



Bali CLI Bulletin

A Daily Report of the Country-Led Initiative in Support of the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the UNFF: Charting the Way Forward to 2015

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UNFF MYPOW CLI HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2007

On Wednesday, the Country-Led Initiative (CLI) in support of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) Multi-Year Program of Work (MYPOW) convened for its second day of discussions. In the morning, participants resumed discussions in three working groups on: Themes of UNFF Biennial Meetings; Modalities; and Regional and Sub-regional Dimensions. In the afternoon participants met in a joint working group session to report on progress made and to discuss cross-cutting issues, then reconvened in working groups. In the evening, participants attended a dinner hosted by the Governor of the Province of Bali.

MORNING WORKING GROUPS

Working Group 1: WG1, on Themes of UNFF Biennial Meetings, continued discussions on identifying a suitable framework for themes. Discussion centered around four possible options: Option 1, focusing each session on one of the Global Objectives; Option 2, focusing sessions on indicators for Global Objectives, National Action Plans and Assessment of Costs and having subsequent sessions follow progress on these; Option 3, themes determined by outputs from regional processes; and Option 4, different themes for each session through the lens of the Global Objectives. Many participants were in favor of combining Options 2, 3 and 4, with some modifications and elaboration of certain aspects. They also said that although separation of Global Objectives proposed in Option 1 may lead to progress on specific objectives, the Global Objectives should be addressed concurrently.

Three other options for thematic frameworks will also be considered by WG1. These include: focusing on means of implementation in the first session and then agreeing on the thematic focus of subsequent sessions; session themes based on the nine principle functions of the UNFF; and sessions based on means of implementation, International Year of Forests and input from regional processes and review respectively. Participants suggested focusing on specific themes as specified in the scope of work for WG1. Participants agreed that the following themes would be suggested to the plenary: means of implementation; climate change; Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); trade and investment; forests and livelihoods; forests and development; and ecosystem services.

Working Group 2: FINLAND, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, IRAN, CANADA and the NETHERLANDS, called for increased information exchange and suggested dedicating time in the first week of UNFF to the presentation of country experiences. SOUTH AFRICA agreed and, supported by NEW ZEALAND, suggested the first week of UNFF could be used for reporting and reviewing progress. FINLAND

suggested using innovative ways of increasing outreach about the UNFF process, specifically suggesting using IISD Reporting Services to cover presentations of national experiences.

The PHILIPPINES outlined the importance of South-South cooperation and the need to share experiences on this.

SOUTH AFRICA commented that negotiations do not take place in the presence of ministers. ARGENTINA agreed and suggested a ministerial dialogue could be held in the first week of negotiations, during the proposed reporting and review segment. BRAZIL suggested that holding a high-level segment prior to the negotiating session may provide guidance to negotiators. The Secretariat cautioned that the way in which ministers participate depends on the readiness of the members to make progress.

NEW ZEALAND introduced a paper proposing a vision for reforming the UNFF process to secure working modalities that operate on a biennial cycle. The paper outlined that during intersessional periods the focus would be on SFM implementation through existing regional fora, which would act as preparatory meetings for UNFF. In the ensuing discussion, participants debated the illustrative timeline, with many pointing to the clash of the proposed preparatory meeting with the General Assembly. Numerous participants noted an intersessional meeting should be held in the months prior to the UNFF as opposed to twelve months prior, to act as a preparatory meeting.

The Secretariat cautioned that intergovernmental processes are not self-guiding and stressed the need to identify a mechanism to assist regions in making an early start. NEW ZEALAND agreed that regional processes require guidance.

Working Group 3: Co-chair Peter Mayer, International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), set out the agenda for Working Group 3 (WG3) on "Regional and Sub-regional Dimensions" focusing on: existing regional mechanisms and how they could cooperate to provide input to UNFF work; how best to provide regional input to UNFF; and the objective of and topics for regional meetings. Co-chair Jose Doig, Peru, noted that regional input should be focused on the UNFF mandate.

Many participants noted the importance of regional input into the UNFF and supported a regional focus in UNFF sessions. COSTA RICA and the AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY ORGANIZATION (ACTO) suggested consolidating regional initiatives and positions to build a common regional agenda in support of UNFF. Many delegates suggested a flexible approach to regional coordination of input to UNFF.

Noting the many existing regional processes, several participants said that these mechanisms should be used to address the UNFF mandate and cautioned against increasing the reporting burden on regional bodies. Several participants,

including BRAZIL and BENIN, said that there was no need for special regional meetings in the UNFF process. BENIN was among the participants who stressed the cost implications of additional meetings. CHINA noted the importance of strengthening South-South regional cooperation.

Regarding how to provide regional input to UNFF, COSTA RICA recommended summary reports from each region to UNFF sessions based on individual contributions within regions and sub-regions. The US suggested showcasing lessons learned from regional experiences on mainstreaming regional dialogue into UNFF work and better integrating stakeholders. Johann Goldammer, Global Fire Monitoring Center provided information on the UN Global Wildland Fire Network.

On the objectives and topics for regional meetings, participants agreed that regional processes should take up MYPOW topics, including any emerging issues not addressed in the MYPOW and keeping in mind the UNFF Global Objectives. NORWAY suggested that regions should identify emerging issues and present these at UNFF sessions. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted that not all topics will be applicable to all regions. GERMANY emphasized that regional meetings must not lose sight of the Global Objectives. FAO cautioned against having UNFF set the agenda for regional meetings, preferring a bottom-up approach but Co-chair Doig noted that some regions requested guidance from UNFF to support their regional agendas and activities.

JOINT WORKING GROUP SESSION

In the afternoon, the Co-chairs of each working group reported their preliminary findings back to plenary, and participants responded to presentations and discussed cross-cutting issues.

In response to questions for WG3, Co-chair Mayer reported that the group had agreed that: regional input is desirable, but should not require submitting official regional reports to UNFF; stakeholder participation is crucial; and that regional bodies should determine how to coordinate input, including the possibility of using the UN Economic Commissions.

Regarding the proposal to have high level segments at each session, WG2 Co-chair Ingwald Gschwandtl said discussions had taken place but had not concluded and that the Secretariat's proposal for high level segments in 2011 and 2015 will be considered. CUBA noted that it would be difficult to have ministers attend high-level segments if these did not include negotiating or policy making. GERMANY said that implementation of the Non Legally-Binding Instrument should be at the core of MYPOW and that there was a need to elaborate on the instruments to support the capacity of countries to voluntarily report. PERU noted that in order to have a coherent report on regional input, WG2 and WG3 need to work together. FINLAND proposed that the UNFF invite scientific input from the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to guide discussions on thematic topics.

Hans Hoogeveen, the Netherlands, UNFF-7 Chair, urged participants to consider the UNFF in the context of the larger UN framework, and stressed the importance of linking it with other processes. He said that international policy will guide action on the ground, but noted that this should be informed by existing national and regional processes, and that the interface between these two realms needs improvement. He emphasized the need for preparatory meetings no later than four months

prior to regular sessions, and the need to secure adequate resources to fund translation costs and the participation of developing countries.

AFTERNOON WORKING GROUPS

Working Group 1: On selection of themes, the US stated that the number of themes and issues that could be selected would depend on the expected outcomes of the negotiations surrounding those themes. The UK pointed out that the themes selected should not only appeal to those within the UNFF but to those outside the UNFF. WG1 was presented with a compilation of proposed themes and issues for UNFF biennial meetings. By request of Co-chair Paul Lolo, important themes were identified and included: forests and climate change, forests and trade, forests and biodiversity, forests and energy, forests and equity, forests and land tenure and property rights. IRAN proposed clustering themes into categories. The CHILDREN and YOUTH Major Group requested that forests and education be added to the list of themes.

Participants exchanged views on how best to structure UNFF sessions in order to attract a wider audience and remain politically relevant, including the possibility of drawing upon the seven thematic elements of SFM.

Working Group 2: WG2 continued discussions on the issues of monitoring and reporting, and activities between biennial sessions. Delegates discussed the issue of capacity building for reporting and the process of harmonization that led to the seven thematic elements of SFM. SOUTH AFRICA cautioned against the conditionality that sometimes comes with funding for capacity building. NEW ZEALAND preferred to focus on the interface between the other two working groups and suggested focusing discussion on an intergovernmental preparatory meeting may pave the way for this. In discussions on biennial meetings, ARGENTINA explained the significance of using the terms "intersessional" and "preparatory". WG2 will continue discussions on Thursday morning to address the questions raised in plenary on the issues of CPF, high-level segments and the scientific community.

Working Group 3: Co-chair Mayer reported that the general consensus among participants on regional input is that it should come from existing processes. He added that there were various processes available to regional bodies, such as the UN Economic Commissions, and it would be up to each region to decide how to coordinate input. While it was determined that there may be a need for intersessional expert meetings, many delegates considered these meetings unnecessary at the regional level. Co-chair Doig said that UNFF-7 needed to give concrete direction to the regions as to how to determine their input.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Despite the casual dress and setting, participants clearly recognize that much is at stake at this meeting, and that a constructive outcome is needed for UNFF-7 to succeed.

Several participants were overheard praising the facilitation of the working groups, and many commented on the pivotal role of co-chairs in effectively guiding participants through the process. Intersessional meetings are emerging as a hot topic, and delegates continue to debate how best to coordinate the input of the regional component into UNFF sessions to ensure consistency, while still allowing flexibility. It is clear that participants wish to use existing regional institutions and avoid the creation of new ones, but how they will interface with the international level remains in the nascent stages of development.