

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

Switzerland

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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, UNFF 3 and UNFF 4, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other international instruments and organizations on the following points:

(a) Assessment (including of the relevance, priority, status of implementation, planned actions) of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the national context

Concerning the international dialogue on forests, an assessment of the IPF/IFF proposals for action (PfAs) against the Swiss national context has been conducted in consecutive steps:

- ✓ Switzerland commissioned two assessments of both the IPF and IFF proposals for action in the Swiss forest policy context (national relevance, degree of implementation and follow-up strategy), in 1998 and 2000, respectively. Both studies were carried out in close collaboration with all federal agencies concerned with the implementation of the IPF/IFF PfAs in Switzerland (expert interviews and agency review).
- ✓ Switzerland further decided to include considerations of the CBD Expanded Work Program on Forest Biological Diversity in the ongoing discussions and reflections of the Swiss National Forest Programme. To this end, a preliminary assessment of CBD's forest activities was carried out in a similar way as for the IPF/IFF PfAs.
- ✓ All three assessments were taken account of in the formulation of the National Forest Programme, which was completed in December 2003 (see below).
- ✓ Studies to assess the degree of implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action in Switzerland, as well as of the CBD Expanded Work Program on Forest Biological Diversity are currently under way. The results on Switzerland's progress in the implementation of IPF/IFF PFAs at international level will be available at the end of 2004, the results for the progress in implementation at national level in spring 2005. A further study has now been launched to evaluate the interface between the IPF/IFF proposals for action and the proposed CBD Expanded Work Program on Forest Biological Diversity , in order to identify gaps in implementation between both processes.

¹ National reports related to forests may be easily accessed on the CPF website at <http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/cpf/index.jsp?siteId=2461&sitetreeId=6947&langId=1&geoId=0>, however UNFF4 reports are available only at <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff4.html> at the time of writing.

Experiences gained:

- ✓ Coordination of the IPF/IFF and CBD assessment process with the National Forest Programme has proven essential. The harmonization of the National Forest Programme with the recommendations of the international community was consequently simplified.
- ✓ For a country like Switzerland, the parallel assessment and implementation of both the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action (over 270 PfAs) and the CBD programme of work on forest biological diversity (130 activities) proved to be a very challenging task. This not only because of the high level of resources that these processes require (see above), but also because of the increasing institutional and sectoral complexity of the implementation process. This situation clearly does not follow the international efforts to develop synergies between IPF/IFF Proposals for Action and the CBD programme of work on forest biological diversity and thus to harmonise the reporting system in order to ease the burden on individual countries to provide too many and often too lengthy reports. As a result, Switzerland reemphasizes the need to increase synergies and coordination between IPF/IFF Proposals for Action and the CBD programme of work on forest biological diversity.

(b) Development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests

National Forest Programme

In 2001, Switzerland launched a Swiss National Forest Programme (Swiss NFP) process. The process was participatory and cross-sectoral, involving public and private stakeholders of various interests and levels. The National Forest Programme was completed in December 2003. A long term vision for the desired status of the forest has been developed which is based on an analysis of problems and trends. Twelve quantified objectives for the year 2015, the strategy for achieving these objectives, the necessary instruments and around 100 measures have been derived from this vision. In terms of the implementation, the objectives and measures are prioritized and the necessary resources allocated. The NFP provides the basis for the orientation of federal Swiss forest policy and for the development of a consultation document for the partial revision of the Federal Law on Forests. The Swiss NFP fulfils the international requirements for a National Forest Programme and follows the MCPFE common approach to elaborate nfps.

Main actors and instruments used

The Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape/Swiss Forest Agency has the overall lead of the Swiss NFP. Approximately 130 forest owners and representatives of various associations and institutions (including cross-sectoral) actively participated in working groups. The Swiss NFP -Forum comprised 28 participants including members of Parliament, directors of other public policy sectors, decision-makers of various forest-related associations and forest owners. The Forum provided additional feedback and political appraisal. At forest summits the general forest public was invited to contribute to the process. Furthermore, all documents were readily available on internet in order to enable the general public to contribute their opinions.

Experiences gained:

- ✓ The launching of the Swiss National Forest Programme gave rise to several other parallel discussions (e.g. at local or regional levels, within associations) on topical forest policy subjects
- ✓ The participation of the various stakeholders is very important; it is an invaluable means for building ownership for a national forest programme process and thus for facilitating its implementation
- ✓ Cross-sectoral issues are discussed and solutions sought. In general, there is a heightened awareness of an increasing number of decisions taken in other political or economic sectors influencing the forest sector.

(c) International cooperation, including development and implementation of partnerships

International cooperation

Switzerland has been very active in the follow-up of UNCED as well as in a series of forest-relevant institutions, organisations and agreements at international and regional level. Switzerland was very active in the Rio follow-up debate on forests in the IPF and IFF processes, and now within the UNFF, but has also substantially contributed to the work of the ITTO. Switzerland is also greatly committed to the Ministerial Conferences for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

To reinforce the activities of the UNFF, Switzerland together with Indonesia organized "The Interlaken Workshop on Decentralization in Forestry", a country-led initiative in support of UNFF that was held in Interlaken/Switzerland in April 2004. In July 2004, the 36th session of the International Tropical Timber Council, ITTC, was held in Interlaken.

Development cooperation of Switzerland

The Swiss Constitution states that "the Confederation (...) contributes to the alleviation of need and poverty in the world, to the respect of human rights and to the enhancement of democracy, to a peaceful living between nations and to the conservation of natural resources" (Art. 54 para. 2). Development cooperation can take the form of technical cooperation, of financial aids, of trade measures in order to improve access to world trade or measures to promote private investments.

Swiss development policy is particularly aimed at the poorest countries. It supports the efforts of partner countries to improve social living conditions in a sustainable manner and to use their own initiative and strengths to further their development. Development activities focus primarily on crisis prevention and management, social development, good governance, promoting economic structures and safeguarding natural resources. Partnerships are entered into with governmental, non-governmental and multilateral organizations, and agreements are made with partners based on common values. The partnerships are intended to ensure a sustainable change. Swiss development cooperation concentrates its activities on selected geographical priorities according to need, potential (e.g. good governance, democracy and human

rights) and Switzerland's relative advantages, such as its experience in the development of mountain regions.

SFM in development cooperation

Development cooperation activities give particular attention to the sustainable use of natural resources as a means to promote poverty alleviation. Forest-related questions are treated as an integral part of ecological and social systems. Activities include following elements: secondary and degraded forests, forests as integral parts of rural production systems, non-wood products, services such as water and climate protection, biodiversity and tourism. Tropical forests have received particular attention in Switzerland in the past years. In its Position Paper on the Protection and Sustainable Use of Tropical Forests formulated in 1995, which still has its validity, Switzerland reinforces its commitment to the "conservation and sustainable use of tropical forests " and develops a number of "operational lines" on the subject, which are also of relevance to forests in general.

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

Policy-making in Switzerland:

Policy-making in Switzerland is characterized by:

- the principle of *direct democracy* which gives citizens direct opportunities to influence government activities through people's initiatives and referendums,
- the *federalism system* means that the Confederation has authority in all areas in which it is empowered by the Federal Constitution, such as in foreign and security policy, customs and monetary affairs, nationally applicable legislation and certain other areas. Tasks which do not expressly fall within the domain of the Confederation are matters of the cantons. Enforcement of federal laws is generally delegated to the Cantons (principle of subsidiarity);
- *tradition of consensus seeking* in decision-making at all levels of society.

Switzerland offers a wide range of opportunities for citizens to participate in political activities and influence government decision-making (democratic procedures and political rights, administrative procedures, contentious procedures, etc.). The above mentioned characteristics of policy-making have a -- more or less -- substantial influence on forest policy and management activities.

Stakeholder participation in forest policy

In Switzerland the cantons, political parties and other relevant stakeholders must be consulted when important decrees and other projects with far reaching effects are prepared (Federal Constitution, Art. 147). Thus it is common practice to have relevant stakeholders participating not only in the development of forest policies and programmes but also in any major important forest relevant undertaking. The dialogue with the Cantonal Forest Directors and the Cantonal Senior Foresters is institutionalized, and takes place several times a year. In the process leading to the adoption of a revised Federal Forest Law all relevant stakeholders (e.g. cantons, NGOs, forest owners, associations) must be consulted, as they are

entitled to state their positions and propose modifications. The Confederation and the cantons must ensure that the authorities and the population are kept informed on the role of forests, their condition, and general matters to do with forestry and the wood industry (1991, Federal Law on Forests, Art. 34). In this context, the public is entitled to participate in forest planning (1992, Ordinance on Forests, Art. 18).

Public participation in Regional Forest Management Planning

In the Federal Law on Forests, which took effect on 1 January 1993, public participation procedures have been formally introduced in forest management planning at regional level. Article 18, paragraph 3 of the Ordinance on Forests says that when elaborating a regional forest plan which goes beyond the scope of a single forest estate (regional level), cantons need to ensure that the public is:

- a) **informed** about the objectives and the course of the planning process;
- b) able to **participate** in an adequate way;
- c) **consulted** on the planning documents.

Regional Forest Plans (RFP) are strategic and management planning documents which set medium and long-term objectives that address society's interests in forests beyond the scope of a single -- public or private -- forest estate. They represent a framework for the future orientation and decisions of forest authorities.

Experiences gained

- ✓ The participation of the relevant stakeholders in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management is very important; it provides invaluable input on one hand and on the other it gives the stakeholders the opportunity to identify themselves with the issues.
- ✓ Experiences made in the implementation of Regional Forest Management Plans have demonstrated the interest of stakeholders and the great public to participate in forest sector planning, decision making and/or forest management.
- ✓ However, adequacy of participatory methods and techniques need to be evaluated and improved in order to enhance the quality and effectiveness of public participation in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management.
- ✓ An area requiring improvement is the involvement of private (very often small) forest owners, forest industry, weakly articulated groups of interest and the general public (especially in urban areas).

In this general context member States may wish to refer also to the resolutions of UNFF relevant to the above elements, in particular resolution 3/4 paras. 1.-13., and provide information on the implementation of these resolutions or their contribution to facilitating the implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.

With respect to Resolution 3/4, *Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination*, we particularly would like emphasize the value of the initiative taken by Australia and Profor with respect to

the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action. Due to our limited administrative capacities we very much appreciated their efforts with respect to structuring the proposals for action, language and relation to CBD activities. The implementation work in Switzerland was largely based on the pioneer work done by Australia and Profor.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 2

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) related to the following elements:

Combating deforestation and forest degradation

Deforestation and forest degradation are no relevant topic for Switzerland at national level these days. On the contrary, the forest area has increased in the past 20 years, in particular in mountain regions on land previously under agricultural use. This is due to a strict forest conservation policy which has been applied for the past 100 years, and will continue to be valid in the future. As Switzerland already has a forest cover amounting to 30% of the land area, there is no interest and no need to further increase the forest area. For this reason the Swiss National Forest Programme suggests developing a forest area policy as an integral part of land-use policies, in order to address the question.

A special issue in connection with quality aspects of the forest resource is the fact that in Switzerland there are ever increasing standing volumes, and ever older, thicker and heavier trees. While this development may be desirable over certain areas from a biodiversity point of view, it poses a range of problems for the protective function of forests as well as for the forestry and timber sectors, as the timber market is showing less interest in heavy logs. This trend in demand will be becoming more marked through the change in the sawmill industry and its equipment, as most modern sawing machines can cope with stem thicknesses of not more than 60 cm.

At international level, Switzerland is actively committed to combating deforestation and forest degradation by supporting the formulation of national policies and strategies for sustainable forest management, as part of development programmes and projects. Supporting the conservation and sustainable development of tropical forests is thereby one of the focal points. Switzerland particularly supports projects which contribute to the Year 2000 Objective of ITTO, the trade with tropical wood out of sustainably managed forests only. Switzerland therefore finances ITTO reforestation and forest management projects.

Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forest and fragile ecosystems

The conservation and protection of unique types of forest and fragile ecosystems a focal point of Swiss forest policy, in particular through the creation of protected forest areas. In 2001, a national protected forest area policy was defined by the Confederation in collaboration with cantons and major groups of interests. Within the next 20-30 years, 10% of Switzerland's forest should be classified as protected forest areas and half of this as strictly protected forest areas. This objective is compatible with the European system of protected forests defined by the MCPFE in 2002.

In Switzerland, cantons are responsible for the definition of protected forest areas (principle of subsidiarity). Consequently, Switzerland has developed a "Terms of Reference" to facilitate implementation of the Swiss Protected Forest Area Policy (*Leitsätze einer Waldreservatspolitik Schweiz*, March 2001). This document represents a model for the cantons in the development of their cantonal protected forest area policies and ensures that cantonal policies fulfil the relevant national and international requirements.

Strictly protected forest areas are legally defined for a long-term period, i.e. usually for at least 50 years, and managed protected forest areas are often defined for shorter periods, i.e. 10-50 years. The Swiss Confederation and cantons compensate forest owners for fulfilment of the contractual conditions affecting strictly protected forest areas to the tune of CHF 20-300 per hectare per year. In the case of managed protected forest areas, the forest owners are compensated for the cost of the special nature conservation measures to be implemented.

To date (February 2003), Switzerland count around 330 protected forest areas with a total area in excess of 22,000 ha; this corresponds to 2.5% of forest area in Switzerland. The total forest area in Switzerland is 12,125.7 km². The protected forest areas are dispersed throughout the country. Switzerland has too few large forests reserves; these are often most difficult to establish in the locations in which they would be most valuable from an ecological perspective.

As part of bilateral and multilateral development programmes and projects, Switzerland is actively committed to support national policies and strategies for the sustainable use and conservation of forest and forest biological diversity. In this context, forest-related activities are treated as an integral part of ecological and social systems. Switzerland particularly supports projects which contribute to the Year 2000 Objective of ITTO, to improve forest management activities and planning from the point of view of the conservation of the biodiversity and the genetic capital.

Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover

With a forest cover amounting to 30% of the land area, Switzerland is no country with low forest cover. The PfAs under this heading are therefore not relevant to Switzerland at national level.

At international level, Switzerland has forest-related activities in countries with low forest cover. They form part of programmes with more general objectives, such as the reduction of water supply problems in

regions and countries affected by desertification and drought. In these countries, Switzerland is committed to support rehabilitation and conservation strategies by supporting the formulation of national policies and strategies for sustainable forest management, as part of development programmes and projects. Switzerland's reforestation activities within the framework of the Convention to Combat Desertification are however not one of Switzerland's main lines of action, as they do not correspond to its relative advantages (e.g. specific knowledge and experience).

Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands and promotion of natural and planted forests

There is no need for plantations in Switzerland, as the forest area amounting to 30% of the land area is considered sufficient and is strictly protected. Neither has Switzerland any particularly environmentally critical areas which could be protected by forests. In consequence, planted forests are no relevant topic for Switzerland at national level. The conservation of natural forests is however a focal point of Swiss forest policy, in particular through the creation of protected forest areas (see above).

Having but little experience, be it at national or international level, planted forests also play but a minor role in Swiss development programmes and projects. Accordingly, the number and scope of plantation projects remain limited. Priority is rather given to the conservation of natural forests (see above).

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 3

Economic aspects of forests, including trade

Multiple-use forestry

Forests in Switzerland provide a wide range of marketable goods and services such as revenue from wood, employment generation, etc. They also provide a wide range of non-market benefits such as environmental (e.g. biodiversity, nature conservation, filtering of water etc.), educational (e.g. public awareness), and social benefits (e.g. protection infrastructure and settlements against natural hazards, open-access, recreational activities, etc.). Considering the recurrent under-valuation of non-market social and environmental benefits of forests, several projects were launched to assess and measure these benefits in economical terms (see below).

Valuation of forest goods and services

- Since mid 1980's, several studies conducted by various universities and research institutes were funded to evaluate both the "recreational value" (i.e. the value that recreational visitors would be ready to pay for a visit to the forest), and the "existence value" (i.e. the value the Swiss forest possesses by virtue of its very existence).

- In 1996, the Swiss Forest Agency funded a first study to assess quantity and value of non-wood products actually being utilized in Switzerland, whereby only those products were taken account of that are actually produced within the forest area
- The project VAFOR (Valorisation of forests) developed in the mid 1990's is encouraging forest owners to increasingly rely on their entrepreneurship rather than on public funds, by seeking remuneration for the numerous services offered by forests, particularly with respect to social and leisure activities (e.g. mountain biking, horse riding, etc.).

Qualitative and quantitative data on Forests

Thorough knowledge and close monitoring are a prerequisite for sustainable forest management. Among the various programmes and individual projects that have been established in Switzerland for this purpose, the National Forest Inventory (NFI) represents the most comprehensive database on the subject. As part of the National Monitoring Programme of the Swiss Forests, the National Forest Inventory documents the structure of the forest and its evolution. The first National Forest Inventory (NFI-1) was realised between 1983 to 1985, followed in 1993-1995 by the second National Forest Inventory (LFI-2). The third National Forest Inventory is currently running (2004 to 2006).

Market data on wood products

Various tools and instruments serve the collection of data on wood products and markets in Switzerland:

- The National Forest Inventory documents the structure and evolution of the Swiss forest (see above)
- The Swiss statistic on forest and wood collects on an annual basis information about the forest area, the state of the forests, growing stock/growth/tree species, wood yield, information on public forest and private enterprises, assistance to forest activities, wood market, round wood production and consumption, foreign trade in wood, promotion programmes, work force in the forest sector, protection forest and natural hazards. The Swiss Federal Statistical Office and the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape jointly publish the Forest Statistic (annual publication).
- At international level, Switzerland collaborates with the UN/ECE Forest Outlook Studies (EFSOS) and provides regular report on the market and production of Wood products in Switzerland.

Market data on non-wood forest products

Beside the study commissioned in 1996 by the Swiss Forest Agency on the quantity and value of non-wood products utilized in Switzerland (see above), no new data has been collected so far on the subject.

Assistance to forest activities

In Switzerland, the policy of assisting forest activities provides two types of assistance, both intended as incentives.

- Indemnities are paid for the performance of tasks required by law (e.g. measures for protection against natural hazards, minimum tending in forests with a protective function).
- Financial assistance is provided if the forest owner chooses to carry out certain tasks that are made particularly onerous by restrictions linked to nature protection.

By far the largest part of the federal funding is used to ‘purchase’ public services at the cantonal level such as the protection against natural hazards, measures to protect biodiversity and measures to maintain forest health and vitality.

In order to improve the policy of assistance, the Confederation is now in the process of developing a new system for the allocation of finances (effort 2 project). In future the Swiss Confederations’ support policy in terms of the application of the Federal Law on Forests will take the form of target-oriented programme agreements between the Confederation and cantons. These comprehensive agreements, which will be valid for a number of years, link quantified contractual objectives with global budgets and a monitoring system. In future, support measures will be based on the results of measures as opposed to their cost. Programme agreements record the priority objectives and results from national perspective. As a result, the need for detailed regulations at operative level is eliminated. The cantons will have greater scope for action in terms of both strategy and measures. The programme agreements are the expression of a partnership between the Confederation and cantons. The cantons assume operative responsibility for the implementation of the programme whose actual services are provided by the forest owners. The cantons can also enter into service agreements with the forest owners. This new cooperation-based instrument marks the beginning of a transformation in the relationship between the Confederation, cantons and forest owners.

Promotion programmes

Besides the assistance policy, the Swiss government has launched several important programmes to promote the sustainable use of renewable energy (the "Energy 2000" programme launched in the 1990s and its successor the "Swiss Energy" programme launched in 2000) and to promote the use of wood and wood products in Switzerland (programme "Wood 21").

Efforts to reduce negative impacts of trade,

The efforts to reduce negative impacts of forest products trade have focused on ensuring market transparency through voluntary labelling and voluntary declaration of origin. Because the negative impacts of trade can best be addressed through internationally coordinated and harmonized approaches, Switzerland actively supports international policies and strategies in that field such as promoting international labelling schemes, initiatives to improve forest law enforcement and eliminate illegal trade and ensuring that the trade regime and the environment regime are mutually supportive. Moreover, Switzerland promotes initiatives in the International Tropical Timber Council that give specific considerations to possible negative trade impacts.

Participation in forest certification and labeling schemes

Several certification systems are known in Switzerland – the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Q/PEFC-Label Scheme. The schemes certify that the wood in question has been produced in an environmentally appropriate manner. The benchmark is provided by the "National Standards for the Certification of Forestry in Switzerland". Today, FSC and Q/PEFC-Label have both become so well established in Switzerland that they will operate in tandem in future. As per April 2003 a total of 250'000 hectares are certified, which corresponds to around 20% of the total Swiss forest area. Of the total

certified area, 180'000 hectares are certified with both the FSC and Q/PEFC labels. At least one of the major Swiss wood retailers has committed itself to sell only wood and wood products with FSC label by the year 2005.

Efforts to reduce illegal trade

One of the most important lessons learned is that illegal trade cannot be addressed effectively at the national level. Purely national measures are often not able to address the issue at its source and they risk creating unnecessary trade barriers. Therefore, international co-ordination is crucial. In this respect, Switzerland supports international initiatives, at global, regional and bilateral levels to reduce illegal harvesting of forest products and to combat illegal trade. Different instruments are currently discussed in Switzerland on the consumer-end side, e.g. certificate of origin, compulsory declaration of wood and wood products, chain of custody certification.

Forest health and productivity

At international level, Switzerland has signed several international agreements and conventions that are designed to reduce air pollutants (Geneva Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and Montreal Protocol on Substance that Deplete the Ozone Layer), to protect the ozone layer (Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and additional Protocols), and to mitigate climate change (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol). As signatory state, Switzerland is committed to the work of the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests (ICP Forests), the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects (ICP-IM) and the International Long-Term Ecological Research Network (ILTER).

At national level there are a number of programmes to monitor damage from air pollution:

- The NABEL survey has been monitoring the state and changes in air pollution in Switzerland since 1978.
- The Sanasilva Inventory has been carried out in its current form since 1985. Its aim is to monitor the health of the Swiss forest using crown and tree parameters as indicators of forest condition. The Long-term Forest Ecosystem Research LTFER aims at improving the understanding of how natural and anthropogenic stresses affect forests in the long term, and which risks for humans are involved. The programmes are in agreement with the aims of ICP-Forests and ICP-IM. The LTFER is part of the International Long-Term Ecological Research Network ILTER.

As part of development cooperation, Switzerland finances activities that promote the energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy, thus fostering development that leads to reduction of CO₂ emission and lower level of pollution within the Global Environment Programme.

Experiences gained

- ✓ As a small country, Switzerland is dependent on international cooperation in order to solve the problems arising from air pollution and climate change. It has therefore been actively committed to

the relevant international processes in this field. The positive impact achieved through the sustained cooperation at international level, e.g. within the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution confirms the necessity of coordinated and cooperative action at regional and international level.

Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs

Maintaining forest cover

Art. 3 of the Swiss Forest Law lays down that the forest area must not be reduced. Deforestation is prohibited. Exemptions from the ban on deforestation may be made, but the deforested area must be replaced (afforestation in exchange of authorized clearing, art. 5 and 7 Forest Law).

The current problem, however, is less the loss than the increase in forest area. The objectives of the new Swiss National Forest Programme are for that reason to maintain the forest area at its current level (according to the second Swiss National Forest Survey) and in its present distribution. A further increase of the forest area is considered neither necessary nor wanted. In order to address the problem of the increasing forest area, a cross-sectoral approach will be chosen, as the increase is largely due to the structural changes in land-use and agriculture (e.g. abandonment of agricultural land in the mountains).

Meeting increasing demand for wood and non-wood forest products and services through sustainable forest management

Article 20 of the Swiss Forest Law lays down that the forest must at all times be able to fulfil all its functions, namely its production function (wood and non-wood), the conservation of biological diversity, the protection against natural hazards and welfare functions (in particular recreation and leisure). The Swiss National Forest Programme gives particular priority to the protection of biological diversity and the protection against natural hazards.

The current problem in Switzerland is that productive potential of the Swiss forest is not being exploited to the full, to a degree which may in the long run affect the fulfilment of other forest functions (e.g. protective function, protection of biodiversity etc). The Swiss National Forest Programme and other projects therefore aim at increasing the use of Swiss wood, in order to allow sufficient forest regeneration. The main reason for this low rate of use is the disparity between the costs of production and the wood prices. In order to increase the use of wood, the forest enterprises need to become more profitable, and the domestic wood processing chain more efficient. The wood promotion programme Wood21 was launched for this reason.

Ensuring the recreational functions is largely in the responsibility of the forest owners. The use of forests for recreational functions is however ensured by the Civil Code, which guarantees free access to forests for all the population. This right of access includes also the right to use non-wood products.

Experiences gained

- ✓ Switzerland's experience shows that the factors influencing forest cover are often not linked to forestry as such, but to developments in other sectors, in particular agriculture and – in the case of Switzerland – tourism and landscape development. Maintaining forest cover is a question that must for that reason be treated with a cross-sectoral approach. This means building new partnerships. A first step in that direction was made in the National Forest Programme, where representatives of agriculture, landscape development and land-use planning were included in the working groups.

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

Please refer to your national report if appropriate, or provide new or updated 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) related to the following elements:

Social and cultural aspects of forests

Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the forest genetic resources

Generally Swiss forest owners may make use of their property (including genetic resources) at their discretion, and thus also keep any gains arising from the use – always within the limits of legal order (Art. 641 Civil Code). Yet forest owners are confined to fairly narrow legal limits: They have the obligation to offer the public welfare functions – mostly gratuitously – and thus to place a part of the use of their forest at disposal of the public (social obligations on property). What these social obligations really comprise is increasingly becoming an object of discussion.

At the international level, Switzerland has been very active in the finding of solutions for the issues arising in the context of access and benefit sharing. Namely, Switzerland has contributed significantly to the development of the voluntary Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising out of their Utilization. Switzerland welcomes the decision taken at the WSSD to negotiate within the framework of the CBD, bearing in mind the Bonn Guidelines, an international regime to promote and safeguard access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

Furthermore, Switzerland proposed in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to amend the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) in order to explicitly enable the Contracting Parties of this treaty to require patent applicants to declare in patent applications the source of genetic resources and/or traditional knowledge, if an invention is directly based on such resource or knowledge.

Strengthening the role of women in sustainable forest management

The Swiss Constitution lays down the equality of gender and forbids any form of discrimination due to gender. At national level this has led to numerous activities in the field. In the forest sector, activities have been mainly axed on occupational questions: Forestry in Switzerland is still one of the most strongly male dominated fields (98.3% of the entire forest work force are male). A study was commissioned in 2001 to look into gender equality and career opportunities for women in forestry. A working group is currently being set up to discuss the implementation of the measures proposed in the study.

Switzerland has recognized the enhancement of equality of women and men as a means of reducing poverty and of promoting sustainable development. For this reason a particular emphasis is placed on gender equality in Swiss development cooperation: In the Swiss Action Plan of 1999 for the equality of women and men it is laid down that gender aspects must be included in all bilateral and multilateral activities of Switzerland.

Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) have formulated gender policy guidelines which lay down that “every intervention is based on a stock-taking considering gender aspects”. For this reason, staff are trained to improve their competences in gender-related questions. SDC has a special gender unit that has developed a toolkit, enabling staff to implement the strategy in all their activities. A particular focus is placed on the better integration of women in decision-making processes and on their participation in the benefits arising from the sustainable use of natural resources.

Integration of local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management

Traditional forest rights of indigenous communities play but a minor role in Switzerland today as there are no indigenous communities in Switzerland. The federal structure of Switzerland (Art. 47: Cantons and Art. 50: Communes of the Federal Constitution) and the principle of subsidiarity, together with the principle of direct democracy ensure that the rights of local communities are sufficiently ensured. There is at present no need for any strengthening of the rights of participation.

Based on its own experiences as a decentralized state, Switzerland attaches great importance to empowerment and thus to the strengthening of local communities in development cooperation. Governance and decentralisation is one of Switzerland’s priority areas. Accordingly, development projects include aspects of owner and user rights, participation and decision-making processes at local level, as well as the development of human and institutional resources. At multilateral level, Switzerland together with Indonesia organized a country-led initiative in support of UNFF on the topic of decentralisation, that was held in Interlaken/Switzerland in April 2004. Furthermore, seco through it’s cooperation with ITTO and it’s bilateral work is supporting different projects directed at local communities in the tropics.

Traditional forest-related knowledge

Inventorizing, cataloguing, and applying TFRK for sustainable forest management

Traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK) especially of the population of the mountain areas has been widely integrated into sustainable forest management in Switzerland. As a matter of fact, the decentralised organisational set up of Swiss forestry with local, cantonal and national levels has allowed an amalgamation of traditional local knowledge and the more technical knowledge of the forest sciences. This has led to specific and sound silvicultural approaches in local forest management.

TFRK is an object of study in various Swiss research institutions, where it is assessed and analysed. Research is conducted not only on forest management (silvicultural practices, planning), but also and most of all on the socio-cultural importance of forests in the different regions of Switzerland. There is at present no intention of intensifying research in this domain at national level.

The importance of knowledge and empowerment has been recognized by Switzerland as main factors in development cooperation. This includes incorporating the use of local knowledge in development programmes and projects. Switzerland in the context of the UNFF is engaging on decentralization, which is closely connected to TFRK and empowerment.

Supporting the application of intellectual property rights

The application of intellectual property rights and other protection regimes have no (or at most a minor) importance for TFRK in Switzerland.

At the international level, Switzerland is actively participating in the discussions of various fora (particularly CBD, WIPO, FAO and WTO) on the protection of traditional knowledge in general and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of this knowledge. With regard to the TFRK-issues related to intellectual property rights, Switzerland considers the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore of WIPO to be in the foreground. Switzerland takes the view that any solution has to be developed in close cooperation between these international fora, especially between the CBD and WIPO. At the project level, Switzerland supports several projects which are related to IPR's and ABS.

Scientific forest-related knowledge

Disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties

Scientific knowledge is generally easily accessible in Switzerland. The costs of accessing information are comparatively low, public libraries and large parts of the population have access to Internet. However the dissemination of knowledge remains a constant concern. Recent activities mostly include the promotion of new internet offers (e.g. . www.waldwissen.ch; the availability of large parts of SAEFL research commissions on www.umwelt-schweiz.ch and of parts of academic research, such as <http://ecollection.ethbib.ethz.ch> or www.wsl.ch).

Furthermore, a number of academic and scientific institutions, but also trade associations regularly offer continuous and advanced training for forest and environment professionals, thus ensuring the regular exchange between science and practice. The research institute WSL also regularly organizes events addressed to a larger public (e.g. a yearly "Forum for Knowledge").

Concerning the strengthening of capacities and the funding for research institutions: The SAEFL recently published an overview and a concept for future environmental research (SAEFL 2003: Plan directeur de recherche ENVIRONNEMENT pour les années 2004-2007. Etat de la recherche, thèmes prioritaires, stratégie. Cahiers de l'environnement no. 35. Bern). Aspects of sustainable forest management are an important part of research in the years 2004-2007.

The dissemination of scientific knowledge and the strengthening of research is an important focal point of Swiss international forest development cooperation. Knowledge generation through applied research as well as information and documentation are part of Swiss development projects. New information technologies are – wherever appropriate and effective – integral components of development programmes. For instance, Switzerland has developed the Service of Forest Information and Documentation for the cooperation in development "Inforest".

Enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes

The interaction of science and policy processes is well institutionalised in Switzerland, for example:

- The Confederation's commitments to research and technology policy have steadily increased in the past 40 years. In parallel the costs of research have also risen. Both elements have led to greater linkages between politics and research.
- The Federal Council provides Parliament with a report on the encouragement of education, research and technology (presently 2004-2007). Politics therefore have an important influence on the priorities in research, particularly through the financial resources at disposal.
- Especially in the domain of the environment, commissioned research that provides the bases for political decisions has a long tradition.

Further measures to increase the interaction between scientific research and policy processes in Switzerland is only partly desirable, as it could endanger the independence of research.

At international level, Switzerland supports a number of research institutions such as CIFOR. The dissemination of research results is therefore also an integral part of Swiss development cooperation.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

Improve information on national forest resources

Switzerland has already conducted two National Forest Inventories (1983-85 and 1993-95), and a third Inventory has now been started. A requirement analysis was conducted prior to the third inventory in

order to optimize the data collection to the actual demands. The results of both previous National Forest Inventories were published and the data made available on the internet (www.lfi.ch). Besides the complete set of data, a version for the wider public was made available in the form of a “walk through the Swiss forest” (www.lfi.ch/spaziergang). The results were also analysed as to their relevance for Swiss forest policy, the results being made available to policy makers in the form of a publication.

Switzerland includes aspects of national information systems into its development programmes, in that it helps develop and strengthen forest policies at national and regional level, and ensures information exchange and documentation

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

In the forest sector, Switzerland is signatory to Resolution L2 „Pan-European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management“ of the Third Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe, and has endorsed the improved pan-European indicators for sustainable forest management (Vienna Declaration, Vienna, 2003). A first report with results was published in 1997. In 1999, Switzerland let international experts conduct an assessment of the sustainability of Swiss forest policy. The assessment was based on the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators, with additional indicators of Swiss relevance.

The six pan-European criteria for sustainable forest management were furthermore used as a framework to elaborate the Swiss National Forest Programme (Swiss NFP). The indicators will be used as a tool to periodically monitor, assess and report the output of the Swiss NFP with regard to SFM. In 2003 the Swiss Forest Agency further published an implementation guide for the elaboration of indicators of sustainable forest management at cantonal or forest management unit (sub-national) level.

At international level, Switzerland is committed to the development of indicators for forest biodiversity in carbon sequestration projects within CBD. Switzerland has also participated actively in the elaboration, dissemination and implementation of C&I for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests within ITTO.

The Sustainable Development Strategy of the Swiss Federal Council of 1997 and 2002 laid down that measures should be taken to monitor sustainable development by creating a system of sustainability indicators. The progress made in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy can thereby be measured. The project MONET developed a set of indicators for this purpose. This set also includes five forest-related indicators (forest area, ecological value, state of protection forests, use of wood and federal expenditure on forests).

Experiences gained

- ✓ Particularly the assessment of Switzerland's forest policy was an excellent test for the utility of criteria and indicators. The assessment proved a useful base for the formulation of a new forest policy within the Swiss National Forest Programme, where the criteria and indicators will be further used.
- ✓ The sustainability assessment also showed that developing further indicators can be necessary to account for more accurate characterization of relevant conditions in a country.

III. Preparation of the Report

- 2. 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.**

This report was prepared by the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forest and Landscape (SAEFL). The main sources of information for the preparation of this report were studies commissioned by the Swiss Forest Agency (Pleines&Kazemi 1998, Kazemi 2002) and the preliminary results of the studies on Switzerland's implementation of the IPF and IFF Proposals for Action (Coleman, Kazemi, Keel, currently in progress).

The report underwent a final consultation among the federal departments involved in international forest policy issues (namely the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation SDC, the State Secretariate for Economic Affairs seco and the Institute for Intellectual Property IIP). In this context, the reporting guidelines and the suggested guideline developed by the UNFF secretariat proved very helpful.