



## Economic and Social Council

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### United Nations Forum on Forests

#### Seventh Session

New York, 16-27 April 2007

Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda \*

### Enhanced Cooperation and Policy and Programme Coordination

#### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present Note is intended to facilitate deliberations of member States at the current session of the Forum in relation to the enhancement of cooperation and policy and programme coordination necessary for the achievement of the new Global Objectives on Forests set out in ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49, and for the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on forests, to be negotiated at the present session.

The Note describes a number of activities undertaken since the fifth and sixth sessions of the Forum related to enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments. It further highlights future issues of concern and opportunities, and seeks to suggest some points for consideration by the Forum.

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Advance Unedited Version

## **Introduction**

1. One of the principal functions of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the international arrangement on forests is to enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as to contribute to synergies among them, including coordination among donors (ECOSOC 2000/35, ECOSOC 2006/49).

2. In ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49, member States devoted one specific section of the Resolution to the issue of enhancing cooperation and policy and programme coordination. The Resolution contains directives and guidelines to countries, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), and relevant multi-lateral agreements, instruments, processes and United Nations bodies, aimed at improved implementation of the shared Global Objectives on Forests, and more efficient collaboration and cooperation with the UN Forum on Forests and its Secretariat.

3. Accordingly, this renewed emphasis on enhanced cooperation will be an important part of the new multi-year programme of work for the Forum, in order for it to appropriately meet the shared global objectives on forests set out in ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 and ensure that the role of forests in contributing to the international development agenda and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) are realized. Moreover, the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, to be adopted at the seventh session of the

Forum, will depend greatly on strengthened cooperation and collaboration with existing instruments and processes at the regional and global levels.

4. The Resolution further calls upon members of the CPF to strengthen their collaboration and coordination in order to foster progress towards sustainable forest management at all levels. Provisions regarding the financial means of implementation will also require more coordination and collaboration among CPF members with the guidance of the Forum.

5. The present Note has three objectives. First, to describe a number of activities undertaken since the fifth and sixth sessions of the Forum related to enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments. Second, it highlights future issues and opportunities, and finally, the Note seeks to highlight some points for consideration by the Forum.

## **I. System-wide Cooperation and Policy and Programme coordination**

### **A. The Economic and Social Council and the 2006 high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly**

6. The ongoing reform process of the United Nations aimed at improving system-wide coordination and coherence is expected to have implications for the work of the different bodies and organs of the organization, including the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Within this process, the General Assembly Resolution on the strengthening of ECOSOC

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(A/Res/61/16) has established two new functions for the Council that are of more immediate and direct concern to its functional commissions, including this Forum. These are the Annual Ministerial Review of the United Nations Development Agenda and the Biennial Development Cooperation Forum on the implementation of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to which the Forum and other functional commissions would be requested to provide inputs to the Council.

7. As noted in the Secretary-General's Report on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Forum for the 2007-2015 period (E/CN.2007/2), these developments provide the Forum with an opportunity to integrate its work more effectively with the broader development agenda to reflect one of the new principal functions of the Forum. Increased collaborative and coordinated cooperation and engagement will be needed between the Forum and the other ECOSOC functional and regional commissions in order to further strengthen the contribution of the Forum to the work of ECOSOC. Some points for further consideration in this regard are presented in section VII of this report.

8. In 2006, the Forum secretariat contributed substantively to the preparation of the ECOSOC High Level segment on, "Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development". The Forum secretariat contributed to the drafting of the Secretary-General's report on this issue by highlighting the inter-relationships between sustainable forest management, employment and rural development. The Forum secretariat further contributed to the preparations of the session by working with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Fund for

Agricultural Development (IFAD), FAO and others to organize a panel discussion on Employment and Rural Development.

## **B. Follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration**

9. The Millennium Declaration (A/res/55/2) continues to provide a strong framework for the work of the United Nations and its member States. Forests are highlighted in the Millennium Declaration and as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The proportion of land area covered by forest constitutes an indicator (No. 25) for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal on ensuring environmental sustainability (No. 7). The Forum secretariat is actively engaged in the Inter-Agency and Expert process on the Millennium Development Goals Indicators<sup>†</sup>, an inter-agency effort to monitor and report on progress made, and has collaborated with various United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in this respect.

10. Enhancing the contribution of forests to the achievement of the MDGs is one of the three new principal functions of the Forum agreed in 2006. The agreement on four shared Global Objectives on Forests further defines the priorities for national and global progress. Taken together, the MDGs and the Global Objectives on Forests provide the foundation for the work of the Forum, member States and other international organizations.

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<sup>†</sup> The MDG Indicators project can be accessed at: <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/>

### **C. Functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and the regional commissions**

11. Interaction with other functional commissions and United Nations bodies, including, in particular, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the regional commissions, has been increasingly important to the Forum and its Secretariat, and member States have encouraged the stronger participation and engagement of regional commissions in the work of the Forum.

12. In December 2005, the Forum secretariat organized an inter-regional workshop on “Regional Cooperation for Integrating Forestry into the Broader Development Agenda”, involving UN Regional Economic Commissions secretariats (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA) and other UN agencies and organizations, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The main objective of the discussion was to explore the possible collaborative role of United Nations Regional Commissions *vis-à-vis* the Forum and the regional dimension in the Forum’s future work programme. Discussions included how to streamline forests into the broader development agenda and means to increase cooperation and coordination between global and regional levels. Possible tasks and the type of role that the United Nations Regional Economic and Social Commissions and other regional bodies/institutions might play in this regard were also explored.

13. The following are a few of the main conclusions of the workshop: UN Regional Economic Commissions can function as integrating organizations in forest policy issues at the regional level; in order to integrate sustainable forest management in the economic development planning of countries, strategies must be developed by each Regional

Economic Commission; there could be possible joint FAO and Regional Economic Commission programs (which presently occurs only in Europe for historical reasons); there is a need to avoid duplication and to integrate and collaborate more closely with implementing agencies such as FAO, UNEP and others; full participation in the Forum is essential; and it is important to use existing reporting structures to focus on forests and their cross-sectoral links in other development areas, such as the Commission for Sustainable Development reporting structure, particularly the use of regional implementation reviews.

#### **D. Activities of the Forum Secretariat within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

##### ***General functions as a division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.***

14. The Forum secretariat participates actively in the intra-departmental activities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The secretariat contributes every year to the consolidated report of the Secretary-General on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, providing information about policy recommendations from the Forum that are relevant to the themes under consideration by the Council.

##### ***Task Force on Conflict Prevention, Peace-building and Development.***

15. The Forum Secretariat has actively contributed to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs Task Force on Conflict Prevention, Peace-building and Development. The

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Task Force was established to develop, in collaboration with other United Nations bodies, a strategic framework for integrating socio-economic issues in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Since 2005, the Forum Secretariat has participated collaboratively in this Task Force, particularly in the discussion concerning natural resources management and forests in conflict and peace-building.

***United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.***

16. The two secretariats of the Forum and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues have maintained a close working relationship. Active participation by the Chairmen of the Bureaus of the two bodies in each other's sessions has greatly enhanced understanding and collaboration between the two Forums. Indigenous peoples' groups play an active part at the multi-stakeholder dialogues of the Forum. The Forum secretariat directly contributed to the DESA Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Indigenous Peoples (2005-2015), and is expected to contribute further once the new multi-year programme of work of the Forum is finalized at the present session.

***International Year of Forests.***

17. The 2011 International Year of Forests, launched by General Assembly Resolution A/61/193, requires a major input from the Forum secretariat, which is acting as the focal point for the implementation and coordination of efforts and work related to the implementation of the International Year of Forests. The International Year of Forests will be an indispensable tool for the advancement of sustainable forest management worldwide by helping to raise additional international awareness of the role of forests in all aspects of development. It will be a celebration of our common understanding and concerns about forests and of their importance to our everyday lives.

18. This decision will require a strong coordination role by the secretariat in the planning and development of cooperative and collaborative activities, involving governments, the CPF member institutions, and various other forest-related international, regional, sub-regional and national organizations, processes and partnerships. In this regard, the possible incorporation and consideration of the issue within the next multi-year programme of work of the Forum is recommended.

### **E. Regional cooperation**

19. The Forum has placed increasing emphasis on regional cooperation in recent years and the Forum secretariat has in turned pursued closer ties with regional organizations and bodies, and, in many of its activities, has drawn upon their knowledge and networks to enhance further collaboration on sustainable forest management.

20. During the plenary of the fifth session of the Forum, a panel on sustainable forest management in the context of Asia-Pacific Regional Realities was held, closing a series of regional presentations starting in 2003, and demonstrating the importance of integrating sub-regional and regional experiences in the future work of the Forum.

21. As mentioned in paragraph 12 above, in December 2005 the Forum secretariat organized an Inter-regional workshop on “Regional Cooperation for Integrating Forestry into the Broader Development Agenda”, involving UN Regional Economic Commissions and other UN agencies, funds and programmes. The secretariat has addressed several regional commissions with respect to forest-related matters within the context of the

Millennium Development Goals and other activities, including natural resource use, governance, renewable energy and sustainable development.

22. During the sixth session of the Forum, three side events on regional issues were organized: one organized by the Forum secretariat on the results of the interregional workshop on “Regional Cooperation for Integrating Forestry into the Broader Development Agenda”; another organized by GTZ with presentations by the Chilean Forest Service (CONAF), the Campesino Committee of the Highlands (CCDA) and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) on dialogue, synergies and collaboration within and between each group and other groups in the framework of the Puenbo II Initiative; and a third organized by the Central Africa Forests Commission (COMIFAC) on the Commission’s actions and the more urgent needs of COMIFAC member countries.

23. In 2006, the Forum secretariat participated in almost all of the FAO Regional Forestry Commission meetings and workshops, where further consideration was given to the issue of the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action and national forest programmes as vehicles for implementation. All Commissions expressed their preference for a strong regional dimension to be developed within the context of the Forum in its future work programme. They also recommended more active cooperation, interaction, collaboration and dialogue between regional level processes and the Forum, and exploration of how the FAO Committee on Forests (COFO) should enable FAO and Regional Forestry Commissions to further contribute to and inform the Forum of regional priorities.

## II. International instruments and organizations relevant to the forest sector

### A. Coordination with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development-related Conventions

24. *Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)* The Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, at their eighth session held in Curitiba, Brazil in 2006, made several decisions which contain more direction regarding its Expanded Programme of Work on forests, and contain new targets for implementation. These include targets for protected areas, vulnerable areas, conservation of genetic diversity and traditional forest-related knowledge, impacts of international trade, and adaptation to climate change. Parties also expressed their appreciation of ongoing collaboration and efforts at harmonization of reporting. The Forum secretariat participated in the Expert Group on Technology Transfer and Scientific and Technological Cooperation, during which a number of issues were explored, including: development of a clearinghouse mechanism; linking cooperation to policy development; the challenges of valuation of biodiversity; the importance of clear needs assessments; and strengthening domestic research and development.

25. *United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)* At the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in 2005, Parties recognized the importance of sustainable forest management in preventing desertification and encouraged countries to promote sustainable forest management as an effective means of meeting the objective of this and other Conventions. The UNCCD secretariat was further encouraged to continue

participating in the Forum sessions and to work toward the development of further joint initiatives with CPF members.

26. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*. At the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Climate Change, held in concurrence with the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in 2005, several Parties, including Papua New Guinea, Costa Rica and Bolivia, introduced a proposal to create incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation. The proposal seeks to expand the incentives currently provided for afforestation and reforestation activities under the Clean Development Mechanism to include financial incentives for sustainable forest management and reduced deforestation. The UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) has provided two years to further elaborate the proposal. The results of this process will be taken up at COP-13, to be held in Asia, and will come at the same time as the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment as well as the close of the two-year dialogue on future commitments.

27. To provide an opportunity for more detailed discussion, the UNFCCC secretariat held a workshop on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries, in which the Forum secretariat, as well as a number of other CPF members, participated, and will hold a second such workshop in March 2007.

28. The discussions of the underlying causes of deforestation and policy measures to avoid deforestation undertaken in this context provide a strong link between the work of the UNFCCC and the primary work of the Forum. Ways to enhance and strengthen these synergies and overlaps should be further explored by the Forum.

### **III. Cooperation with relevant international organizations related to forests**

#### **A. Collaborative Partnership on Forests**

29. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests has played an important role in the international arrangement on forests by providing substantive support to the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and by enhancing cooperation and coordination among the members of the partnership, including through joint forest-related initiatives. CPF members undertook a number of new initiatives in 2006, including a science and technology initiative aimed at providing policy-relevant scientific findings to international fora.

30. As a voluntary partnership, the Partnership receives guidance from the Forum, but each member takes direction from, and is accountable to, its own governing body. In this regard, many of the governing bodies of the members of the Partnership are calling for greater cooperation with the Forum. The report on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework 2007 (E/CN.18/2007/6) provides an assessment of the progress of the Partnership, highlighting joint initiatives of Partnership members and describing other collaborative activities undertaken to promote sustainable forest management worldwide.

31. Many of the governing bodies of CPF members recognized the Global Objectives on Forests adopted by ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 in 2006 and encouraged secretariats to continue to play an active role in the Partnership. Areas where organizations are

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encouraged to continue work include harmonization of reporting, sharing of information and the promotion of sustainable forest management at the regional and national levels.

### **B. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

32. Close collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and its Regional Commissions provides an important link between inter-governmentally agreed decisions and implementation at the national and regional levels, as well as strong monitoring, reporting and assessment of progress made. At its one hundred and thirty-first session held in Rome in 2006, the FAO Council recommended that the FAO continue to work closely with the Forum secretariat and other CPF members, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution A/Res/61/193, to ensure successful implementation of the International Year of Forests. The Forum secretariat is actively engaged with the work of the FAO Forestry Department and the FAO Regional Commissions, and holds this collaboration to be quite important in ensuring that intergovernmental decisions of the Forum reach the policy-makers and practitioners that can affect change on the ground. The Forum Secretariat also participated in the Kotka V Expert Consultation in Finland (12-16 June 2006), which provided guidance to FAO for the preparation of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2010.

### **C. International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)**

33. A new International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) was adopted in 2006 and is scheduled to go into force by 2008. As with previous agreements, the ITTA was

negotiated as a commodity agreement under the aegis of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and is legally binding. The new agreement will have a longer duration period than previous agreements (initially, ten years) which will provide for greater stability and continuity. It retains the balance of emphasis between development and conservation of the environment, but broadens the scope to include priority and emerging issues such as forest law enforcement, illegal logging and associated trade, poverty alleviation, certification, non-timber forest products, environmental services, and forest dependent indigenous and local communities. The Forum secretariat is actively engaged with the work of ITTO.

#### **D. International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO)**

34. The Forum secretariat has been actively involved with IUFRO in exploring how the provision of scientific knowledge and advice can be further enhanced in the future at the international level in order to facilitate informed decision-making and contribute to policy implementation. In 2006, IUFRO, in collaboration with other CPF members, spearheaded the Science and Technology Initiative as a means of providing policy-relevant scientific knowledge to inter-governmental processes on issues that are of importance to them. The Global Forest Information Service (GFIS) serves as an Internet gateway that provides access to forest data from around the world, and includes browsing and metadata search facilities for users, building on agreements with a broad range of forest-related institutions, giving them wider opportunities to disseminate information. In leading this initiative, IUFRO maintains close collaboration with the Forum secretariat and other partners. The secretariat also acts as a member of both Steering Committees.

## **E. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**

35. The Forum Secretariat has worked closely with UNEP and partner organizations in the preparation of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-4) that will be published in 2007. The GEO series reviews the world environment situation and provides early warning on emerging environmental issues of international significance. The Forum Secretariat contributed to the writing of Chapter 3 on land, particularly the sub-chapters on forests and land use. It also participates as a member of the GEO-4 High-level Consultative Group, which provides UNEP with strategic advice on collaborative aspects of the GEO-4 process, including outreach and strategic engagement, as well as on the preparation of the Summary for Decision-Makers. UNEP also has launched its major worldwide Billion Tree Campaign with the objective of planting at least one billion trees in 2007.

## **IV. Stakeholder involvement**

36. Stakeholder participation in the United Nations Forum on Forests process continues to be of importance. Regular consultations with major group focal points were organized by the Forum secretariat throughout 2005 and 2006, and in preparation for the present session. Major group representatives presented their perspectives at a panel discussion entitled, “Contributions of Civil Society to Sustainable Forest Management – From Policy Development to Implementation” during the sixth session of the Forum. Major

Group representatives also contributed substantively to the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Non-legally Binding Instrument (NLBI) on all types of forests in December 2006 and the Country-Led Initiative held in Indonesia in February 2007 on the multi-year programme of work of the Forum. Major groups are providing discussion papers reflecting their views and concerns for the present session. These are provided as Addenda to the Note by the Secretariat on the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue (E/CN.18/2007/4). There is also a growing spirit of collaboration and partnership among the different groups, as major group organizations continue to seek ways of leveraging each other's strengths and constituencies.

#### **V. Country- and organization-led initiatives in support of the Forum**

37. Country- and organization-led initiatives have been recognized as an essential part of the work of the Forum. Linked to different themes of the Forum's multi-year programme of work, these initiatives have provided a number of opportunities for experts to address issues prior to Forum sessions. The diversification of workshops and expert meetings in various regions worldwide has also played a significant role in raising awareness of the work of the Forum, in promoting increased understanding of the issues and in facilitating discussions. The Forum secretariat has provided input and advice to all initiatives held in support of the Forum. Such initiatives have provided valuable expert input to the work of the Forum, with reports made available for consideration at the Forum sessions.

38. One recent example is the International Expert Meeting organized in support of the Forum, entitled, “Scoping for a future agreement on forests”, held in November 2005, in Berlin, Germany. This meeting aimed to provide the basis for informed decisions at the sixth session of the Forum, and provided an opportunity to further explore some of the concepts and ideas contained in the Chairman’s draft text that was the result of the fifth session of the Forum.

39. As of the time this report is being processed, February 2007, a specific Country-led Initiative is being held on the next multi-year programme of work (MYPOW) of the Forum until 2015 in Indonesia, prior to the seventh session of the Forum, in order to provide an opportunity for countries to exchange views and initiate informal discussions on the issue before the session.

## **VI. Advances in forest partnerships and processes**

40. A number of regional and international processes have developed around different themes of sustainable forest management, reflecting particular priorities in specific regions. The developments in respect to criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, as well as on forest law enforcement, governance and illegal international trade, have shown how it is possible to achieve networking and partnership within regions, and between processes, in order to benefit from experiences in different parts of the world. The Forum Secretariat has been supportive and actively liaising with these and other partnerships, including the Asia Forest Partnership, the Congo Basin Forest

Partnership, a number of forest law enforcement and governance processes, the International Model Forest Network, the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, the Montreal Process, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, the Tehran Process on low forest cover countries, and other regional criteria and indicators-related processes, to mention a few. Some of the cooperation initiatives of these partnerships and processes are briefly considered below.

#### **A. Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE)**

41. The MCPFE has consistently referred to advances and beneficial outcomes of more effective cooperation and coordination with various organizations in implementing sub-programmes in the region. Enhanced cooperation within the MCPFE has also allowed better interactions and exchange of information on the developments in the discussions on, for example, the issues on wood energy and climate change.

42. The Forum secretariat actively engages with the MCPFE, and it is expected that such interaction shall increase as result of the new provisions established by ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 regarding cooperation and collaboration for implementation of sustainable forest management at regional levels. The issue of regional cooperation and how the MCPFE can best contribute to the promotion of regional achievements of global agreements has been central in the deliberations of the MCPFE.

#### **B. Asia Forest Partnership (AFP)**

43. In 2005, the AFP, of which the Forum secretariat is a founding member, decided to establish a Steering Committee for the partnership to replace the erstwhile system of lead partners, to be composed of the Government of Japan, the Government of Indonesia, the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Nature Conservancy and the Forum secretariat. The AFP is in the process of evaluating its achievement in the five-year period. The Forum secretariat is also involved in this evaluation process. Interaction between the AFP and the Forum has been growing, and with the new paths opened up by ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 on needs for strengthening regional cooperation for implementation of sustainable forest management and achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests, it is anticipated that the AFP will play an increasing role in the achievement of internationally agreed decisions.

### **C. Congo Basin Forest Partnership**

44. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership was established in 2002 to promote economic development, alleviate poverty, improve governance and enhance conservation of natural resources in the region. Since its founding, additional governments and NGO's have joined the partnership, the main objectives of which are to improve communication among its members and support coordination between members' projects, programmes, and policies. In 2006, the partnership issued the "State of the Forest Report on the Congo Basin," aimed to present the "baseline" state of the region and intended to serve as a coordination instrument for the Partnership. The Forum secretariat has been actively participating in the work of the Partnership.

#### **D. The International Model Forest Network (IMFN)**

45. Building on recommendations of the IMFN Global Forum in 2005 and work initiated in the Regional Model Forest Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC-Net), the partnership launched a global consultation for the development of network-wide principles, attributes and indicators (PAI) framework, upon which the network will define standards for membership and access compliance with criteria. A globally agreed PAI framework is expected to be finalized in 2007. The network is also developing a strategic plan for the Regional Model Forest Network for Asia, and a final consultation to complete the strategy has been scheduled for January 2007 in Bangkok. The FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has been helping with the initiative, and a regional trend analysis of sustainable forest management in Asia will be used in FAO's upcoming State of Forestry in Asia-Pacific report.

#### **E. Processes on forest law enforcement, governance and illegal international trade**

46. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation") includes a commitment to "take immediate action on domestic forest law enforcement and illegal international trade in forest products, including in forest biological resources, with the support of the international community, and provide human and institutional capacity-building related to the enforcement of national legislation in those areas". Several processes, internationally and regionally driven, address forest law enforcement, governance and associated trade in the forest sector, and the Forum secretariat continues to be actively involved with these partnerships and processes.

47. The Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) initiative, facilitated by the World Bank along with other international organizations, donor agencies, and Governments, continues to make progress. The East Asian FLEG process held a series of regional workshops and meetings on such issues as customs enforcement, forest sector transparency, and approaches to anti-money laundering and related investigation and prosecution. In March 2006 the Asia FLEG process held a second working group meeting of the Asia FLEG Task Force and Advisory Group in which there was clear indication of stronger ownership of the process in East Asia and the Pacific. They also agreed to form a regional steering committee with the responsibility of preparing the next Ministerial Meeting.

48. The members of the Central Africa Forest Commission (COMIFAC) are working on national action plans and to integrate FLEG issues into the COMIFAC work program.

49. The Europe and North America (ENA) FLEG process held a ministerial meeting in November 2005 in St. Petersburg, Russia. The resulting St. Petersburg Declaration has since been adopted by all members of the European Union (EU) Council. It charts a course of action at the national and international levels, and addresses the possible need for reform of forest sector legislation and policies to ensure that forests are managed in a sustainable manner, responsible legal forest industry is encouraged and the rural poor are not criminalized for using forest resources. An ENA FLEG Workshop was held in Turkey in May 2006 to further discuss the implementation of the agreements made in the St. Petersburg Declaration.

50. Forest law enforcement and governance issues have long been addressed within the Forum and remain a priority in the political agenda, culminating with ECOSOC

Resolution 2006/49. The resolution urges countries to develop and implement national plans, programmes and strategies in order to achieve the Global Objectives on Forests and to promote sustainable forest management by, *inter alia*, “strengthening the capacity of countries to address illegal practices according to national legislation and illegal international trade in forest products in the forest sector through the promotion of forest law enforcement and governance at the national level, sub-national level, regional and sub-regional levels as appropriate”.

#### **F. Tehran Process**

51. A strategic plan of action for the Tehran Process is currently being developed by the Low Forest Cover Countries (LFCC) secretariat to strengthen capacity of these countries, and to promote the inclusion of forestry and forest-related issues in national development agendas.

#### **G. Criteria and Indicators processes**

52. At present, the nine major international criteria and indicators processes, led by the African Timber Organization, the Dry Forest Asia Initiative, the Dry-Zone Africa Process, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Lepaterique Process, the Montreal Process, the Near East Process, the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and the Tarapoto Proposal, involve 149 countries and 85 percent of the world’s forests. These criteria and indicators processes have played a major role in

the development of a common understanding of what constitutes sustainable forest management, and collaboration among them is growing. The Inter-Criteria and Indicators Process Collaboration Workshop is a recent initiative of the collaborative effort by the Montreal Process, the ITTO, the FAO, the MCPFE, UNECE, and the US Forest Service. The Workshop was held in June 2006 in Poland, in response to repeated calls by international expert conferences on Criteria and Indicators for more and improved cooperation and collaboration among C&I processes.

#### **H. Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration**

53. This Partnership, launched in March 2003, currently comprises 25 partners and sponsors, including nine members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, several governments and governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, communities and a growing number of companies. The Forum secretariat joined the Partnership at its inception. In 2006, IUCN and ITTO collaborated to organize nine national technical workshops in Ghana, Mexico, Guyana, Guatemala, Cameroon, the Philippines, India, Myanmar and Côte d'Ivoire.

#### **I. Commission of Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC)**

54. The Commission of Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC) seeks to facilitate better management and conservation of the forests in Central African countries. It received the mandate from Heads of State of the sub-region to coordinate all activities and policies regarding the management of forests and savannahs. The COMIFAC Treaty was adopted

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by the Heads of State of Central Africa during the Brazzaville Summit in February 2005.

The Forum secretariat works closely with the COMIFAC secretariat to facilitate exchange of information, including through the participation in meetings and events.

## **VII. Issues for further consideration**

55. The new working modalities of the United Nations Forum on Forests as well as the changing modalities of the work of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will require more interaction and sharing of perspectives with forest-related regional and sub-regional bodies, mechanisms, processes, and CPF members in the work of the Forum.

56. Countries may wish to consider how the Forum can best contribute to the newly formed Annual Ministerial Reviews and biennial Development Cooperation Forums of ECOSOC within the context of the multi-year programme of work.

57. Countries may also wish to consider incorporating activities related to the International Year of Forests in the new multi-year programme of work.

58. In addressing the linkages of the work of the Forum with that of the UNFCCC, countries may wish to consider ways to enhance and strengthen synergies and linkages.

59. In addressing linkages at the regional and sub-regional levels, countries may wish to request the Secretary-General:

- a. To continually address the relationship between forests and the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, at relevant regional level

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meetings, including regional implementation meetings, within the context of sustainable economic, social and environmental development.

b. To facilitate the incorporation of forest-related issues more effectively as part of the work of the United Nations Regional Economic and Social Commissions, and enable closer collaboration and work with other international regional agencies and processes, such as regional treaty bodies, the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions and regional development banks.

60. When further defining the regional component of the Forum's work, the Forum may wish to request the Secretary-General:

a. To prepare, in collaboration with regional partners, a report for the eighth session on how to render more efficient and effective the collaboration and cooperation among existing regional partnerships, regional processes and organizations.

61. Countries may wish to consider possible tangible provisions to explore how best to strengthen forest education, as well as research and development, in the context of the new multi-year programme of work of the Forum.

62. Taking into account ECOSOC resolution 2006/49, the Forum may wish to provide further guidance and request the Secretary-General:

a. To facilitate the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, by initiating a project, as an activity of the multi-year programme of work of the Forum, in collaboration with other CPF members, for clustering and further simplifying language, taking into account existing work,

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- b. To establish a close linkage between the Forum secretariat and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other global and regional stakeholders, to strengthen forest education and research and development through global, regional and sub-regional networks, and
- c. To build-upon and enhance, in collaboration with other CPF members, activities to promote the exchange of forest management-related experiences and good practices.

63. The Forum may wish to provide further guidance to the work of the CPF by requesting it to:

- a. Mainstream the decisions taken by the Forum into the programmes and financial mechanisms of its member organizations, particularly by increasing support for National Forest Programmes and national actions aimed at implementation of sustainable forest management and the integration of forest issues in national development programmes and poverty reduction strategies;
- b. Coordinate the development of indicators for assessing and monitoring the fourth Global Objective on Forests on finance;
- c. Provide further support to the Forum secretariat on assessing the relative ability of different financial means of implementation, including innovative financial mechanisms, to ensure sustainable forest management