



UNFF 7 Outcomes and Contribution to the Review of the Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity

**Remarks by the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
at COP 9**

**Bonn, Germany
20 May 2008**

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with pleasure that the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat participates at this 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to inform Parties of the Forum's work, in relation to forest biodiversity, and to provide, for consideration, suggestions to further cooperation on forest-related issues.

Of relevance I underscore the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2007, during its 62nd Session. This Instrument represents a landmark of the global forest dialogue over the last fifteen years, built on concepts and elements from those negotiations. Along with strengthening the political commitment to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and enhancing the contribution of forests to achieving the internationally-agreed development goals, the purpose of the Instrument is to provide a framework for national action and international cooperation on forests. As a first of its kind, the Instrument reflects the international commitment to promote implementation of SFM through a new, more holistic approach. Furthermore, it sets out to achieve the four Global Objectives on Forests.

In addition to the adoption of the NLBI, 2007 was a year of other relevant decisions. The Economic and Social Council approved the mandate of the UNFF and its Secretariat, including the Multi-Year Programme of Work for the period 2007-2015. The Council further decided that the UNFF should develop and consider a voluntary global funding mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework for all types of forests, with a view to adopt said mechanism at the Forum's eighth session, in 2009. To carry these activities forward strong collaboration and active support are required at all levels.

Madam Chair,

We have seen the focus on greater regional interaction and cooperation rise considerably within the international forest policy process in the last few years. Even before the UNFF was established, in 2000, there was universal agreement among member States of the critical role that regions play in achieving sustainable forest management. This view was further articulated

through the introduction of the Forum's six principal functions, in 2000¹, and moreover with ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 which added to these six functions, three new ones, explicitly strengthening the Forum's regional component. Accordingly in Resolution 7/1, the Forum invited regional and sub-regional entities to provide substantive inputs on activities and discussions linked to agenda items of future Forum sessions. These inputs will be a new feature of the forthcoming Eighth Session in 2009.

A number of other important factors put emphasis on using regional cooperation to promote and advance SFM. Of these, I wish to mention the approach set out in the framework of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all Types of Forests. Under International Cooperation and Means of Implementation, there are 6 measures concerning regional action. The focus is on: forest law enforcement and good governance; capacity building; international technical and scientific cooperation, including South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation; and forestry research and development. Thus, successful implementation of the Instrument is closely linked to building partnerships with all, including regional and sub-regional organizations.

Madam Chair:

The Forum's 8th session in 2009 will focus on Forests in the Changing Environment, which includes issues linked to all three Rio Conventions. Addressing forests and biological diversity, including protected areas, is particularly relevant to our Secretariat's cooperation with the Secretariat of the CBD. Closer cooperation with UNCCD Secretariat on the issue of deforestation and, the UNFCCC Secretariat on climate change and SFM developments, are also underway, thus further enhancing synergies.

To close I wish to mention the timely opportunity that the International Year of Biodiversity (2010) and the International Year of Forests (2011) offer to plan joint activities between our Secretariat's, in collaboration with other members of the CPF. With respect to this, we suggest that Annex 1 of Document UNEP/CBD/COP/9/25/ADD1 could also list the 8th Session of the UNFF, to be held at the UN headquarters in NY, from 20 April to 1 May 2009, as a significant occasion to promote joint collaboration in preparation of both International Years. Furthermore, as we approach these milestone events, we also consider that the involvement of the UNFF Secretariat could also be included among the inter-agency task force contained in that same document under paragraph 42.

Thank you for your attention.

¹ ECOSOC Resolution E/2000/35