

UNFF News

Highlights

- Forests discussed at WSSD, PrepCom IV in Bali, Indonesia
- UNFF Secretariat participate in WTO's Committee on Trade and Environment
- UNFF considers gender Issues. A panel discussion on gender mainstreaming in the functional commissions of ECOSOC

Informal Newsletter from the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Forests in the WSSD Jungle

The 4th Preparatory Committee meeting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held on 27 May to 7 June in Bali, Indonesia. The meeting focused on developing the Plan of Implementation for the WSSD. Two weeks of intense negotiations resulted in agreement on several areas, such as forests. However, several key areas, including finance and trade remain unresolved.

The paragraph on forests (paragraph 43), in the Implementation Plan, reflects the outcome of the Ministerial Segment of the second session of UNFF, and calls on action at all levels to:

- Enhance political commitment to achieve sustainable forest management;
- Support UNFF, with the assistance of the CPF, as key intergovernmental mechanisms to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of sustainable forest management;
- Take immediate action on domestic forest law enforcement and illegal international trade in forest products;
- To promote and facilitate the means to achieve sustainable timber harvesting;
- Develop and implement initiatives to address the needs of those parts of the world that currently suffer from poverty and the highest rates of deforestation;
- Create and strengthen partnerships and international cooperation to implement sustainable forest management, including the IPF/IFF proposals for action;
- Support indigenous and community based forest management systems;
- Implement the CBD's expanded work programme on forest biological diversity, in close collaboration with UNFF and CPF members.

During the 4th PrepCom in Bali, the CPF organized a Side Event. The Side Event was well attended, about 70 people. The Side Event focused on the positive experience of CPF, support to the UNFF and the benefits of international organizations working together.

All CPF members were present at the Side Event, except for ITTO. Mr Moein, nominated-Chair of UNFF 3 Bureau, provided opening remarks, in which he highlighted the close working relationship between UNFF and CPF. He also emphasized that the establishment of CPF was considered as one of the most significant developments in recent years to foster close collaboration on forests among major international organizations. Following the opening remarks, CPF members present shared their experiences and lessons learned of working together collaboratively. The Side Event was moderated by David Kaimowitz, CIFOR.

During the Side Event governments had an opportunity to present Partnership Initiatives (Type II initiatives). Mr. Kazuo Asakai, Ambassador for Global Environment and International Economic Affairs of Japan, presented an Asian Forest Initiative. This initiative was supported by the government of Japan and Indonesia, and aims at promoting sustainable forest management in Asia. Jan McAlpine, US State Department, presented some initial work on another forest-related initiative in the Congo Basin.

From the perspective of forests and UNFF, Bali was a success. Both UNFF and CPF were highlighted in the discussions and governments were able to reach consensus on the paragraph on forests. Furthermore, a number of other paragraphs in the Implementation Plan include reference to forests. In particular, the sections on agriculture, desertification and mountains. Nevertheless, governments face enormous challenges in order to finalize the Implementation Plan and to draft and adopt a political declaration.

In the preparations for Johannesburg, the UNFF Secretariat encourages *UNFF News* readers to review the Ministerial Declaration and Message from UNFF to the WSSD. Since Rio, significant progress in international forest policy development and implementation has been achieved.

UNFF Attends the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment

The UNFF Secretariat participated in the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), held in Geneva, 13 – 14 June 2002. Several issues were discussed that are sure to figure highly at UNFF 3 in May/June 2003, when issues regarding economic aspects of forests are to be discussed. The statement made by the UNFF Secretariat brought the attention of CTE to the issues of certification, labeling and trade in forest products.

The Government of Japan presented a paper touching upon many related matters and

proposed three topics on trade of forest products to be considered at future CTE sessions: 1) export restrictions on unprocessed timber; 2) certification and labeling schemes for products resulting from sustainable forest management; and, 3) illegal logging of forests.

The UNFF Secretariat is encouraged by the prominence of forest-related issues discussed during WTO CTE and plans to increase its engagement in this forum in order to track the issues of forests within this increasingly important debate.

UNFF Considers Gender and Forests

The UNFF3 Bureau and UNFF Secretariat, represented by Mr. Gustavo Ainchil, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Argentina to the UN, and Dr. Jag Maini, Coordinator and Head of the UNFF Secretariat, took part in a panel discussion on Gender Mainstreaming in the Functional Commissions of ECOSOC on 11 June 2002. Mr. Ainchil provided historical context of the intergovernmental forest policy process and highlighted the role of and impact sustainable forest management has on woman. Dr. Maini provided additional information on the interface between forests and human well-being, particularly that of women in developing countries. He stated that within the UNFF debate, women are

clearly seen both as contributors as well as beneficiaries of sustainable forest management.

Some examples from the IPF/IFF proposals for action that emphasize the crucial role of women, include the following:

- Call for equal opportunities for women, especially in rural or poor areas;
- Encourage that forest valuation reflect gender aspects.

The integration of the gender issue into forests and the work of the UNFF was also considered. Input from UNFF members and partners on how the gender issue can be enhanced in forest issues would be welcome. Please send these inputs to the UNFF Secretariat, at unff@un.org.

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We're on the Web!

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.htm>

The UNFF newsletter aims to provide updated information on matters related to the international arrangement on forests.

This informal newsletter is produced and distributed electronically by the UNFF Secretariat. If you wish to subscribe to this free newsletter contact the Secretariat at unff@un.org. For comments and suggestions, please contact Ms. Abby Sarmac at sarmac@un.org.

Upcoming Meetings

UNFF

26 May – 6 June 2003, Geneva. 3rd session of the UNFF.

Other

July 29 – Aug 2 in Bridgetown, Barbados
Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, in Preparation for the 1st Session of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention
UNCCD, www.biodiv.org/doc/lists/events-jlg-en.pdf

Aug 26 – Sept 4 in Johannesburg S. Africa
The World Summit on Sustainable Development
World Summit Secretariat, www.johannesburgsummit.org or www.un.org/rio+10.htm

12 – 14 September 2002, Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland
Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, 24th Session
<http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/docs/jc-sessions/jc-24/jc-24.htm>

For more information regarding upcoming forest-related meetings visit UNFF's website and view Calendar of Events: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.htm>