



AUSTRALIA



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Statement by Mr John Talbot **Head of Delegation**

Mister Chair and distinguished delegates,

Australia is looking forward to a very productive two weeks of negotiations at the forum. I would like to make some early comments in relation to the means of implementation for sustainable forest management towards achieving the four global objectives on forests and on my Government's policy on illegal logging.

An important role for UNFF is how the forest instrument can be used effectively to achieve SFM.

Australia thanks the secretariat for the preparation of quality papers and wishes to highlight comments in the UNFF paper E/CN.18/2009/5 that the NLBI "represents a global consensus of all countries" and "a new opportunity for all countries to move together in a concerted effort to achieve sustainable forest management". The paper goes on to say, "Expectations are high that the NLBI will serve as both a framework and a platform for integrating SFM into national development plans and strategies". We agree with these views and see this as a practical way forward.

Australia also sees the use of the NLBI by countries as an important way to provide opportunities for regional organisations to assist where there are needs identified through the NLBI process. It can also assist in identifying priority areas which require support from funding facilities.

In 2008 Australia and Switzerland co hosted a Region Led Initiative that highlighted the capacity of regional organisations to deliver the outcomes sought by this forum.

Members may like to consider how this work can be taken forward and how it might assist in the implementation of the NLBI.

I note in the slides by the UNFF secretariat under the first global objective on forests that illegal logging was raised. I would like to update members of the UNFF on Australia's strong stance and multifaceted approach on illegal logging policy since the election of the Rudd Government in late 2007.

Australian Government policy has 5 components which will link with regional governments and industry to:

- Build capacity within regional govts to prevent illegal harvesting;
- Develop and support certification schemes for timber and timber products sold in Australia;
- Identify illegally logged timber and restrict its import to Australia;
- Require disclosure at point of sale of species, country of origin and any certification; and
- Argue that market based incentives aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation should be included in a future international climate change agreement.

The first two points of this commitment are being addressed through our Asia-Pacific Forestry Skills and Capacity Building Program which has committed \$15.8 m over 4 years. The second two points are being implemented through a regulatory impact statement which is currently being undertaken in Australia to examine the costs and benefits of various policy options which will be presented to Government for consideration. The final point is part of our climate change agenda.

Finally, congratulations to you Chair on your appointment and Ms Mc Alpine on her appointment to the position of Director.

Mister Chair, Australia stands willing to work cooperatively with the other delegations to ensure that a positive outcome is achieved at UNFF8.
