM in Europe; the need to implement global commitments at regional, national and sub-national levels; and the role of the MCPFE process to contribute to the development of forest-related global commitments.

On benefiting rural livelihood and urban societies, commitments include: strengthening conditions for the economic viability of SFM; promoting incentives for the protection and sustainable management of forests; increasing the sound use of wood; maintaining and strengthening the services of forests in providing protection from natural hazards; reflecting the social and cultural dimensions of SFM in forest-related policies; and addressing the challenges that forest owners are facing in CEE countries.

On building strong partnerships, commitments address: improving understanding of how policies developed in other sectors influence the forest sector and *vice versa*; identifying key cross-sectoral issues and establishing a dialogue to seek joint solutions; developing new and strengthening existing partnerships at international and national levels; using nfps as a means for effective inter-sectoral coordination; and basing forest-related decisions on science, and supporting research. They also stress continuing the pan-European cooperation and increasing cooperation with other regional forest processes, and further developing cooperation among countries with different socioeconomic situations, especially with regard to CEE.

On tackling global challenges, commitments include: promoting good governance and forest law enforcement, and combating illegal harvesting of forest products and related trade; contributing to the overall reduction of greenhouse gas concentrations and promoting SFM within the process of the UNFCCC; maintaining, conserving, restoring and enhancing forest biodiversity; supporting the UNFF; and promoting the implementation of the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF), the UNFF Multi-year programme of work, and the expanded work programme on forest biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

VIENNA RESOLUTION 1: STRENGTHEN SYNERGIES FOR SFM IN EUROPE THROUGH CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION AND NFPS

On putting MCPFE commitments into action, commitments highlight: promoting SFM by implementing C&I for monitoring, assessing and reporting progress; and developing a work programme for implementation.

The preamble addresses the need to strengthen coherence and synergies between policies aimed at SFM and other relevant policies. It aims to further the concept of nfps in Europe, accepting that an nfp constitutes a participatory, holistic, inter-sectoral and iterative process of policy planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and that nfp processes are an important means to strengthen coherence and synergies within the forest sector and between the forest and other sectors.

The commitments include: working towards an improved understanding of cross-sectoral issues; enhancing inter-sectoral policy coordination; developing and implementing nfps, and using them to address relevant cross-sectoral issues and assess gaps in forest-relevant policies; considering nfp outcomes in national sustainable development strategies; exchanging country experiences gained in the nfp process; and making best use of information on mechanisms for implementation and financing of nfps, research, education, and national and international programmes.

An annex to the Resolution contains the MCPFE approach to nfps in Europe, which includes the principles of:

- participation;
- holistic and inter-sectoral approach;
- iterative process with long-term commitment;
- capacity building;
- consistency with national legislation and policies;
- integration with national sustainable development strategies;
- consistency with international commitments recognizing synergies
- between international forest related initiatives and conventions;
- institutional and policy reform;
- an ecosystem approach;
- partnership for implementation; and
- awareness raising.

VIENNA RESOLUTION 2: ENHANCING THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF SFM IN EUROPE

The preamble notes, *inter alia*, that economic viability is a key pillar of SFM and of crucial importance for maintaining forests and their multiple benefits for society. It acknowledges that SFM in Europe relies on private owners, enterprises, public bodies and a workforce, and that forests provide raw material, goods and services, and a broad range of social, cultural and environmental values.

The commitments include: adjusting policy and legal frameworks to support sound enabling conditions for SFM that encourage investment and economic activity in the forest sector; promoting the use of wood from sustainably managed forests; improving enabling conditions for the market-based provision of non-wood goods and services; working towards common approaches to the practical application of the valuation of the full range of goods and services provided by forests; and enhancing the competitiveness of the forest sector. They call for supporting research and mechanisms for dissemination of knowledge, enhancing the quality of education for the sustainable and competitive development of the forest sector, and improving the working environment and safety conditions of forest owners and the forest workforce. They also address: supporting institutions concerned with workforce safety and education; incorporating the economic viability of SFM into rural development policies; using innovative economic instruments for achieving forest-related goals; encouraging the voluntary cooperation

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of forest owners to improve economic viability; and promoting associations of forest owners, workforce and entrepreneurs, in particular in CEE countries.

VIENNA RESOLUTION 3: PRESERVING AND ENHANCING THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF SFM IN EUROPE

The preamble recognizes the relationship between people and forests, and that social and cultural dimensions of SFM are reflected in landscapes, monuments, knowledge, values, experiences and traditional practices related to forests and uses of wood and non-wood goods and services. It notes that social and cultural values change over time and that globalization and urbanization have an effect on forestry. It takes into account relevant UNFF and CBD decisions, and work done by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and sets the aim of raising awareness of the social and cultural dimensions of SFM.

The commitments include: addressing the social and cultural dimensions of SFM in nfps and other relevant policies; encouraging the identification, expression and communication of the social and cultural dimensions of SFM; securing the property rights and land tenure arrangements of forest owners, and local and indigenous communities; developing the material and non-material social and cultural aspects and benefits of SFM; increasing the attractiveness of the landscape; and raising awareness of the contribution of traditional knowledge and practices in SFM. Other commitments address identifying, assessing and encouraging the conservation and management of historical and cultural objects and sites in forests, and encouraging multi-disciplinary research into the role of the social and cultural aspects of SFM in the overall goal of sustainable development.

VIENNA RESOLUTION 4: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY IN EUROPE

The preamble recognizes the importance of forests for biodiversity, reaffirms that the conservation and appropriate enhancement of forest biodiversity is an essential element for their sustainable management, and aims to further maintain, conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity.

The commitments include: striving for coordinated implementation of the CBD expanded forest work programme and the IPF/IFF proposals for action at all levels; addressing the maintenance, conservation, restoration and appropriate enhancement of forest biodiversity in nfps; assessing the impact of relevant policies and programmes on forest biodiversity, removing policy distortions and failures resulting in loss of forest biodiversity, and promoting the compatibility of trade regulations with forest biodiversity-related goals; and providing and analyzing information about the impact and underlying causes of illegal harvesting of forest products and related trade on forest biodiversity, and taking effective measures to combat them, and build capacity for forest law enforcement. They stress the need for: developing a regional understanding of the linkages between the ecosystem approach and SFM, and sharing it with relevant bodies at the global level; analyzing and further developing protected forest networks; and preventing and mitigating forest biodiversity loss due to fragmentation and conversion to other land uses, while maintaining and establishing ecological connectivity. They call for: promoting the restoration of forest biodiversity in degraded forests; improving the assessment and monitoring of forest biodiversity in Europe; developing a pan-European strategy which prevents and mitigates the impacts of invasive alien species that threaten ecosystems, in accordance with the CBD decisions; and promoting management planning and practices specifically suited to maintain, conserve, restore and enhance forest biodiversity. They also stress promoting the conservation of forest genetic resources as an inte-

gral part of SFM, supporting inter-disciplinary research in order to take knowledge-based decisions on SFM, and continuing collaboration with the Environment for Europe process/ PEBLDS.

The annexed Framework for Cooperation between the MCPFE and the Ministerial Process Environment for Europe/ PEBLDS includes sections on areas, modalities and priority themes for cooperation.

The second annex contains the MCPFE Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and Other Wooded Land in Europe. The Guidelines include, general principles, structure, and definition of classes under the main management objectives of biodiversity, protection of landscapes and specific natural elements, and protective functions.

VIENNA RESOLUTION 5: CLIMATE CHANGE AND SFM IN EUROPE

The preamble recognizes the threats posed to forests by climate change, and the role of European forests in the global carbon cycle. It takes into account the MCPFE Helsinki Resolution on strategies for a process of long-term adaptation of forests in Europe to climate change, and UNFCCC and WSSD decisions. It aims to ensure the sustainable management of European forests and the sustained provision of their multiple benefits, underlining that the main emphasis should be put on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The commitments include: contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas net emissions through promoting the efficient and sound use of wood, and a significant increase in the efficient generation and use of bio-energy from sustainably-managed forest resources and wood residues; contributing to the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol by maintaining the carbon stock and enhancing carbon sequestration of forests in Europe through SFM practices and nfps providing for afforestation and reforestation; supporting research on the potential scope and methods of carbon sequestration in forests and of carbon storing in forest products; and supporting research and monitoring activities to better understand the possible impact of climate change on forests and on their goods and services. They stress enhancing policies and measures and developing forestry to improve the adaptability of forests to climate change; and further contributing to the on-going work under the UNFCCC on the elaboration of methods to estimate, measure, monitor and report changes in carbon stocks in forest ecosystems and forest products. The call for sharing experiences on forest-related national and regional strategies for mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, and for contributing to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol deliberations to ensure that decisions are taken and implemented in line with SFM.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

ITTC-34: The 34th meeting of the International Tropical Timber Council will convene from 12-17 May 2003, in Panama City, Panama. The First Preparatory Committee for the negotiations of the Successor Agreement to ITTA, 1994 will be held immediately following the session. For more information, contact: Alastair Sarre, ITTO Secretariat; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: editor@itto.or.jp; Internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RURAL LIVELIHOODS, FORESTS AND BIODIVERSITY: This conference will convene from 19-23 May 2003, in Bonn, Germany. It is organized by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), in collaboration with Germany's Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and 'Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit' (GTZ). The conference will consider the role of forests in supporting rural livelihoods in developing countries and in maintaining biodiversity. Key objectives are to survey current knowledge, and identify policy lessons and a future research strategy. For more information,

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contact: William Sunderlin; tel: +251-622-622; fax: +251-622-100; e-mail: w.sunderlin@cgiar.org; Internet: <http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/shared/template/livelihoodconference.asp>

CENTRAL AMERICAN CONGRESS ON FORESTRY: This meeting, organized by the Association of Central American Forestry Professionals (ACA-PROF), will convene from 21-23 May 2003, in Panama City, Panama. It will bring together researchers, experts, technicians, indigenous peoples, entrepreneurs, teachers and professionals from science and technology institutions to discuss their findings, field experiences and main results from their most recent research. For more information, contact: Irving R. Díaz, ACAPROF; e-mail: irving_diaz@hotmail.com; Internet: <http://www.catie.ac.cr/news/notas/nota24.htm>

ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE: This ministerial conference, sponsored by the UNECE, will convene from 21-23 May 2003, in Kiev, Ukraine. The Conference will address: environmental policy in transition; environmental monitoring; the third pan-European environmental assessment report; environmental strategies for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia; environment, water and security in Central Asia; mountain initiatives; environmental education; and energy. The conference will also consider the future of the "Environment for Europe" process and will adopt a ministerial declaration. For more information contact: Ella Behlyarova; tel: +41-22-917-2376; fax: +41-22-917-0630; e-mail: Ella.Behlyarova@unece.org; Internet: http://www.unece.org/env/wgso/index_kyivconf.htm

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ECONOMICS OF SFM: This conference will convene from 22-24 May 2003, in Toronto, Canada. Hosted by the University of Toronto, it will focus on economic principles, theories, methods, and models reflective of the distinct features of SFM. For more information contact: Shashi Kant, Conference Secretariat; tel: +1-416-978-6196; fax: +1-416-978-3834; e-mail: shashi.kant@utoronto.ca; Internet: http://www.forestry.utoronto.ca/socio_economic/icesfm/menu.htm

CPF MEETING: This meeting, organized by the UNFF, will convene on 25 May 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Luz Aragon, UNFF Secretariat; tel: +1-212-963-1393; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: aragonm@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests>

UNFF-3: The third session of the UNFF will convene from 26 May-6 June 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland. Delegates will discuss a variety of issues, including: means of implementation; progress in implementation, specifically related to economic aspects of forests, forest health and productivity, and maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs; and common items. For more information, contact: Mia Söderlund, 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>

UNFCCC SB-18: The Subsidiary Bodies to the UNFCCC will meet from 4-13 June 2003, in Bonn, Germany to continue negotiations on the institutional and implementation aspects of the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: <http://www.unfccc.int>

FORESTS IN SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT - RISKS AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT: This meeting, organized by IUFRO, will convene from 9-13 June 2003, in Galtuer, Austria. For more information, contact: Gernot Fiebiger, IUFRO; tel: +43-1-877-01-51-0; fax: +43-1-877-01-51-50; e-mail: gernot.fiebiger@wlv.bmlf.gv.at; Internet: <http://iufro.boku.ac.at>

THE FOREST SCIENCE/POLICY INTERFACE IN EUROPE, AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST WORKSHOP: This workshop, organized by IUFRO, will convene from 23-27 June 2003, in Copenhagen, Denmark. It will cover issues related to the management of natural and plantation forests and woodlands for economic, social and environmental goods and services in the European-African region and the Middle East. For more information, contact: John Parrotta, IUFRO; tel: +1-703-605-4178; fax: +1-703-605-5131; e-mail: jparrotta@fs.fed.us; Internet: <http://www.flec.kvl.dk/>

EUROPARC 2003: This meeting, sponsored by the Norwegian Ministry of Environment, will convene from 27-31 August 2003, in Stryn, Norway. The Europarc General Assembly will meet to discuss ways to balance nature conservation and local economic development in protected areas in Europe. Recommendations will be forwarded to the World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, in September 2003. For more information, contact: the Europarc 2003 Conference Office; tel: +47-57-877200; fax: +47-57-877201; e-mail: office@europarc2003.no; Internet: <http://www.europarc2003.no>

SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR ON FOREST RESEARCH CROSSING BORDERS: This seminar will convene from 28-29 August 2003, in Joensuu, Finland. It is organized by the European Forest Institute. Topics include the role of forests in creating welfare, effect of global change on SFM, and better information for good governance of forests. For more information, contact: Anu Ruusila, European Forest Institute; tel: +358-13-252-0215; fax: +358-13-124-393; e-mail: anu.ruusila@efi.fi; Internet: <http://www.efi.fi/events/2003/10AC/seminar.html>

FIFTH WORLD PARKS CONGRESS - BENEFITS BEYOND BOUNDARIES: This IUCN conference will convene from 8-17 September 2003, in Durban, South Africa. For more information, contact: Peter Shadie, IUCN Programme on Protected Areas; tel: +41-22-999-0159; fax: +41-22-999-0025; e-mail: pds@iucn.org; Internet: <http://wcpa.iucn.org/wpc/wpc.html>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TROPICAL SAVANNAS AND SEASONALLY DRY FORESTS - ECOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: This conference will convene from 14-20 September 2003, in Edinburgh, United Kingdom. For more information contact: the Edinburgh Centre for Tropical Forests; tel: +44-131-440-0400; fax: +44-131-440-4141; e-mail: savanna-conference@ectf-ed.org.uk; Internet: <http://www.nmw.ac.uk/ectf/events.htm#International>

COURSE ON FACILITATING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES AND SOCIAL LEARNING: This course will convene from 15 September-3 October 2003, in Wageningen, the Netherlands. It considers "state-of-the-art" thinking on participation from the local to the global level, and introduces up-to-date methodologies and approaches for facilitation and participation. For more information, contact: the International Agricultural Centre; tel: +31-317-495-495; fax: +31-317-495-395; e-mail: training@iac.agro.nl; Internet: <http://www.iac.wur.nl/services/training/regular/module.cfm?code=61/50>

12TH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS: This congress, organized under the auspices of the FAO, will convene 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: mailto:sec-gen@wfc2003.org; Internet: <http://www.wfc2003.org>