

**United Nations Forum on Forests  
Bureau of the Ninth Session (UNFF9 Bureau)**

**Minutes of the Sixth Meeting**

Tuesday 23 November 2010  
UN Forum on Forests Secretariat  
One UN Plaza, DC 1 – 1235, New York

**Participation**

**Bureau Members:** Mr. Arvids Ozols, Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl, Mr. Zainol Rahim Zainuddin.

Mr. Raymond Harold Landveld, and Mr. Ndiawar Dieng were not able to attend the Meeting.

**UNFF Secretariat:** Ms. Jan McAlpine, Director, and all the Secretariat Staff.

**Others:** Mr. Andreas Brandstatter (Permanent Mission of Austria) and Ms. Zalwani Zalkapli (Permanent Mission of Malaysia)

The agenda of the sixth meeting of the Bureau was the following:

- 1- Preparations for the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests:
  - i. Status of Session's documentation
  - ii. Work Program including the organization of work for the high level segment and the launch of Forests 2011
  - iii. Initial Draft Building Blocks for Ministerial Declaration
  - iv. Accreditation of Organizations
  - v. Side events
  
- 2- Recent and upcoming events:
  - i. Mexico CLIs in Sep 2010
  - ii. MDG Summit
  - iii. CBD Conference of the Parties
  - iv. Forest Day 4
  - v. Initiatives by major groups for UNFF9
  
- 3- Future meetings of the Bureau
  
- 4- Other matters:
  - i. Discussion on CLI guidelines in UNFF9

- ii. Trust Fund including travel support for delegates participating at UNFF9

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### **Adoption of the agenda**

Mr. Arvids Ozols, Chair of the UNFF9 Bureau, opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed members of the UNFF9 Bureau and the participating staff members of the secretariat. He then proceeded with the adoption of agenda for the meeting.

#### **1. Preparations for the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests:**

##### **i. Status of Session's documentation**

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the status of documentation, and informed the members that all documents have been submitted for processing within the deadlines set by the UN Documentation Unit. It informed the Bureau that the final number of documents prepared for the UNFF9 session is now 17 as a result of preparation of three coordinated background documents by the major groups, instead of the traditional separate documents by each of the major groups, and of combining closely related topics into single reports by the Secretary-General. The documents are currently being processed; several of them are already translated into all official languages, and all are posted on the UNFF website. The members of the Bureau welcomed the efficient preparation and processing of documents by the Secretariat, and the members supported mainstreaming and optimizing of the documents for UNFF9. It was also noted that the timely availability of all documents would greatly facilitate the preparations by the delegations for the session. The Bureau was also reminded of its previous decision on merging the agenda item of "Emerging issue" in the report of the Secretary General to the high level segment and in the Secretary General's reports on the "forests for people". The secretariat also requested guidance by the Bureau on the documentation for the UNFF10.

The Bureau thanked timely preparation of UNFF9 documents which would leave enough time for Member States to be prepared for a thorough discussion during the UNFF9. The Bureau also welcomed merging the agenda item of "Emerging issue" with other important agenda items, and providing a separate document which contains specific recommendations on the main theme of the Session.

*Decision:* The Bureau took note of the status of preparation of UNFF9 documentation and thanked the secretariat for timely preparation of the documents, and agreed on the need to give thought on the types of documents that are needed for the UNFF10, and requested the secretariat to prepare the provisional agenda of the UNFF10 in advance of the UNFF9 for consideration of the Bureau.

**ii. Work Program including the organization of work for the high level segment and the launch of Forests 2011**

The Bureau received a draft organization of work of the UNFF9 for the period 24<sup>th</sup> January – 4 February 2011, prepared by the secretariat. This draft was revised slightly to reflect the discussion of the Bureau during its previous meeting in Nairobi. According to the draft organization of work, all agenda items of the UNFF9 and relevant Secretary General's reports and other official documents will be introduced in the plenary sessions on 24 and 25 January 2010. During these days, two mandated panel on food, energy, and economic challenges as well as the panel on regional input will be held as well. The morning session on 26 January is allocated to Multi-Stakeholders Segment.

From the afternoon of 26 January, detailed discussions on agenda items will be followed in two parallel working groups. Working group one will consider the main theme of the session; forests for people, livelihood and poverty eradication. This group will also conduct the discussions and negotiations on a draft ministerial declaration, as well as the discussion on the IYF. Working group 2 would be responsible for agenda items on means of implementation; assessment of progress in implementation of forest instrument and achievement of global objectives on forests; regional input; and enhanced cooperation.

Based on the discussion of the Bureau in Nairobi, there would be a joint informal meeting of two working groups on Thursday morning, 27 January 2011. This joint meeting will provide, in particular, for participants in working group 2 the opportunity to share their views on the eventual ministerial declaration with working group one which is responsible for negotiations on the draft declaration. All draft decisions, resolutions as well as the draft ministerial declaration would be presented by the Vice-Chairs of two working groups to delegations by Friday afternoon, 28 January 2011. This will give sufficient time to Member States to consult and get ready to engage in negotiations on Monday and Tuesday 31 January and 1 February 2011. All negotiations have to be concluded by the afternoon of 1 February 2011, and reported to the Plenary.

The opening session of the High Level Segment on 2 February 2011 is solely devoted to the official launch of the International Year of Forests (IYF) and relevant ceremonies. There would be two parallel round tables on the afternoon of 2 and two in the morning of 3 February 2011 on different topics and Member States will be requested to indicate their preference for making statement in one of these round tables. The last session of the high level segment on the afternoon of 3 February 2011 includes a high level dialogue among the heads of the CPF member organizations and the high level officials of countries. The high level segment will conclude with the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration.

The Bureau Members endorsed the organization of work of the UNFF9 and its high level segment and requested the secretariat to post it on the UNFF website. The Bureau also stressed the importance of sending individual invitation letters to the ministers for participation in the high level segment. In light of heavy agenda for the high level segment, the Bureau also invited cooperation of Member States to ensure efficient time management during this segment.

*Decision:* The Bureau endorsed the organization of work for the UNFF9 and its high level segment, and decided that the Chair of the UNFF9 Bureau send, as soon as possible, invitation letters to the ministers for participation in the high level segment.

### **iii. Initial Draft Building Blocks for Ministerial Declaration**

The secretariat informed the Bureau that as of 23 November 2010 Cuba, European Union, Guatemala, Japan, Switzerland and United States have provided input for the building blocks for ministerial declaration of the UNFF9. These input sent to the Bureau Members prior to the meeting of the Bureau, and there would be possibility of receiving more input including from the G77 in the coming week. A synthesis of main points in the input by Member States was also presented to the Bureau, as well as the key points in the report of the Secretary General to the high level segment.

The Bureau thanked Member States for providing input for the building blocks, and expressed its wishes to receive more input as soon as possible. The Bureau also stressed the importance of preparation of building blocks and its distribution during the month of December and early January, so the building blocks could be shared with Member States in advance of the UNFF9.

*Decision:* The Bureau decided to prepare the building blocks for the ministerial declaration and share it with Member States during the second week of January 2011. The Bureau also agreed that the ministerial declaration should not be long, and as a political message should provide added value, taking into account all related developments. The Bureau also decided not to post the received input on the website, as the input was only provided to the Chair in response to his request.

### **iv. Accreditation of Organizations**

The secretariat informed the Bureau that as of 23 November 2010 the secretariat had received requests for participation in UNFF9 from eight NGOs. Of the eight organization, 4 sought UNFF observer status for UNFF9. NGOs seeking UNFF9 observer status were the International Family Forestry Alliance (IFFA), Comite de Gestion de L'Environnement (COGESTEN) ONG de L'Environnement et du Development Durable, the Rural Area Development Programme, Tanahun, and Livelihood NGO Development Organization. As these NGOs are not ECOSOC accredited NGOs, they were advised to get in touch with the NGO Committee Secretariat or, as a short term solution, to participate in the UNFF9 as a member of an already accredited NGOs. The other 4 NGOs - Association Congolaise d'Education et de Prevention Contre des Maladies et la Drogue, Federation of Environmental and Ecological Diversity for Agricultural Revampment and Human Rights (FEEDAR &HR), Union de Selvicultores del sur de Europa/ Union of Southern European Forest Owners (USS), and Pan European Certification Council Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council were already accredited to ECOSOC. In addition, the Bureau was informed of the request by the Economic Community of the African States (ECCAS) (an intergovernmental organization) to participate in the UNFF9.

*Decision:* The Bureau agreed to recommend the ECOSOC accredited NGOs and the ECCAS to UNFF9.

**v. Side events**

The secretariat informed the Bureau that it had received three applications for side events by 23 November and was expecting many more by the deadline of 26 November 2010. In addition to the applications already received, 15 organizations had shown great interest in organizing a side event. The geographical distribution of interested organizations for hosting a side event was as follows: Europe 60%, North America 15%, South America 15%, Africa 5%, Asia 5%.

**2. Recent and upcoming events:**

**i. Mexico CLIs in Sep 2010**

The Bureau was briefed on the outcome of the Workshop on Forest governance, decentralization and REDD in Latin America, which was held from 31 August to 3 September 2010 in Oaxaca, Mexico. This Country Led Initiative was organized by the Governments of Switzerland and Mexico. The meeting was well attended by participants from Latin America and the Caribbean regions. Most Bureau Members were also able to attend. Key recommendations that made by the Workshop to the UNFF include supporting the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit sharing, and preservation of cultural/social values; and emphasizing the role of SFM in combating forest degradation and potential to enhance carbon stocks. The report of this Workshop will be submitted by the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the Secretary General, as official document of UNFF9

**ii. MDG Summit**

The secretariat briefed the Bureau on the forest related outcome of the High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on MDG progress which was held on 22 September 2010 in New York. The outcome includes an action agenda for achieving the MDGs by 2015 while it recognizes many interlinkages among the MDGs, setting out a number of cross-cutting interventions that drive progress across all the Goals. Paragraph 77 d) of the outcome document specifically devotes to forests and member States commit themselves to accelerate progress to achieve MDG7 including through strengthening political commitment and action at all levels to effectively implement the global objectives on forest and the sustainable forest management of all types of forests in order to reduce the loss of forest cover and improve the livelihoods of those that depend on forests through the development of a comprehensive and more effective approach to financing activities, involvement of local and indigenous communities and other relevant stakeholders, promoting good governance at the national and international levels, and enhancing international cooperation to address the threats posed by illicit activities.

### **iii. CBD Conference of the Parties**

The Bureau was also briefed on the forest related outcome of the tenth conference of the parties of the CBD. During this conference, parties to this Convention adopted 3 inter-linked goals: a new CBD Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2020 (Aichi Target), a decision on activities & indicators for the implementation of a resource mobilization strategy, and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair & Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

CBD Strategic Plan or the “Aichi Target” meant to offer a framework on biodiversity for the UN system and includes 20 headline targets arranged under five strategic goals. Targets related to forests include; at least halving & where feasible bringing close to zero the rate of loss of natural habitats, including forests; and to restore at least 15 percent of degraded areas through conservation and restoration efforts. In addition, forests issues raised under forest biodiversity, sustainable use of biodiversity, protected areas, climate change, and strategic plan. Framework of collaboration between the UNFF & CBD secretariats was also identified as joint activities during the Conference.

### **iv. Forest Day 4**

The secretariat briefed the Bureau on the programmes of the Forest Day4 (FD4) which will be held on 5 December 2010 during the UNFCCC COP16 in Cancun, Mexico. The FD4 will be hosted by the Government of Mexico & the CPF and includes plenary sessions, three sub-plenary sessions and nine learning events. The UNFF secretariat is the co-sponsor of one sub-plenary session on “Biodiversity: Synergies in policy and practice” as well as the Learning Event on “REDD+ & Forest Finance: The need for a 360 degree perspective on Forest Finance”.

### **v. Initiatives by major groups for UNFF9**

The Bureau received a report on the outcome of Major Group Led Initiative. This Initiative which was undertaken by the major groups in support of the UNFF work was meant to increase major groups’ participation in UNFF policy-making decisions & ensure the inclusion of major groups’ recommendations. During this meeting, major groups also agreed on a two-year work programme for 2011-2012 with the objectives of building capacities of 150 people from seven major groups, raising the profile of forests on the political agenda, and creating awareness for IYF 2011.

This biennial programme includes convening regional workshops (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania & Countries with Economies in transition), undertaking IYF related education & awareness creating activities, and holding second Major Group-Led Initiative in 2012. The estimated budget for this programme is USD 1.62million.

## **3. Future meetings of the Bureau**

The secretariat informed the Bureau of the practice of holding a meeting during the weekend before the session and daily meeting during the UNFF sessions.

Decision: The Bureau agreed to meet on 23 January 2011, and to hold daily meeting during UNFF9.

#### **4. Other matters:**

##### **i. Discussion on CLI guidelines in UNFF9**

The Bureau was informed that the discussion on its proposed CLI guidelines will take place under item 10: Enhanced Cooperation.

##### **ii. Trust Fund including travel support for delegates participating at UNFF9**

The secretariat informed the Bureau that there is no further funding available for Bureau travel for the UNFF9. The secretariat also provided detailed explanation on the status of funding in the UNFF Trust Fund to support the travel of eligible countries for participation at the UNFF9. The secretariat stressed that the available travel support funding for UNFF9 is extremely limited and is one eighth of the funding that was available for UNFF8. In the absence of immediate and substantial funding by donors, secretariat added that participation of eligible countries would be affected seriously. Current funding could only be sufficient for paying the ticket of limited number of delegates and would not cover, at all, the DSA. The secretariat encouraged the Bureau to bring this matter to the attention of donor countries, as a matter of urgency.

#### **Closing of the meeting**

Mr. Ozols thanked the Bureau members and the secretariat for their active participation in the meeting. He then adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.