

**National Report to the Third Session of the
United Nations Forum on Forests**

Germany

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I. Key Contacts

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Not applicable.

II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action

General

1. Please provide additional or new information on initiatives taken or lessons learned further to the information on forests included in your national reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development¹ on the following points:
 - assessment (including of the relevance, priority, status of implementation, planned actions) of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the national context
 - development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests, and
 - mechanisms or initiatives to facilitate stakeholder participation in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management.

Report:

- A thorough analysis of the relevance of the IPF/IFF proposals for action for Germany was conducted by the federal forest research institute and fed into the start up discussions of the German national forest programme starting 1999. Building, inter alia, on that analysis participating actors decided on a series of priority issues to be dealt with under the programme. Following COP 6 of the CBD, a follow up analysis was conducted in 2002 inter alia linking the elements of the expanded work programme on forests and possibly necessary implementation works to the proposals for action. The latter will be one basis for both the further implementation of the national forest programme and the national forest biological diversity strategy promoting an integrated and coherent approach.
- The German NFP is in a second phase. Invitation was extended to all groups which are dealing with forests and which are active nationwide (= around 40 groups plus national institutions and authorities). Topics are being selected and discussed in a multi-stakeholder approach on a partnership basis. The quality of arguments and the readiness for a consensus play an important role in the process. Based on partly heated up discussions of the first phase 1999/2000 an evaluation of the process had been conducted resulting in a jointly elaborated and agreed upon manual outlining the structure of the process and the relations of participants („basic rules“). Each topic is assigned to one round table. Time limits per round table as well as for the whole phase was regarded useful to not lose momentum. Organisational elements of the German nfp process to strengthen the participatory character in the second phase include: preparatory groups, drafting groups, reporters to take minutes

¹ For further explanation, please refer to “content” in section 6 of the “Guidelines for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reports to the Third Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests”, attached above. The most recent information on forests submitted to the CSD by most countries is in their “Country Profile”. The text, on CD Rom and in hard copy, has been distributed along with these guidelines to each country.

and monitoring groups open for all actors. A round-up of the second phase and an agreement on a monitoring phase to follow is foreseen for 2003.

Most important lessons learnt:

There is a need for the focal point to

- provide necessary organisational and secretarial services to the process,
- balance the different strengths and weaknesses of the actors involved,
- keep a balance between demanded independence and necessary guidance of the actors in the whole process,
- ensure full integration of the international with national objectives related to forests because national actors are not necessarily aware of their full scope.

An agreed manual with “basic rules” for the organisation of the process seems helpful.

Forest policy can win and forest related issues can get a higher national visibility taking cross-sectoral linkages into account if the process is successfully organised.

- Stakeholder participation has increased at all levels in the past years. At the federal and sub-national levels the German NFP has undoubtedly furthered participation in the forest sector but other mechanisms like local Agenda 21 projects and regular contacts with governmental bodies have similarly increased importance. At forest management unit level one needs to take into account that only 30% of German forests are state owned. Most of the forests are owned and managed by private people and municipalities thus providing for a wide variety of approaches according to local and individual needs especially in rural areas.

Economic aspects of forests, including trade

2. Please provide information on: i) activities undertaken in your country, ii) progress made, iii) lessons learned, iv) constraints encountered (including those related to financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and needs for capacity-building) and v) initiatives planned and vi) the role of enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination to facilitate progress in:

- valuation of forest goods and services (this may include, among other things, the development and use of new valuation methodologies, valuation of a wider range of goods and services, and policy decisions that reflect a more comprehensive assessment of forest values)
- the amount, scope, or quality of market data and information for wood and non-wood forest products and their substitutes
- use of economic and policy instruments to facilitate progress toward sustainable forest management (these may include improved tax policies and forest revenue collection systems)

Report

- No visible progress has been made in bringing valuation models into practice. Collective efforts will be supported in future under the framework of the Pan-European Forest Process (Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe).
- Germany supports the successful harmonisation of statistical work of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Statistics.
- Germany promotes the sustainable management of private and municipal forests financially with a focus on ecologically oriented forestry and support to forest owners associations. In the view of recently increased area coverage under nature protection regimes the instrument of protection by contract is to gain importance but small size forest lots and high number of potential contractees are an existing constraint for cost-efficient implementation. Apart from that the new policy of the German government for the period 2002-2006 strives for new and innovative intersectoral efforts accepted and supported by all societal groups to promote the use of wood as a renewable resource.

3. Please provide information on i) initiatives taken, ii) progress made, iii) lessons learned, iv) constraints encountered (including those related to financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and needs for capacity-building) and v) initiatives planned, and vi) the role of enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination to facilitate progress

related to trade in forest products or environmental services (e.g. carbon trading), including in:

- efforts to reduce negative impacts of trade,
- participation in forest certification and labeling schemes and work toward mutual recognition and comparability of such schemes, and
- efforts to reduce illegal trade (exports from or imports into your country) in wood or non-wood forest products. Please indicate achievements made, lessons learned, constraints encountered, and planned initiatives.

Report

- Negative impacts of timber traded into Germany include a) need for domestic forestry to compete with partly unsustainably harvested and thus low priced timber and b) risk of negative image of all timber in the view of German consumers being confused by alarming news in the media about some timber suspected to come from illegal and unsustainable sources. Efforts to reduce these effects are described below.

- Given ca. 6.3 million hectares, almost 60% of the forest area in Germany have now been certified according to the certification schemes of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Pan-European Forest certification (PEFC). An ongoing upward tendency can be observed. Yet, the expenditure involved in verifying the chain of custody still only allows a comparatively minor percentage of certified finished products to enter the market. Great efforts are therefore being made to shape the chain of custody system in a more feasible manner.
- Efforts to reduce illegal trade include the above mentioned certification supported by public procurement as well as an effective use of CITES regulations. Moreover Germany supports initiatives for the European Union as a whole timber market in the ongoing FLEGT processes as well as complementary private initiatives by the timber importing industry and offers to flank these by bilateral talks and agreements with interested major timber exporting countries. Constraints lie inter alia in the high criminal energy and fraud involved as well as in the mostly complicated and hard to control chains of custody.

Forest health and productivity

4. If damage to forests from air pollution is a significant problem in your country, please provide information on recent national strategies or programmes to minimize damaging air pollution. Please indicate if your country is involved in any international cooperation efforts aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge, increasing information access or reducing the impacts of long-range air pollution on forests, as well as your views on the role of enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels to facilitate such work.

Report

- The main results of the environmental monitoring of forest ecosystems are presented in the German Forest Condition Report published yearly. The condition of forest ecosystems has been examined for over fifteen years now.

The condition of many forest ecosystems in Germany still gives cause for concern. In addition, profound changes in many forest soils caused by deposition of air pollutants and accompanying long-term consequences are becoming increasingly evident. Many forest soils are acidified and increasingly emit pollutants into the ground water.

In view of this it becomes clear that the success so far achieved in air pollution control is still not sufficient. It is true that air quality with respect to sulphur dioxide, for example, has decisively improved, rendering the efforts made in air pollution control and the related investments worthwhile. Yet the nitrogen inputs in forests have hardly decreased so far. The acid inputs are frequently still too

high as well. Furthermore, past air pollution accumulated over many years will constitute a critical burden for a long time yet.

Therefore, the Federal Government still deems a firm clean-air policy as absolutely imperative. This forms part of a broad concept safeguarding our natural resources in the long run. Measures for air pollution control, climate protection, turnaround in energy policy and a reorientation of agricultural policy complement each other in this concept:

- Major developments have been initiated in air pollution control. Apart from a large number of measures within the scope of the Federal Immission Control Act (industry, plant and machinery) as well as in the transport sector, it is especially the set of measures on energy savings and climate protection, launched as part of the energy turnaround, that causes direct emission reductions. It contains various incentives for energy savings as well as for intensified use of renewable energy sources.
- The new agricultural policy forms part of an integral approach and also benefits forests. A key element in the new agricultural policy is sustainability in food production. The aim is to reduce environmental strains, promote the production of safe foods of high quality as well as to respect flora and fauna as part of creation. The new policy focuses on the following measures, in particular: stepped-up support of organic farming, reduction of stocking density as well as targeted, additional measures of emissions reduction.
- A key concern of Federal Government/*Laender* forestry policies is to conserve forest ecosystems with their productive, protective and recreational functions and their biological diversity. The following measures are crucial, inter alia, for safeguarding our natural resources in the long run: implementation of ecological forestry on the largest area possible, conservation of the genetic diversity of forest trees as well as increased use of timber as an eco-friendly renewable raw material.

Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs

5. Please indicate progress made and lessons learned in efforts to harmonize or to make compatible policy frameworks in your country (e.g. national forest programme or a similar policy framework for forests, biodiversity strategies and action plans, national action plans to combat desertification, etc.) that collectively address the full range of forest values.

Report

This is an ongoing process which the NFP Germany is highly relevant for and contributing to (see answer to question 1). Cross-sectoral issues like climate change and forests, biological diversity and forests or society and forests have all been dealt with under the programme.

6. Please provide information on recent efforts to assess long-term trends in national supply and demand for wood, non-wood forest products and services and whether your country's national forest programme or similar policy framework for forests takes into consideration future needs for forest goods and services. Please provide views on how enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels, including through UNFF, could further facilitate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action

Report

Germany supports the successful work of the UNECE in this respect. Future needs for the full range of forest goods and services are being dealt with under the NFP Germany, inter alia wood products or services like biodiversity, climate protection, protective functions and recreation.

UNFF, supported by regional processes or regional commissions of FAO and others, should facilitate exchange of information on ways and means of implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action, on lessons learnt and obstacles to be tackled. Helpful for this are:

- consistent and well coordinated support to processes for the assessment and implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action at national, regional and international level, and the building of effective partnerships towards this end,
- a reporting like this helping to focus the deliberations at UNFF sessions to this end while channeling the wide field of nationally different experiences towards the concrete issues on the agenda,
- synthesis reports being prepared on that basis and
- a flexible modus for deliberations and discussions at UNFF sessions, including multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Output should be: recommendations to actors at all levels for the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, including possible supportive or corrective measures and synergetic action with other forest related processes.

Other information and emerging issues

7. Please provide any additional relevant information on the implementation of proposals for action or emerging issues² related to: i) economic aspects of forests, ii) forest health and productivity, or iii) maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.

Report

No additional information for the time being.

III. Preparation of the Report

8. Describe the process of preparing this report, including which government agencies and stakeholder groups were involved, and the extent to which they contributed. Provide information on challenges encountered and lessons learned in the preparation of this report.

Report

This is a report by the German government prepared through interministerial coordination. No non-governmental organisations were involved.

The orientation along the lines of a focussed questionnaire while avoiding duplication of national reporting elsewhere is regarded as helpful. Time constraints helped to keep the report short.

² “Emerging issues” refer to issues that have not been addressed by UNFF but that are related to UNFF “elements”. For example, some countries may consider forest fires and forest pests and diseases as important emerging issues for the UNFF to address under the UNFF element, forest health and productivity. Kindly limit the emerging issues to three per UNFF element addressed by this report.