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PEKKA'S CORNER



Pekka Patosaari
Director, UNFF Secretariat
[photo courtesy of ENB/IISD](#)

I am writing this message from the on-going UNFCCC meeting in Nairobi. It was not a surprise to find that deforestation has been one of the major topics here, when elaborating on the mitigation of climate change and the strengthened means of implementation of the commitments made.

I was recently sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the *Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change* by H.E. Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom Mission to the UN. The report was also presented and highlighted several times here in Nairobi. One of the key conclusions reached by the report is also a critical issue for, and highly relevant to, the work of UNFF, i.e., that reducing the rates of deforestation would have a direct impact on global greenhouse gas emissions.

We have been discussing the drivers of deforestation for quite some time, with recommendations for reducing deforestation levels provided in the Rio Forest Principles as well as Chapter 11 of Agenda 21. The Inter-governmental Panel on Forests (IPF) touched upon the role of forests in mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and the underlying causes of deforestation; these issues were considered again at the country-led initiative hosted by Costa Rica and UNEP in 1999, the Inter-governmental Forum on Forests (IFF), and at the third session of UNFF.

In the context of climate change, the role of forests in sequestering carbon and in enhancing environmental stability is becoming increasingly recognised. I believe further dialogue on effective means to curb deforestation, as well as to restore and expand forest cover, would be very pertinent to our broader discussions on sustainable forest management. With our new global objectives on forests, we are on track toward ensuring more comprehensive dialogue and action on this very important issue.

This is an exciting time for us at the UNFF Secretariat, as we witness a new direction and scope developing within the inter-governmental process on forests. I strongly believe that the new non-legally binding instrument will raise the political and public profile of forests at all levels, and contribute to greater understanding of what is meant by sustainable forest management. We can expect that the instrument will also provide a global platform for closer cooperation and collaboration among the many forest-related international and regional agreements, processes and organizations.

PEKKA'S CORNER contd.

The UNFF Secretariat is currently working with the World Bank and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, to support the preparatory process toward the seventh session of the UNFF, by providing some further clarity on possible financial mechanisms to support action toward the Global Objectives on Forests and sustainable forest management.

The proposal on the International Year of Forests (2011) is currently being taken up by the General Assembly. The International Year presents an opportunity to galvanize public and political awareness on forests, to promote sustainable forest management, and to highlight continuing threats to forest habitats. Once the General Assembly resolution on the international year is adopted, I look forward to working with all stakeholders, to ensure that the International Year of Forests will be a success.

Secretariat's Note and Composite Draft Text on NLBI Available Online

Ad Hoc Expert Group on the consideration of the content of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests
11-15 December 2006

The UNFF Secretariat has prepared a note for the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the consideration of the content of the non-legally binding instrument (NLBI), to provide Government-designated experts with a summary of the country and regional group proposals and follow-up comments, and to facilitate the consideration of content of the non-legally binding instrument. The note identifies and analyzes common elements in the 18 proposals and five comments provided by member States, identifies other elements for possible inclusion and provides further elaboration of substantive, working and institutional elements for developing a non-legally binding instrument. The note also includes an annex which lists all the proposed elements provided by countries and regional groups. The Secretariat's note is currently available in all UN languages on the [UNFF website](#).

The UNFF Secretariat, upon request by and in close consultation with the UNFF7 Bureau, has also prepared a composite draft text for the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. The text was presented by the Chairman of the UNFF7 Bureau, Mr. Hans Hoogeveen, at a briefing for delegates on the preparations for the Ad Hoc Expert Group meeting, on 3 November 2006 at UNHQ, New York. The composite text takes into account the views presented by Governments in the proposals and comments submitted. This draft text is currently available on the [UNFF website](#) in English, and will be made available shortly in all UN languages.

UNFF7 Bureau Held its Third Meeting

The UNFF7 Bureau held its third meeting at UN Headquarters, New York, on 12 October 2006, under the chairmanship of Mr. Hans Hoogeveen. Bureau members considered, among other matters, preparations for the Ad Hoc Expert Group (AHEG) meeting on the non-legally binding instrument (NLBI), including the compilation of proposals and comments on the elements of the NLBI, the Secretariat's note on the NLBI, and the composite draft text of an NLBI, based on country proposals and comments, as well as upon the agreed text from previous resolutions. The Bureau also considered the organization of work for the Seventh Session of the UNFF (16-27 April 2007, New York), particularly, the focus on the multi-year programme of work, and the non-legally binding instrument. In addition, the Bureau was briefed on recent developments related to the International Year of Forests, 2011, and the Indonesian country-led initiative taking place from 13 to 16 February in 2007.

The next meeting of the Bureau is scheduled for 10 December 2006. For more information on the UNFF7 Bureau, including minutes of the Bureau meetings, please refer to the [UNFF website](#).

E-Forum on Forest Ownership



photo above and banner photo courtesy of [FAO](#),
[Roberto Faidutti](#), #CFU000902

The third UNFF on-line forum discussion on “[How do ownership structures affect sustainable forest management: what strategies can be considered to secure forest tenure?](#)” took place from 6-13 October 2006. These on-line discussions are attracting a growing audience; the recent forum was viewed by over 1000 people.

The Secretariat invited Ritva Toivonen from the Forest Economics Research to provide a guest piece outlining the key issues related to forest ownership/tenure. Participants representing Governments, member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, Inter-governmental organizations and major groups engaged in a week-long lively discussion, with opinions being voiced from divergent perspectives. The discussions focused on the pros and cons of state-centered vs. private models of ownership; the growing role of private/public partnership arrangements for forest management; the links between tenure and forest-based business performance; and the importance of participatory approaches and secure ownership in responsible forest management.

These discussion forums are intended to provide a space for the wider online community to discuss emerging issues related to forests. A summary of key issues raised will be made available on the [UNFF website](#) shortly.

Major Group Discussion Boards Now Open

All Major Groups have the opportunity to submit a Discussion Paper to UNFF7 highlighting priority areas for the future work of UNFF. These discussion papers are submitted to the session as official documents and are made available in all UN languages. Major Group focal points consult widely within their respective networks to ensure that the papers reflect the views of the majority of their peers. The Secretariat is facilitating this consultative process by making available on-line discussion boards to enable wider communication. [Discussion boards](#) for the Scientific and Technological Community, Women, Children and Youth, and Workers and Trade Unions groups are currently open.

Collaborative Partnership on Forests Meeting

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests held its seventeenth meeting on 29 August 2006 in Rome, Italy, chaired by Mr. Jan Heino, the new Assistant Director-General for the FAO Forestry Department.

Members discussed a wide range of policy developments and changes within their respective organizations and negotiating processes. Mr. Pekka Patosaari, Director of the UNFF Secretariat, briefed members on the outcomes of the sixth session of the UN Forum on Forests, the content of the latest ECOSOC resolution pertaining to UNFF and on plans for the forthcoming Ad Hoc Expert Group meeting on a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests.

In promoting further collaboration, members discussed the potential to strengthen the relationships between the Bali Partnership Fund, the National Forest Program Facility and PROFOR. IUFRO presented a draft concept paper for a CPF Joint Initiative on Science and Technology as a response to a request by the UNFF (UNFF6, para 23). The objective of this initiative would be to assess and analyze existing scientific information derived from international as well as national institutions, to provide policy-makers with the state of the art in each chosen field.

Collaborative Partnership on Forests Meeting contd.

Members reported on on-going joint initiatives. In response to the recommendation by the Expert Consultation on Streamlining Forest-Related Reporting (April 2005, New York), an informal planning meeting among the CBD Secretariat, ITTO and FAO was held in April 2006. Partners agreed to better coordinate the collection and display of information relevant to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA), ITTO Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests and CBD forest-related targets and indicators. IUFRO reported that the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS) group continues to expand its network of information providers, and recently completed a training session in Russia at the Moscow State Forestry University. The World Bank reported that the Sourcebook on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of Forests, to which FAO, CIFOR and IUCN have contributed, will be launched as a CPF product at UNFF7.

A [full report](#) of the meeting can be found on the [CPF website Documents Section](#).

Upcoming Activities and Events

UN Regional Group consultations in the lead-up to the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the NLBI

8 December 2006, New York

The UNFF7 Bureau will engage in a series of briefings and informal exchanges of information with the five UN Regional Groups at UNHQ in New York on 8 December 2006.

Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Consideration of Content of the Non-legally Binding Instrument

11-15 December 2006, New York

The Open-ended Ad Hoc Expert Group on the consideration of the content of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests is being held to identify and analyze common elements of the non-legally binding instrument, and to further elaborate the substantive, working and institutional elements of the instrument. The meeting will take place at UNHQ in New York, from 11-15 December 2006.

The ad hoc expert group shall be composed of experts designated by Governments of member States of the Forum.

The meeting will be attended by members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, representatives of inter-governmental organizations and major groups. Travel support and daily subsistence allowance is being provided to one Government-designated expert per eligible country to the maximum extent possible from the budget, on a first come, first served basis.

All documents related to the meeting, including terms of reference and the Secretariat's Note on developing a NLBI on forests, and composite draft text are available on the [UNFF website](#).

Country-led Initiative in Support of the United Nations Forum on Forests' "Multi-Year Programme of Work of the United Nations Forum on Forests: Charting the Way Forward 2015"

13-16 February 2007, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia

In July 2006, the Government of Indonesia announced its intention to host a country-led initiative in support of the UN Forum on Forests. Expected outputs of the meeting include recommendations to UNFF7 on the structure and substance of the multi-year programme of work (MYPOW) of the UNFF; inter-linkages between the MYPOW and the NLBI; strengthening the regional dimension; and approaches to accomplish the global objectives on forests and the new principal functions of the UNFF. Participants will include experts from UNFF member States, relevant inter-governmental organizations and representatives of major groups.

United Nations Forum on Forests

Informal Newsletter by the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat

September/October 2006

Country-led Initiative in Support of the United Nations Forum on Forests' contd.

Preparations for the meeting are underway, a national organization committee and a steering committee have been established. The first Steering Committee meeting took place via a teleconference on 3 November 2006, in the conference facilities of the UNFF Secretariat, New York. For more information, please refer to the [Indonesian Ministry of Forestry website](#) or contact [Mr. Tri Tharyat](#), Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations.

Next E-Forum: Community-Based Forest Management

The next UNFF [on-line forum](#) will be open from 5-11 February 2007, and will discuss on-the-ground experiences in community-based forest management.

UNFF Calendar of Events

For information on upcoming forest-related events in 2006 and 2007, please visit our [online calendar](#).

UNFF Staff Update

We would like to welcome Ms. Edith Niamke, who has recently joined the Secretariat as a Programme Assistant. We are confident that she will make an excellent addition to our team.

Request to Update Information on National Focal Points

We would like to invite all member States to review the national focal point name and contact information currently listed on our website to ensure that the information is correct and up to date. Please send any corrections to the UNFF Secretariat [via email](#).

New nominations of national focal points should be sent in hard copy through mail or fax (+1 917 367 3186). Please [contact us](#) if you require templates of nomination letters or copies of past communications regarding this matter.