

Input from the Montréal Process to UNFF8

I. Brief overview of the Montréal Process

The Montréal Process on criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests (MP) was launched in 1994 as a response to the Rio Forest Principles and the Chapter 11 of Agenda 21. It has 12 member countries (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Mexico, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Korea, United States of America, Uruguay and Japan) accounting for 80% of the world's temperate and boreal forests and 50% of all forests in the world.

In 1995, MP member countries adopted the Santiago Declaration affirming their commitment to the conservation and sustainable management of their respective forests and endorsing the following 7 criteria and 67 associated indicators as guidelines for policy-makers to use in assessing national forest trends and progress toward sustainable forest management.

Criterion1: Conservation of biological diversity

- 2: Maintenance of productive capacity of forest ecosystems
- 3: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality
- 4: Conservation and maintenance of soil and water resources
- 5: Maintenance of forest contribution to global carbon cycles
- 6: Maintenance and enhancement of long-term multiple socio-economic benefits to meet the needs of societies, and
- 7: Legal, institutional and economic framework for forest conservation and sustainable management.

In 2003, MP member countries developed and published their first Country Forest Reports using the agreed criteria and indicators (C&I). Illustrative trends drawn from the 12 country reports are highlighted in the Montreal Process First Forest Overview Report 2003.

In order to enhance the relevance of the indicators to sustainable forest management (SFM) and improve each member country's ability to report, MP started a review process of the original set of indicators since 2003, and completed the revision by endorsing a set of 54 indicators in November 2008 at its 19th meeting in Russia.

II. Relevance to substantive matters of UNFF

The MP is in the process of producing the Montreal Process 2009 Overview Report highlighting four priority issues: i) Climate change; ii) Biodiversity; iii) Energy; and iv) Water, which are quite relevant to the substantive matters of UNFF8 specified below.

- Forest and climate change
- Reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation in all types of forests

- and combating desertification, including low forest cover countries
- Forests and biodiversity conservation, including protected areas
- Means of implementation for sustainable forest management

The 2009 Overview Report, which is scheduled to be presented at the XIII World Forestry Congress in October 2009, will achieve the following objectives.

- i. Demonstrate MP member countries' progress toward the sustainable management of forests
- ii. Show how MP helps respond to domestic and global issues
- iii. Demonstrate value of MP & working together
- iv. Show how countries are using C&I
- v. Display vignettes of how C&I influenced policy and direction
- vi. Use of C&I to influence future policy & direction

In addition to the 2009 Overview Report, MP member countries are also planning to produce their second Country Forest Reports in 2009 using the revised set of criteria and indicators.

Through these exercises, it is expected that MP member countries will update major developments and challenges for the promotion of SFM so that they can share their experiences and knowledge not only among MP member countries but also with international communities.

III. Characteristics of MP cooperation and partnerships

The MP is a non-legally binding and voluntary framework to identify shared goals and improve countries' capacities for the promotion of SFM. It is being operated by voluntary contributions from 12 member countries based on confidence and trust among countries through the following mechanisms.

The MP Working Group

The MP Working Group, which is a decision making body for MP, holds its regular meetings hosted by member countries on a rotational basis and is open to representatives of other criteria and indicators processes, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

The MP Liaison Office

The Working Group is supported by the MP Liaison Office (LO) established in 1995 and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) established in 1996. The LO is currently hosted by the Government of Japan. From 1995-2006, it was hosted by the Government of Canada. The LO facilitates communication among members, helps organize Working Group and TAC meetings, arranges for translation, printing and dissemination of MP documents, maintains the MP

website, and coordinates MP representation at regional and international meetings and events.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC is comprised of forest experts from all member countries and provides technical and scientific advice to the Working Group on issues related to data collection, indicator measurement and reporting. The work of the TAC is coordinated and facilitated by the TAC Convenor. From 1997 to 2003, the TAC Convenor was hosted by United States. From 1996 up to now, it has been hosted by New Zealand.

The Strategic Action Plan

The MP Strategic Action Plan (SAP), which provides direction for Montréal Process activities for the period 2009–2015, was adopted in November 2008 at its 19th meeting in Russia. It serves as the Working Group's overall guiding document and road map through 2015 and is a principal tool for communicating Montréal Process objectives and priorities to stakeholders within member countries, other governments, other C&I processes and relevant regional and international organizations.

The SAP 2009-2015 is based on the five Strategic Directions set out as follows.

1. Enhance the relevance and use of the Montréal Process Criteria and Indicators for policy makers, practitioners and other users
2. Strengthen member country capacity to monitor, assess and report on forest trends and progress toward sustainable forest management using the Montréal Process Criteria and Indicators
3. Enhance collaboration and cooperation with forest-related regional and international organizations and instruments and other criteria and indicators processes
4. Enhance communication on the value of criteria and indicators and the accomplishments of the Montréal Process
5. Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Montréal Process Working Group and its Technical Advisory Committee and Liaison Office

Other initiatives

In addition to the above-mentioned regular mechanisms, MP member countries have been cooperating and strengthening partnerships not only among member countries but also with other countries/organizations in a timely and flexible manner. Some recent initiatives are as follows.

- Organizing a joint workshop with other C&I processes including FAO, ITTO and MCPFE

- Conducting C&I and Forest Certification training course for developing countries including MP member countries
- Developing a joint project on the impact of MP