

UNFF News

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

Highlights

- New Coordinator and Head of UNFF Secretariat Appointed
- UNFF National Focal Points Requested
- UNFF–CBD Collaborative Work
- Streamlining Forest-Harmonizing and Reporting
- New Zealand Government-Led Initiative on Planted Forests

Pekka Patosaari Appointed New Coordinator and Head of the Secretariat of the UNFF

Mr. Pekka Patosaari, native of Finland, is joining the Department of Social and Economic Affairs as the Coordinator and Head of the Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests.

His first task will be to represent the UNFF Secretariat as its Coordinator-designate at the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development in September in Johannesburg, South Africa. At the Summit Mr. Patosaari will attend several forest-related events as well as meet with key partners in preparation for his upcoming duties.

A forester and educator by training, Mr. Patosaari has had a distinguished career in international forestry and environmental issues for more than two decades. He joined the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Helsinki in 1984. Since 1990, he was the Director of Forest Policy Development. In 1997, he moved to London for a diplomatic assignment with the portfolio of forestry and the environment, with the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Since January 2001, he has been back in Finland at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as Director of State Forestry and Forestry Research and as Deputy to the Director General. Mr. Patosaari also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the well-respected Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR).

Among his many achievements in international forest policy, Mr. Patosaari served for five years as Chief Coordinator of the Pan-European Process, also known as the Helsinki Process of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe – MCPFE. He has also been involved in Finland's international cooperation programs, particularly in China.

Mr. Patosaari's achievements in international forest policy have been recognized at the highest levels, inspiring the President of the Republic of Finland in 1996 to designate him as a Knight of First Class of the Order of the Lion of Finland. Mr. Patosaari is married and has two children. The UNFF Secretariat welcomes the arrival of Mr. Patosaari and is honored to count such a distinguished forest policy leader as its Coordinator and Head.

Appointment of UNFF National Focal Points Requested

Focal points within each of the member states of the UNFF are essential for participatory and effective coordination of international policy on forests. In order to facilitate the establishment of a national focal point system, the UNFF Secretariat has sent a letter to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations encouraging each government to nominate a UNFF focal point within its administration.

To find the national focal point for your country, please consult the list posted on the UNFF website at <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/iffmembers.htm>

Collaboration on Forests: UNFF and CBD

In follow up to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP 6 decision on the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity, a joint meeting between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests was held in Montréal, July 11-12 2002. The meeting reviewed the COP 6 decision, focusing mainly on collaborative activities of the two Secretariats. It also

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reviewed the activities in which the collaboration of CPF members is invited. These will be discussed at the next CPF meeting, scheduled for 3-4 October.

For further details on this collaboration, please contact Susan Braatz at braatz@un.org.

CPF Task Force on Harmonizing and Streamlining Forest-related Reporting

On 25 July 2002 CPF established a Task Force on Harmonizing and Streamlining Forest-related Reporting. This was in response to calls for CPF to assist the UNFF in reducing duplication in the reports CPF members request from countries (paragraph 9 (c) of UNFF resolution 1/3), streamlining reporting requests and, to the extent possible, synchronizing reporting cycles (section E of UNFF resolution 2/2).

The objective of the CPF Task Force is to propose ways to reduce the forest-related reporting burden, for example, through reducing and streamlining reporting requests, synchronizing reporting cycles, harmonizing data collection methods and increasing data comparability and compatibility, and facilitating the accessibility of existing information. The purpose of this work is also to guide ongoing international processes by sharing experiences on different reporting frameworks and by seeking possibilities for common approaches for data and information collection, storage and reporting by international organizations.

The Task Force will report its results to the

CPF, which will make the results widely available to the UNFF, governing bodies of CPF members and other organizations and fora, as relevant.

For more information about the Task Force, please contact Ms. Tiina Vahanen, FAO, at tiina.vahanen@fao.org

New Zealand Government-Led Initiative on Planted Forests

The issue of plantations has been highlighted within the UNFF element of rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands and promotion of natural and planted forests, which was dealt with during UNFF 2.

In addition, the issue of plantations is being highlighted by the Government of New Zealand that is planning an Expert Meeting on Plantations 24-30 March 2003 in Wellington, New Zealand. The tentative agenda includes six topic areas drawn from the outcomes of the International Expert Meeting on the Role of Planted Forests in Sustainable Forest Management, held in Santiago Chile, 6-10 April 1999. These topics include: benefits/positives, side effects, advancements/efficiency/evolution, alternatives, ensuring sustainable management and facilitation.

Sponsorship of the Expert Meeting to date includes: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States and CIFOR, FAO, and ITTO. For further information on this initiative, please contact: plantedforestry-meeting@maf.govt.nz

Upcoming Meetings

UNFF

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

CPF

3-4 October 2002 (tentative), venue TBA, Collaborative Partnership on Forests Meeting organized by the CPF.

Other

28 – 29 October 2002, Washington, DC, USA, 2002 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group organized by the World Bank / IMF. www.imf.org/external/am/index.htm.

13 October 2002, Beijing, China, GEF- NGO Consultations organized by the Secretariat of the GEF. <http://gefweb.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.