



Prep for Ad Hoc Expert Group Meetings

Dear Friends of the UNFF,

The autumn in New York is putting a splendour of bright colours on the forest landscape, showing the unique characteristics of trees. I am reminded of our responsibility to sustain such natural gift for the benefit of our future generations.

These past months have been quite exciting in the Secretariat as we prepared for the ad hoc expert group meetings to take place this year and next. The meetings of the ad hoc expert groups on (i) approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting, and (ii) finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies will be held from 8-12 December and 15-19 December 2003 in Geneva. These meetings will be of significant value to the work of UNFF.

We must pay attention to the needs of people that depend on forests and forest products ranging from indigenous communities and forest workers to consumers, timber companies and governments. UNFF4 is rapidly approaching a critical phase, and the contributions of these ad hoc expert groups on issues such as knowledge diffusion and capacity building will have important impacts upon the direction of intergovernmental deliberations and commitments to sustainable forest management.

The issue of creating enabling environment for private sector investments in forests will be discussed as part of the agenda on finance. Equally important will be the contribution of these ad hoc expert groups on their recommendation for monitoring, assessment and reporting of progress. I would encourage you all to monitor these issues closely. Most documents for these meetings are available now in our website.

I welcome your comments and feedback on how the Secretariat can better serve you.

Pekka Patosaari,
 Coordinator and Head
 UNFF Secretariat

Preparations are now in full swing for two ad hoc expert groups on: Approaches and Mechanisms for Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (Geneva Switzerland, 8-12 December 2003); and Finance and Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies" (Geneva Switzerland, 15-19 December 2003). The Secretariat has received almost all nominations from the regional groups and several documents will be posted on the UNFF website including: list of nominated experts, provisional annotated agenda, and advance unedited versions of the Notes by the Secretariat prepared for the ad hoc expert groups.

The Secretariat has also received nominations from major group focal points that will make scientific and technical contributions at the ad hoc expert groups meetings. The same registration proce-

dures for ECOSOC accredited organizations as for normal UNFF meetings will be applied for the ad hoc expert group meetings. Further inquiries on accreditation should be directed to Leslie Lawrence of the DESA NGO Section at desangosection@un.org.

Member States are reminded that in order to speed up the process for receiving passes to enter the UN in Geneva they should inform the UNFF Secretariat well in advance of the names of the persons included in their delegations.

All participants should be aware that it is imperative to book hotel rooms as soon as possible as the World Summit on Information Society will take place around the same time as the meetings of the ad hoc expert groups.

UNFF@WFC: Consultation with Civil Society

The 2003 World Forestry Congress, co-organized by FAO and Canada in Quebec City, was very well attended, with 4000 people representing over 140 countries participating. During a session on implementation of international commitments, the UNFF and its role within the global forest process was highlighted. Several CPF members had side events highlighting work that contributes to the forest conservation of all types of forests. The UNFF Secretariat was engaged in further forest policy dialogue with the youth stakeholder group during the Youth Event that took place 21 September 2003.

The UNFF major group focal point network took advantage of the various major group members attending the World Forestry Congress to organize a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Consultation on 24 September 2003. Several items were discussed and decided upon including:

*Changes in the Focal-point System - IUFRO steps down as UNFF MSD focal point for the **Scientific and Technical community**. The **International Council for Science (ICSU)**, has to undertake focal point responsibilities for UNFF4. A new **Youth** focal point, the **International Forestry Students Association (IFSA)** headquartered at the University of Freiburg in Germany, has been appointed lead focal point for Youth and Children for UNFF.

*MSD at UNFF4 should focus upon **implementation** of IPF/IFF proposals for action and major groups will explore suggestions on how to best organize MSD to ensure this.

***Indigenous peoples organizations and NGOs** shared that they hope to organize an organization-led initiative on traditional forest related knowledge, among other UNFF4 elements, in support of UNFF4. *The issue of a **travel fund** for major groups from developing countries to UNFF related meetings was again emphasized as a priority.

*Finally the need to create major group – **government linkages** early in preparation for UNFF4 was underscored.

Cont., p2

UNFF4 Bureau Meets

The UNFF4 Bureau met 29 September 2004. On the agenda were the UNFF related discussion of the last ECOSOC session held in July 2003, the UNFF ad hoc expert groups meetings and nominations of the Latin American and Caribbean group of countries (GRULAC). GRULAC communicated to the Secretariat the nomination of Mr. George Talbot of the Permanent Mission of Guyana to the United Nations in New York as one of the vice-chairs of the Bureau, completing the UNFF4 Bureau, consisting of: Mr. Yuriy N. Isakov (Russian Federation) and UNFF4 Chairman-elect, Mr. I Gede Ngurah Swajayara (Indonesia), Mr. Xolisa Mabongo (South Africa), Ms. Stephanie J. Caswell (United States of America). Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo, recently appointed Under-Secretary General of economic and

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CPF and CPF Network Meetings

The members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) met on 20 September 2003 in Quebec City, Canada. The agenda touched upon several work items related to CPF's support to UNFF, including follow-up on UNFF 3 and preparations for UNFF 4, proposed contribution to the ad hoc expert groups, enhancing collaboration and coordination among CPF members at regional and national levels, the CPF Network and CPF members' current joint initiatives and a possible new initiative on information and knowledge sharing. The summary report of the meeting will shortly be available on the CPF website: www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

CPF's joint initiatives, specifically the online CPF Sourcebook on Funding Sustainable Forest Management and the upcoming meeting of the CPF Task Force on Reporting from 20-21 November in Rome, Italy were discussed. The CPF Sourcebook has been updated and can be reviewed on the CPF website. The meeting on Reporting will focus look at the potential for an international framework for

reporting on forests and capacity building on monitoring, assessment and reporting. The online reporting portal is available on the CPF website in English. French and Spanish translations will be available shortly.

Taking advantage of the several forest stakeholder representatives gathered at the World Forestry Congress, the CPF Network met on 24 September in Quebec City, Canada. The agenda included an overview and background of the CPF Network, preparations for UNFF 4 and the UNFF ad-hoc expert groups and how the CPF Network might become involved in these tasks as well as exploration of proposed CPF Network activities and potential CPF Network contributions to CPF initiatives. The summary report of the meeting will shortly be available on the CPF website.

For further information on the CPF please visit its web site and/or contact Mia Söderlund at soderlund@un.org

UNFF4 Bureau, cont.

social affairs, met briefly with the Bureau to exchange ideas on DESA and UNFF. Dr. Ocampo suggested a need to look at forests and forest issues through a holistic and cross-sectoral manner, as well as linking forests to the economic and social priorities such as poverty reduction. The next Bureau meeting would be held on Tuesday, 18 November 2003 in New York.

Further information, including the minutes of the meeting and contact information for the UNFF4 Bureau members, can be found on the UNFF website: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/bureau.html>

Civil Society, Cont.

Several follow up groups were formed to ensure action on discussion, including Major Group-Governments Linkages Group and a Major Group Funds Group led by the NGO focal point. The next Stakeholder Consultation will take place 15 December in Geneva, Switzerland.

Further information, including direct contacts to the UNFF major group focal points and the detailed summary of the MSD Consultation in Quebec, can be found at the UNFF website: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/participation.html>

UNFF4 National Reports

The UNFF Secretariat has begun to receive responses from governments to the call for national reports on the elements that will be touched upon at the upcoming UNFF4 sessions. All reports received are posted directly on the UNFF website. For further information, please refer to the following webpage: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff4.htm>

UNFF Session

UNFF 4th Session in Geneva, Switzerland. 3-14 May 2004.

Other Meetings

4—5 November 2003.

"Regional Consultations of UN Agencies Working in Africa" organized by the Africa Economic Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

3 – 8 November 2003. 35th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council organized by ITTO in Yokohama, Japan. www.itto.or.jp

10 – 14 November. 9th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA9) organized by CBD in Montreal, Canada. www.biodiv.org

Informal Newsletter
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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