



FORESTS 2011

السنة الدولية
للغابات • ٢٠١١

2011 • 国际森林年

INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF FORESTS • 2011

ANNÉE INTERNATIONALE
DES FORÊTS • 2011

МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ
ГОД ЛЕСОВ • 2011

AÑO INTERNACIONAL
DE LOS BOSQUES • 2011

Celebrate
forests
for
people.

www.un.org/forests

The International Year of Forests 2011 launched on 2 February, officially reminding the world of the importance of forests in our daily lives.

A key issue facing forests remains the issue of forest financing. Initiatives have been launched throughout the world regarding finding new ways to finance reforestation projects as well as studying methods of sustainable forest management.

For example, at the launch of the International Year of Forests, Minister Stanislas Kamanzi, announced that by 2035, Rwanda would achieve a “country-wide reversal of the current degradation of soil, land, water and forest resources in such a way that demonstrably improves the quality and resilience and provides new opportunities for rural livelihoods.” In the short term, he added, by 2015, Rwanda had committed to developing a comprehensive action plan for that initiative as well as to support “forest restoration activities,” in line with national development priorities.

One of the major instruments in making projects such as the one announced by Rwanda possible is the resolution passed in the special session of the Ninth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in October 2009. The resolution established the open-ended ad hoc expert group which would also propose strategies for mobilizing resources to achieve the global objectives on forests, and the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests.

“The resolution is a milestone in the global policy debate on financing for sustainable forest management, which as you know has been elusive for many years,” said Ambassador Nadia M. Osman, from the Permanent Mission of Sudan. “Countries had not been able to agree on the options since the start of these discussions at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. We believe that the agreement also has multiple advantages and long-term implications for other major global processes.”



Ambassador Osman was instrumental in developing consensus to help pass the resolution. As Chair of the G77 and China, and Chief Negotiator of the resolution on behalf of the G77 and China, which contains groups such as the African Group, the Least Developed Countries (LDCS), the and Locked Developing Countries (LLDCS), The Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Ms. Osman had to guide the group tactfully towards its common objective, while ensuring that all were in agreement regarding all the scenarios, options and compromises.

“The negotiations were very difficult and complex, but what helped me greatly as a negotiator was the very friendly constructive atmosphere that prevailed in the G77 and China, on one hand, and between the Group and our development partners, particularly during the latter part of the negotiations” said Ambassador Osman, “in addition to the hard work of all the regional coordinators who cooperated with me to help solidify our common positions as developing countries and keep the group united up until the very end when the resolution was finally adopted.”



On what further makes the resolution such a remarkable achievement, Ambassador Nadia answered that, “the resolution was negotiated in a very complex and sensitive global climate, in the midst of an international financial crisis and just a few weeks before Copenhagen. Yet, delegations succeeded in reaching consensus and a road map, which I believe constitutes a “global consensus” on the means of implementation for sustainable forest



management”, and that it was also “operational”, as it sets in motion a clear intergovernmental process, consisting of two sets of actions: establishment of an Open ended Intergovernmental Ad hoc expert Group, to examine current funding mechanism, including the establishment of a Global Forest Fund, which was proposed by the G77 and China, in addition to initiating a Facilitative Process aimed at improving access to current funding and facilitating capacity building and technology transfer

The Facilitative Process addressed the special needs of countries that have faced a 20-year decline in forest financing. Results of the facilitative process have been extremely positive with developed countries increasingly showing commitment to funding activities and developing countries offering to host workshops on forest financing.



As the International Year of Forests continues to build momentum for forest initiatives and awareness around the world, Jan McAlpine, Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, hopes that the resolutions passed during the special session of UNFF9 will continue to make advancements across all sectors. Recalling the result of negotiations that date back to the landmark Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, Ms. McAlpine explained that the International Year of Forests, when combined with the tools already available, such as the Facilitative Process, will lead to innovative solutions because they will bring together the broadest possible cross-section, including governments, donors and the private sector.

“We must learn together, so that we may work together,” Ms. McAlpine said.

The collaborative attitude that helped pass the UNFF9 resolution is also an essential factor in the International Year of Forests. While the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat is the focal point for the International Year, the true impact of the year resides in the activities and events planned by organizations around the world. From Member States to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, from non-governmental organizations to universities and schools, events celebrating “Forests for People” are filling up the calendar.

These events have both an immediate and a lasting impact, as the momentum built for action on forest issues has impacts across many sectors.

“This is indeed a critical year which really places the issue of forests solidly within the context of development and the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly the eradication of poverty,” said Ambassador Osman. “It’s also an opportunity to consolidate our global efforts to follow up on the implementation of the UNFF resolution.”

It is worth mentioning that Ambassador Nadia, was also Chief Negotiator on behalf of the G77 and China on several other issues, including ECOSOC 2009 Ministerial Declaration on Global Public Health, coordinator of the Group on CSD 17 Outcome Document on (Agriculture, Rural development, Drought, Desertification, Land and Africa), and coordinated the G77 and China for the 64th Session of the General Assembly on all sustainable development and macroeconomic issues of the UN Second Committee.