

# **Statement by Switzerland**

## **7th session of UNFF**

### **16-27 April 2007**

- We would like to thank the Bureau and the UNFF secretariat for preparing this session.
- The UNFF is uniquely positioned to be the high-level body to move the international forest agenda. Under the ECOSOC and further under the General Assembly.
- It can become a leader in catalyzing policy and action for the sustainable use and management of the world's forests for present and future generations.
- But it can only do this if it changes: Last year, we managed to adopt a very good resolution but we need to be further creative:
- UNFF must adopt new, more effective ways of working. We need concerted and collective actions. UNFF is much about partnership.
- We have partners but we do not seem to treat them well.
- The CPF is of great importance but we do not seem as governments to be fully consistent between what we ask them to do under UNFF and what we decide on their individual work programmes as Parties for example. One text on “Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination” for this session was only prepared by the UNFF secretariat without the other CPF members knowing about it. It is simple: they discovered it on the web. This is not acceptable.
- The CPF members' inputs to UNFF sessions not just as panellists but as full members is the key to support UNFF.
- The major groups must be our full partners and not just during multi-stakeholders dialogue or just during ad hoc expert group meetings. On the ground they are implementing the decisions we have taken in the past, backing up governments, easing our tasks. Their experiences in the field and their expertise are essential to governments. We want them to support us fully, i.e. to provide us with their precious inputs. Their reports for this session were very precise on quite a few points where they see a real need.
- The regional experiences, and initiatives are primordial to the UNFF work, but we have to leave a certain freedom on how the regions/regional organisations want their work to be presented into UNFF. They might want to coordinate themselves and come with their own proposal.
- Now if we want to stop being accused of looking at our belly button as foresters and if we really want to live to our expectations, i.e. be the essential global forum on forests, we need to be noticed and relevant outside the forest sector. We therefore need to build bridges and provide services to other political decision fora that affect forests;

- Partnership means exchanging good will from all sides. This will be needed when it comes to the commitment of countries for implementing the 4 global objectives and the provision of means of implementation.
- This session will adopt 2 important documents: A Multiyear programme of work- MYPOW and a Non legally binding instrument -NLBI, both based on the 4 global objectives and the 7 thematic elements of sustainable forest management.

### **MYPOW**

- Switzerland would like to thank warmly the governments of Indonesia and Germany for the excellent meeting in Bali.
- Switzerland is particularly interested in a strong MYPOW as the implementation tool for the 2006 resolution.
- We consider the MYPOW to be the sap of the International arrangement on forests.
- Each session should have a flagship theme with a concise set of subthemes. They should also be attractive to others outside the forest sector. They should represent a logical package to advance the sustainable development agenda.
- The MYPOW must be ready to tackle critical, difficult and emerging issues.

### **NLBI:**

- Although we are not strong believers in a NLBI, we are ready to work with you.
- The NLBI should be short: not more than 10 pages.
- We are setting a competition: a box of Swiss chocolate for the delegation, the major group or the organization that will come up with a reasonable version.
- As it stands now, we face the risk of renegotiating bits and pieces of the 2006 resolution. If we make abstraction of the text concerning the resolution, there are only a few pages left with new and additional elements to the existing resolutions.
- We should focus on these new elements.
- The NLBI can only be useful to our work if it adds value to what we have committed ourselves before.
- Switzerland wants to reach an outcome for both negotiations at this meeting. We have no intention to extend them over April 2007, this in full agreement with the 2006 resolution.
- As a last point, let me stress again that UNFF has a major role to play given its current resolutions and needs a strong MYPOW that responds to the world challenges, without necessarily having a NLBI.
- I fully agree with you, Mr Chairman, when you said it is Now or Never.
- We have a say in French : we say: ou ça passe ou ça casse (or it goes through or it breaks).
- Do not break UNFF

Thank you, Mr Chairman

