

United Nations
Forum on Forests

PEKKA'S CORNER

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Governments of Mexico and the United States for co-hosting the country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) on the future of the international arrangement on forests held last month in Guadalajara, Mexico. My gratitude also goes out to the other co-sponsors: the Governments of Austria, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) for their generous support in funding the initiative.

It is crucial to remember that we do not work in isolation. Sustainable forest management contributes to society in a wide range of ways. Poverty reduction is at the heart of the challenges facing sustainable forest management. Finding solutions to alleviate poverty will be crucial for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and is central to UNFF's work.

I believe that, right supportive policies and enabling environments will help to create much needed forest markets and revenue from forest products and services, especially in developing countries. Important underlying factors for healthy local and national economies include the strengthening of institutional capacity for good practices and governance as well as the provision of better opportunities for education and training.

Forests are deeply entwined with many sectors of society and their management requires coordinated efforts and inter-sectoral approaches. There is a need for a broader and meaningful interaction between various stakeholder

COUNTRY-LED INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF UNFF ON THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT ON FORESTS

Guadalajara, MEXICO, 25-28 JANUARY 2005

The Country-led Initiative (CLI) in support of UNFF on the Future of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) was held in Guadalajara, Mexico from 25 to 28 January 2005. The Meeting had two main objectives: to further elaborate the critical elements desired by countries in a future IAF in order to increase its effectiveness, focusing on the options for institutional modalities, and the financial mechanisms of an enhanced IAF; and to provide an informal setting where participants could expand their understanding of the expectations, goals and ambitions held by others for a future IAF and provide a basis for decision to be taken at UNFF 5.

Mr Francisco García, Co-Chair of the CLI Steering Group opened the Meeting. In his opening statement, Pekka Patosaari, Director, UNFF Secretariat stated that he hoped that deliberations at the CLI would facilitate firm decisions during UNFF 5 on the reviews of progress in the implementation of the UNFF Multi-Year Programme of Work and Plan of Action, and on the review of effectiveness of the IAF.

Many participants expressed a clear need to change the international arrangement on forests and set strategic objectives, functions and targets. Mechanisms for monitoring and reporting, compliance, and finance and transfer of technology were needed in order to raise the political profile of forests on the global political agenda

The meeting identified potential functions that would be carried out by the future IAF. They included among other things serving as an international forest policy forum to promote and facilitate the achievement of sustainable forest management worldwide; demonstrating the contribution of forests to poverty alleviation, sustainable livelihoods of forest dependant people, rural development, provision of environmental benefits and services, gender equity and restoration of deforested and degraded forest lands; supporting regional initiatives and processes; providing a forum of the exchange of information and experiences; and monitoring deliberations on forests and forest-related issues in other inter-governmental and international fora.

One hundred and sixty two participants from governments, CPF members, Intergovernmental Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and Major Groups attended the CLI. To view the report of the CLI, go to: http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/cli/cli_mex-usa_report.pdf

STAFF UPDATES

The UNFF Secretariat would like to welcome Mr Antonio do Prado to the Secretariat. Mr do Prado is on secondment from ITTO and will serve as the Policy and Trade Officer. Prior to joining us, he served as Special Assistant to the Minister of Environment, Government of Brazil. He provided assistance and advice to the Minister of Environment on Brazilian forestry policy, the Brazilian National Forest Programme and the establishment of an ITTO regional office in Brazil.



groups and between those sectors that influence forests and the forest-dependent poor.

The country-led initiative looked into these and other factors, clarifying issues, exploring innovative ways and means, and most importantly, the meeting produced reasoned recommendations that will help UNFF reach the best decisions - for forests and for people.

Pekka Patosaari,
Director,
UNFF Secretariat



CPF UPDATES:

FIFTH MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE OF THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP ON FORESTS (CPF) ON STREAMLINING FOREST-RELATED REPORTING

ROME, ITALY, 16 JANUARY 2005

The fifth meeting of the CPF task force on streamlining forest related reporting met to discuss and examine ways to further develop and use the proposed CPF information framework. The framework is expected to benefit CPF member organizations that collect and analyze information and countries that compile the reports. Participants from FAO, CBD, UNCCCD, UNFCCC, UNFF, UNEP-WCMC and ITTO attended the meeting.

The CPF information framework is expected to further improve access to forest-related information submitted to CPF members. It will streamline reporting and reduce reporting burdens on countries. The task force focused on the value added for users of the framework to have the reported infor-

mation categorized and searchable by thematic elements; and how it would help in designing questionnaires and reporting formats.

The next task force meeting to be held in April 2005 will seek feedback from countries in order to further develop and use the information framework. For more information on streamlining forest-related reporting, go to: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/cpf/index>.

THIRD MEETING ON HARMONIZATION OF FOREST-RELATED TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ROME, ITALY, 17-19 JANUARY 2005

The third meeting on harmonization of forest-related terms and definitions was held from 17 to 19 January. National experts and representatives of international organizations and instruments attended the meeting which focused on two main categories of definitions: forest origin and composition, and managed and unmanaged forests. The meeting also addressed multilingual aspects and set up groups to consider linguistic consequences for Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish. For more information on the process of harmonizing forest-related definitions, go to: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/cpf/index>.

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UPCOMING EVENTS: Please visit our website for all forest related events:
<http://www.un.org/esa/forests.2005.html>.