

**A Statement by the Scientific and Technological Community Major Group
UNFF 7, Wednesday, 18 April 2007**

Mr Chairman,

The positive contribution of science and technology to progress in areas of human development need no longer be demonstrated. In the area of sustainable forest management (SFM), science and technology has a crucial role to play. This indeed has been recognized and highlighted in UNFF resolutions since 2004.

Mr. Chairman,

The early stages of forest development in developed countries have not been very different from what is currently experienced by developing countries. Deforestation and land degradation were also rampant in much of the developed nations until fossil fuel was discovered as an alternative source of energy. Using scientific and technological advances, developed countries have been able to turn their forest sectors into viable sectors which contribute tremendously to their economies, employment, and environment.

The situation is not so hopeful in much of the developing world, where deforestation is generally increasing without much financial rewards nor hope for future turn around.

This is why Mr. Chairman, the Science and Technology Major Group is delighted to see in the draft composite text for the NLBI that member States have resolved to seriously address the situation by strengthening the contribution of science and research in advancing SFM by incorporating scientific expertise into forest policies and programmes.

We are also delighted to notice that, member states have also resolved to enhance the research and scientific forest-related capacities of developing countries, as well as to promote collaborative research and development with potential technical and financial support from developed countries in the field of SFM.

Mr. Chairman, the composite text also indicates that member States resolve to promote international technical and scientific cooperation, including South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in SFM, where necessary through the appropriate international, regional and national institutions.

The Science and Technology Major Group wishes that these wonderful "resolutions" could be effectively translated into concrete actions and programmes in the Multi Year Programme of Work (MYPOW); and that innovative and field level initiatives such as the Joint CPF initiative on Science and Technology in support of the intergovernmental process, through effective linkage between science and policy; and the National Forest Programme Facility programme hosted by FAO, could be adequately considered as fundamental building blocks on which further means and programmes of implementation could be based.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the Science and Technology Major Group would like to urge international donors, governments and financial institutions to indeed follow these resolutions with much commitment and make the much awaited Trust Funds of the Forum Secretariat a reality.