

II. Proposed Format for the Voluntary National Reports to UNFF 4

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

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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 since 1997 further to the information on forests included in your national reports¹ to UNFF 2 and UNFF 3, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other international instruments and organizations 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

Up to now an assessment of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action for implementation within and by Austria has been carried out (see Austrian Report to UNFF 3). Due to the fact that the CBD Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity has been adopted by the Parties of the Conference of the Convention on Biological Diversity in April 2002, a study commissioned by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Forestry has been carried out by the Institute of Forest Sector Policy and Economics at the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna, concerning "The implementation of the CBD expanded work programme of forest biological diversity and the IPF and IFF Proposals for action in Austria".

Among others, the topic "Synergies and differences between the CBD Programme of Work and the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action" might be of interest:

The synergies and differences in the implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on forest biological diversity and the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action were identified. The text of each Proposal for Action was compared to the requirements of the activities of the CBD Programme of Work. The respective headings that introduced the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action as well as the activities/goals of the CBD Programme of Work were part of this analysis.

When evaluating the implementation of the CBD Programme of Work and the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action it should be taken into account that both have been developed in different periods of time. While the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action have been developed between 1995 and 2000, the CBD Programme of Work was adopted in April 2002. Despite their numerous overlaps and interlinkages the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action contain a solid basis for action on the international, the supranational and the national level. They concentrate mainly on international actions, while the CBD Programme of Work should be implemented mainly on the national level.

The IPF/IFF Proposals for Action are valid for all types of forests and refer to all aspects of forest policy. The main objective of the CBD Programme is to enhance the protection and sustainable use of forest biological diversity as well as the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of forest genetic resources. It further proposes activities for the improvement of institutional and socio-economic structures. It contains also activities for the monitoring of forest-biological diversity and research. The analysis showed that most of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action address the policy areas „development cooperation, forest policy, research and forestry statistics“. This is not surprising, as development cooperation is most important to reduce the pressure on natural resources within developing countries and countries with economies in transition. New and additional financial resources should be provided. Research policy plays also a prominent role as it has been one of the main parts of the work programme of IPF. Forestry statistics plays also a rather prominent role for the Proposals for Action. It has been one of the parts of the work programme and many Proposals for

¹ National reports related to forests may be easily accessed on the CPF website at www.fao.org/forestry/cfp-mar

Action ask for the need for sharing information and call upon countries and international organisations to develop harmonized and comprehensive reporting formats for collecting and synthesizing national forest information to meet various needs. Developing countries should be supported in their efforts, and access to forest-related information should be made available to everybody. Biodiversity and climate change, respectively energy policy, are not among the main policy areas addressed by the Proposals for Action, as these issues are being discussed separately within the framework of two Conventions – the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Most of the activities of the CBD Programme of Work address the policy fields Forest Policy, Biodiversity and research. Other policy areas such as Forestry Statistics, Rural Development, Development Cooperation, Trade, Forest genetics, and Climate Change policy etc. are also addressed.

The analysis showed further that the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action emphasises the following thematic areas: Trade, International cooperation and technology transfer, Financial resources, Research, Rehabilitation of degraded areas;

In Decision VI/22 to the Annex of the CBD Programme of Work on forest biological diversity the international community emphasises the importance of the following areas: Effectiveness of forest law enforcement, Role of indigenous and local communities, Role of women, Development and use of criteria and indicators, Cooperation and identification of synergies between the CBD Programme of Work and the Plan of Action (UNFF), Forest protected area networks

Many activities of the CBD Programme of Work are also addressed by the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action. In some cases the requirements of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action are more detailed (e.g. traditional forest knowledge, criteria and indicators). In other areas no IPF/IFF Proposals for Action exist (e.g. invasive alien species, climate change, forest fires etc.).

- development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests, and

To help in reconciling the diverse demand placed on forests now and in the future, and to comply with international obligations to promote sustainable forest management, the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management officially launched the Austrian Forest Dialogue on the 9th of April 2003. The Austrian Forest Dialogue serves as the framework to develop an Austrian Forest Action Programme.

The Austrian Forest Dialogue aims to reach a social consensus with respect to an ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable forest management and to emphasize the vital role that the forestry sector can play within the framework of sustainable development. The Austrian Forest Action Programme as an outcome of the dialogue-process thus constitutes an essential part of the Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development.

The Austrian Forest Action Programme will not only contain recommendations for action, but constitutes also the framework for concrete forest political measures. Hence it is the objective of the Forest Action Programme to formulate operational guidelines on discussion areas, which will help to shape the short-, medium- or long-term future development of forestry policy in Austria.

In compliance with international requirements and the principles laid down in the Vienna Resolution VI and taking into consideration the experience of other countries, a process schedule has been adapted to the Austrian situation. The Forest Dialogue is in principle open to anyone who is interested in forests and forestry. Thus for example the opportunity to participate in this process will extend not only to the representatives of the Federal and Provincial Governments, but also to representatives of associations of forest owners, the timber and paper industries, the tourist industry, nature conservation

organisations and other NGOs, research institutions, trade unions, as well as the general public. As part of the Forest Dialogue a Round Table, a co-ordinating committee and 3 modules have been set up. At the Round Table the political reconciliation of interests take place. Around 50 organisations dealing at the federal level with forests and forestry have been invited to the Round Table by the Minister. In-depth discussion is taking place in three thematical modules. The modules consist of representatives of groups with a particular interest or expertise. They allow certain topics to be considered in much greater detail than would be possible at the Round Table level. The modules produce reports for the Round Table identifying areas of agreement but also highlighting any mayor areas of disagreement. Module 1 is dealing with protective functions of forests and protection of forests. Module 2 deals with economic issues and Module 3 is responsible for environmental and social aspects of forestry. The administration of the whole process lies within the responsibility of the Ministry assisted by a number of scientific specialists.

For organisational reasons as well as for capacity reasons only representatives of organised groups of interests can actively participate in the Round Table and the individual modules. The broader public can take part in the dialogue process via an Internet platform as well as by submitting written contributions. In addition there are public meetings, where participants can bring forward their points of view and interests and feed these into the process. The first results are expected to be presented towards the end of 2005.

- mechanisms or initiatives to facilitate stakeholder participation, including indigenous and local communities, in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management.

See Austrian Report to UNFF 3; see also above.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4

Please provide information on: activities undertaken since 1997, progress made, constraints encountered, lessons learned, and issues that have emerged, as well as relevant information related to means of implementation (financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building) to support the following actions:

Social and cultural aspects of forests

2. promoting the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources and addressing the issue of intellectual property rights, including the identification of the origins of forest genetic resources, taking into account work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international agreements

The first workshop of the International Training Programme on Conservation and management of Forest Genetic Resources (FGR) in Eastern Europe, jointly organized by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW) of Austria and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institutes (IPGRI) in technical collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), was held in Gmunden, Austria from 29 April to 12 May 2001.

The two-weeks workshop was attended by 22 young scientists and practitioners from 15 countries (Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia FYR, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Ukraine, Yugoslavia). It was organized as a contribution to the implementation process of international resolutions from the Ministerial Conferences for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

The overall objective of this Training Programme was to improve conservation and to promote sustainable use of forest genetic resources in Eastern Europe.

During this module, the trainees were provided with an overview of basic principles of conservation genetics and their practical application in forest management. Topics included molecular genetics, evolutionary genetics, in situ and ex situ conservation strategies and techniques and provenance research. A number of case studies on important European trees species were used to illustrate the current state of conservation and genetic knowledge. Legal and political aspects of conservation of FGR at the European and global level were also covered.

One of the main take-home messages was that for sustainable forest management to be successful, within species (genetic) diversity is at least as important as species diversity. In view of the positive results obtained, a proposal for a five year cooperation between the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW) was initiated on the Conservation And Use of Biological Diversity for Development . A final decision on the implementation is pending.

This proposal for collaborative action between Austria and CGIAR in the field of genetic resources foresees the establishment of a collaborative capacity building programme that would offer a new quality in the relation between Austria's scientific community and Austria's role as an active member of the CGIAR. With the strong scientific expertise and recognized authority in the relevant areas, domestic well-established national genetic resources system, and in line with its overall development cooperation objectives, Austria can make a very significant contribution to the development of modern, effective systems for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources in developing countries and in countries in transition to pave the way for prosperous scientific cooperation and exchange of genetic resources.

The first objective of this proposal is to establish a comprehensive, multidisciplinary collaborative programme, which will address the most urgent needs and challenges of national genetic resources systems in developing countries. The second objective is to raise the awareness and strengthen the commitment and experience of Austria's scientific community for building capacity of these national systems.

Austria continues the fruitful collaboration within the framework of the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN) and plays a proactive role in shaping the programme. The Common Action Plan which is currently discussed within the Phase III-Task Force was initiated by Austria. The Federal Office and Research Centre for Forests is actively involved in several EUFORGEN networks. This networking has helped to bring different European cultures together in order to share the European biodiversity heritage.

3. strengthening the role of women in sustainable forest management, including through capacity building and greater participation in community-based forest management

In Austria, the forest sector traditionally is male dominated. In times of increasing importance of female emancipation, more and more women are working in this field. For that reason, in 2002 initiative was taken and an association with the title "Forstfrauen" (women in forestry) was founded. The aim of this network is to bring women in the forest sector together and to initiate mutual assistance and support. Furthermore the integration of women in the men-dominated sector is promoted. At present, the network has about 50 members.

At the Federal Institute for Less-favoured and Mountainous Areas, a study analyzing the role of women in agricultural and regional politics is carried out. The background is the political strategy “gender mainstreaming”, which was passed by the EU in 1999.

4. integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management programmes, particularly as regards (a) recognition and respect of the customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous and local communities, (b) participation in decision making regarding the management of forests, (c) the attainment of secure land tenure arrangements, (d) capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities

Not applicable.

traditional forest-related knowledge

5. inventorying, cataloguing, and applying traditional forest related knowledge for sustainable forest management and promoting research on TFRK with the involvement of the knowledge holders

Most of the Austrian forests are privately owned (~80%) and are tended by private persons or families. For that reason, forest knowledge is traditionally given from one generation to the next.

There is a huge amount of traditional forest knowledge kept in Austria. Apart from many specialized museums, there are many forest related archives, owned by the state, the provinces, the church, universities or by private persons or organisations. Also libraries, like the Austrian National Library, play an important part.

All together, there are more than 2.500 museums in Austria. In general, inventorying and cataloguing of all exhibits with electronic means is a great challenge. Special subsidisation programs have been created in some provinces to support this kind of activities, which also will be used for forest related actions in this context.

6. supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices

On initiative of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Austrian and the Austrian Forest Association in October 2003 a ‘Forest-Cultural Network’ was established.

The network sees itself as a loose connection of all research and educational offers (concerning forestry and environmental history) in Austria and its neighbouring countries. Its aim is to contribute to the research of forests as a substantial cultural heritage. Furthermore, the network serves a knowledge-platform and as a link between political agreements on highest level and their conversion in the daily business of forest companies.

scientific forest-related knowledge

7. disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institutions and networks

Disseminating scientific knowledge plays traditionally an important role in Austria. A well established source is the Austrian Federal Office and Research Centre for Forests, which disseminates forest scientific knowledge mainly through its publications. Besides, an internet site is run, which continuously presents the latest results of the research. Additionally there are many scientific workshops and events. Connected to the Austrian Office and Research Centre for Forests there are two Forest Training Centers, which are part of the educational and scientific network and disseminate research results to forest owners and workers through their educational activities.

The University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna plays also an important role in disseminating scientific knowledge. There is an elaborate research documentation, which is accessible via the internet.

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management annually publishes a research report, which contains information on all research projects being financed by the Ministry.

In addition, private organisations or the representation of interests bring knowledge to all interested persons.

8. enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes, including priority setting of research, addressing of knowledge gaps and using scientific knowledge to support decision-making

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management always has been interested in improving the interaction between scientific research and policy. The Ministry places research assignments and uses the results partly for improving policy processes.

Furthermore the secretary of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) is located in and supported by Austria.

Austria also hosts the Regional Center INNOFORCE of the European Forest Institute (EFI) focusing specifically on innovation and entrepreneurship of the forest sector in the Central European region.

Austrian forest experts are active in many committees of experts and various research workshops at subnational, national and international level.

monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

9. improving information on national forest resources, making the information widely available, and assisting other countries in their related efforts

At present, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management is implementing a forest information system with the aim of making information about Austria's forests and forestry easily accessible via internet for anyone. The project was initiated in 2001 and will probably be finished by the end of 2004.

Furthermore many other organisations, e.g. like the Austrian Federal Office and Research Centre for Forests or the Federal Environment Agency provide information via their internet pages.

criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

10. developing and using criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (at national level and/or subnational level and for policy, planning, management and/or monitoring purposes), and participating in regional and/or international C&I processes

Austria as signatory of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe has taken an active role in developing Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for SFM in the Pan-European region. At the 4th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, held in April 2004 in Vienna, a new and improved set of indicators was adopted by the Ministers responsible for forests of 44 European countries.

At the national level the Pan-European C&I provide the structural basis for monitoring and reporting on Austrian forests. In addition, the Pan-European C&I are also used as thematic framework for organising the National Forest Programme of Austria (The Austrian Forest Dialogue www.walddialog.at) in terms of content.

III. Preparation of the Report

11. 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 successes, challenges and lessons learned in the preparation of this report.

The primary source of information for this report was two studies:

"The Assessment of the implementation of IPF and IFF proposals for action in Austria", which was drawn from interviews with representatives of various government departments, stakeholders and stakeholder groups. The report underwent a consultation process with major forest relevant stakeholder groups in Austria.

"The implementation of the CBD expanded work programme of forest biological diversity and the IPF and IFF Proposals for action in Austria". For this study, 25 interviews have been conducted with responsible staff of relevant ministries and implementing agencies, research agencies, university, interest groups, NGOs and forest owners.

Additional information to specific issues of this report was gained through a number of governmental and non-governmental institutions.

List of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action Related to Each of the Thematic Issues on the Agenda of the Fourth Session of UNFF

The proposals for action listed below have been identified as being those most relevant to each of the thematic issues on the agenda of UNFF 4. To facilitate reporting, the proposals for action have been clustered and a summary of each cluster has been provided. These summaries are by no means meant to replace the proposals for action. Countries are urged to refer to the full text of the proposals for action as provided in the reports of IPF 4 (E/CN.17/1997/12) and IFF 4 (E/CN.17/2000/14).

Social and cultural aspects of forests

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources Promote the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources	IFF 56 (j)
The role of women in sustainable forest management Involve women in national forest programmes (NFPs), and enhance their role in sustainable forest management	IFF 56 (m), IFF 56 (n), IFF 66
Enhanced role of indigenous and local communities in sustainable forest management Develop and implement programmes for sustainable forest management. Support indigenous people and local communities by funding sustainable forest management projects, capacity-building, information dissemination and participation.	IPF 17 (a), IPF 17 (f), IPF 29 (c), IPF 77 (f), IPF 131 (b), IFF 56 (f), IFF 66, IFF 115 (d), IFF 121 (b)
Common Item: Monitoring, assessment and reporting on social data	IFF 121 (b), IFF 129 (a)
Common item: Promoting public participation	IPF 89 (h)
Common item: Social aspects addressed in national forest programmes National forest programmes and the socially relevant elements <u>National forest projects and the social linkages</u>	IFF 122 (b), IFF 122 (d), IFF 129 (d), IFF 140 (a), IFF 144

Traditional forest related knowledge

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
Advance use of TFRK for SFM. With the participation of indigenous people and local communities who possess TFRK inventory, catalogue, retrieve and apply TFRK for sustainable forest management.	IPF 40a, IPF 40b, IPF 40g, IPF 40h, IPF 40i, IPF 40j, IPF 40k, IPF 40l, IPF 40m, IPF 40n, IFF 75
Develop intellectual property rights for TFRK and promote equitable benefit sharing. Develop ways and means to promote effective protection of TFRK and work with relevant international organizations and conduct studies to help to	IPF 40c, IPF 40d, IPF 40f, IPF 40o, IPF 40p, IPF 40q, IPF 40r, IFF 74a, IFF 74b, IFF 74c, IFF 74d

develop common appreciation and understanding of relationship between TFRK and intellectual property rights and promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from TFRK, including consideration of payments.	
Means of implementation Technology transfer and capacity building: as an integral part of national forest programmes, taking account of local TFRK	IPF 17g
Common items Public participation: promote participation of people who possess TFRK in planning, development and implementation of national forest policies and programmes	IPF 40e

Scientific forest related knowledge

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
Functional interaction between science and policy Improve linkages between scientific research and policy processes and involve guidance from all the interested parties.	IPF 96c, IFF 98b
Setting the research priorities and addressing the knowledge gaps Set research needs and priorities nationally, regionally and globally, address knowledge gaps, and promote and strengthen research efforts in support of SFM.	IPF 46g, IPF 94a(i), IPF 94b, IPF 94d, IPF 104c, IPF 50b, IFF 96d, IFF 96a, IFF 98a, IFF 97d
Promote efficient sharing of information and strengthen networks Make results and information available for all users to support decision making, develop new and innovative means of disseminating information and technologies and promote and make use of existing networks, institutions and mechanisms in efficient sharing of information.	IPF 58b(vii), IPF 94a (ii), IPF 94a(iii), IFF 97c, IFF98c
Means of implementation Mobilize funding for forest research: examine new ways to mobilize funding for forest research to accomplish its objectives and build capacity at the national, regional and global levels)	IPF 94a(iv), IPF 94c, IFF 96b, IFF 97a, IFF 97b
Common items Public participation: apply participatory mechanisms to involve research into planning process	IPF 17e

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
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<p>Collection and dissemination of national information on forests Improve national forest resource assessments and make information related to sustainable forest management widely available</p>	<p>IPF 46b, IPF 89b IFF 17a, IFF 17b</p>
<p>Improved and streamlined international reporting and information systems on forests Develop improved and streamlined reporting and information systems to assist in the collection, verification, synthesis, interpretation and dissemination of information on progress in sustainable forest management and financial resources for SFM</p>	<p>IPF 89d, IPF 89e, IPF 115e IPF 78a, IPF 78b, IPF 78c, IPF 89g IFF 18, IFF 19a, IFF 30d, IFF 142c</p>
<p>Concepts, terminology and definitions Formulate an internationally acceptable set of definitions of key terms used in forest resource assessment and criteria and indicators of SFM, including for low forest cover, planted forests and categories of protected areas</p>	<p>IPF 58a, IPF 89f, (IPF 115d) IFF 89, IFF 122a</p>
<p>Means of implementation Capacity-building and financial resources: to assist countries efforts in national reporting</p>	<p>IFF 17e, IFF 19b IFF 17a</p>

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
<p>Develop, test and implement criteria and indicators at national, subnational and operational levels Develop, field test and promote the use of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, including by integrating them into national forest programmes and national forest assessments and using them to monitor trends and promote best forest management practices</p>	<p>IPF 17d, IPF 89a, IPF 115a, IPF 115b, IPF 115c IFF 17d</p>
<p>Promote the use of criteria and indicators at regional and global levels Support international and regional initiatives to achieve a common international understanding of concepts, terms and definitions related to criteria and indicators, mutual recognition among sets of criteria and indicators, and methods for the measurement of indicators and the collection and dissemination of data</p>	<p>IPF 115d</p>
<p>Further develop biodiversity indicators Encourage, within the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the development of biodiversity indicators that are consistent and complementary to existing forest criteria and indicators</p>	<p>IPF 115f</p>
<p>Means of implementation Technical and financial resources: donor countries and multilateral organizations to provide adequate technical and financial assistance to countries for further development, field testing and implementation of C&I</p>	<p>IPF 115c</p>
<p>Common items Public participation: encourage the formulation and implementation of criteria and indicators of SFM with full participation of all interested parties</p>	<p>IPF 115a, IPF 115b</p>