



## **UNFF 7 Outcomes and Contribution to the In-depth Review of the Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity**

**Remarks by the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat  
at 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of SBSTTA**

**Rome, Italy  
19 February 2008**

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Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Experts and Colleagues,

It is with pleasure that the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat participates at this 13<sup>th</sup> meeting to inform SBSTTA of the Forum's work, in relation to the in-depth review of the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity, and to provide, for SBSTTA's 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. To this end, cooperation to help achieve the NLBI could also be reflected, in paragraph 2 b. of document SBSTTA/13/3.

Mr. 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 SFM. This view was further articulated through the introduction of the Forum's six principal functions, in 2000.<sup>1</sup>

During the first five years of UNFF, interaction with regions significantly expanded. Given this, the Forum at its 6th and 7th sessions adopted a stronger mandate for regional cooperation through 2015, gearing Forum discussions more prominently towards regional and national level actions. Among the three new principal functions decided by the Council in resolution 2006/49, the third one specifically calls on the Forum to strengthen interaction with regional and sub-regional entities in order to facilitate cooperation and implementation of SFM. In addition, the Forum's new Multi Year Programme of Work calls for regional and sub-regional entities to provide substantive inputs on activities and discussions linked to agenda items of future Forum sessions.

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-Leagally 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.

Mr. Chair:

The Forum's 8th session in 2009 will focus on Forests in the Changing Environment, which includes issues linked to the 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.

In moving towards our common goal of Sustainable Forest Management, we anticipate more opportunities for collaboration. In the same way, we look forward to working with regional and sub-regional organizations to find ways to bring their experiences and substantive inputs, to global processes, in a way that promotes even greater exchange between levels.

The Side Event on Regional Cooperation co-hosted by FAO, CBD Secretariat and the UNFF Secretariat, offers a timely opportunity to share our perspectives on regional forest interaction, including information from the first-ever Regional Led Initiative in support of the UNFF, co-organized by the governments of Australia and Switzerland, last month in Geneva. On a final note, I invite you all to participate at this Side Event, to be held in the "Red Room", following this morning session.

Thank you for your attention.

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<sup>1</sup> ECOSOC Resolution E/2000/35