

## **Minutes of the second meeting of the UNFF2 Bureau**

UNFF Secretariat, DC-2 Building, New York

27 November 2001

Started at 10:00 a.m

Ended at 05:00 p.m.

### **Attendee**

Bureau Members and contact persons: Mr. Knut Øistad (Chairman, Norway), Ms. Patricia Chaves (Vice Chair, Costa Rica), Mr. Hossein Moeini Meybodi (Vice Chair, Iran), Mr. Ositadinma Anaedu (Vice Chair, Nigeria), Mr. Dmitry I. Maksimych (Contact person, Russian Federation), and Mr. Geir Tønnessen (Contact person, Norway)

UNFF Secretariat: Jag Maini, Jaime Hurtubia, Kyaw Kyaw Shane and Mahendra Joshi

ECOSOC Secretariat: Vladimir Zelenov and June Chesney

Regrets: Dr. Hosny El-Lakany, Chairman, CPF

The objectives of the second meeting of the Bureau were to:

1. High-level ministerial segment including the ministerial dialogue with heads of member organizations of the CPF
2. Establishment of expert groups
3. Review of the preparations for the second session (4-15 March 2002, San Jose, Costa Rica), in particular the
4. Multi-stakeholder dialogue
5. Side events at UNFF2
6. Coordination with other functional commissions of ECOSOC
7. Briefing of the Permanent Missions in New York
8. Secretariat staffing
9. Other business
10. Next Bureau meeting

### **1. High-level ministerial segment**

The Bureau discussed several matters related to the high-level ministerial segment at UNFF2, including (a) the dialogue between the ministers and heads of CPF member organizations, (b) ministerial deliberations, (c) message to WSSD, and (d) coordination mechanism among the Bureau, Government of Costa Rica, CPF and the UNFF Secretariat towards the preparations for UNFF2.

The Bureau agreed that the Governments and CPF member organizations should focus the dialogue on a few critical issues and produce clear understanding of concrete future actions.

The Bureau tentatively agreed on the following five critical issues on which to focus the dialogue between the ministers and heads of CPF member organizations:

- Repositioning of forest on the national and international political agenda by linking forest to economic and human development as well as poverty eradication
- Financing for SFM
- Cross-sectoral harmonization at the national, regional and global levels, including fostering synergies between forest-related instruments and organizations
- Forest conservation, protection and use
- Role and commitment of CPF members in implementing IPF/IFF proposals for action

The Bureau also agreed to highlight issues such as law enforcement and good governance. It requested the UNFF Secretariat to prepare brief Notes to introduce critical issues and the procedures on organization of the High-level Ministerial segment.

The Bureau considered the possibility of continuing the Ministerial deliberations on the following day on the same critical issues. The high-level ministerial segment is also expected to provide political commitments by endorsing the UNFF Plan of Action as well as to decide on the type of inputs to be made to WSSD. The Bureau also considered exploring innovative ways to make the Ministerial dialogue with Heads of CPF member organizations more interactive and effective, such as requesting one minister from a region to introduce one critical issue, to be followed by responses from selected heads of CPF member organizations. This could then lead to an interactive discussion between the ministers and heads of CPF.

The Bureau agreed that the other part of the ministerial segment, i.e., the deliberations among Ministers would aim to: endorse the UNFF Plan of Action; transmit a Ministerial message to WSSD; and encourage CPF to support the work of UNFF.

The Bureau discussed possible substance of the message to WSSD. It was suggested that a background work on the message should be initiated in advance of UNFF2. The draft message should reposition forests on the international political and policy agenda by highlighting: the role of forests in sustainable livelihood, poverty eradication, and economic and human development; the significant progress on international forest policy development since Rio; showcase forests as a success story at WSSD; the need for strengthening political commitment and international cooperation in implementing the agreed policies (notably IPF/IFF proposals for action); and the need to resolve outstanding issues on forests.

The Bureau also recognized the need to send a "Ministerial message" to the third PrepCom of WSSD.

The Bureau agreed to the suggestion to have closer consultations and cooperation among the Bureau, Government of Costa Rica, CPF member organizations and the Secretariat towards the preparations for UNFF2. Each of the entities has a crucial role to play in making the meeting a success, and a concerted approach by all entities is absolutely essential. The Bureau expressed its satisfaction at the on-going consultations and cooperation and agreed to continue the practice.

It was also decided that efforts should be made to encourage wider participation of ministers responsible for forests from as many countries as possible.

The Bureau requested Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs to invite all heads of CPF to participate in the ministerial dialogue, and to encourage Ministers responsible for forests to attend the Ministerial segment at UNFF2.

## **2. Establishment of ad hoc expert groups**

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that open-ended informal consultations on the three expert groups, as mandated by UNFF's MYPOW, will be held in San Jose, Costa Rica during 2-3 March 2002, prior to the opening of the second session. The expert groups will address the issues of (i) approaches and mechanisms of monitoring, assessment and reporting, (ii) finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and (iii) consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. The informal consultations will facilitate in reaching a consensus on the specific titles, terms of reference, scheduling and reporting by each expert group, and provide the basis for UNFF2 to make the final decisions.

The Secretariat is currently working in close cooperation with CPF partners in developing draft terms of reference including specific titles, tasks, scheduling and reporting mechanisms for all three expert groups.

The Bureau decided that the Secretariat should draft a detailed Note on the establishment and functioning of the expert groups for the consideration of the Bureau at its next meeting. After incorporating the comments by the Bureau, the Note can be distributed widely, to serve as a basis for informal consultations in March 2002.

The Bureau also discussed the reporting schedules of each expert group. It is suggested that the expert group on finance and transfer of technology could start its work immediately after UNFF2 and present its final report at UNFF3. Similarly, the expert group on MAR could start its work after UNFF2 and present its final report at UNFF 4. The expert group on legal framework should take into account and integrate the outcomes of the two other expert groups in its report, which should be presented at UNFF 5.

### **3. Preparations for UNFF2**

The Secretariat reported that drafting of the following six SG's reports and a Note from the Secretariat are on schedule:

- National forest programmes;
- Combating deforestation and forest degradation;
- Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural and planted forests;
- Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems;
- Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover;
- Monitoring, assessment and reporting, including concepts, terminology and definitions, and
- Trade and sustainable forest management (Note from the Secretariat).

Once the documents are cleared by the Secretary General, they will be made available on the Internet as advanced unedited versions in English (most likely by the end of December 2001). The Bureau expressed its satisfaction on the progress in preparing the documentation for UNFF2.

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau about the UN Mission to Costa Rica led by Mr. Jaime Hurtubia in October. It also informed that the host country agreement between the Government of Costa Rica and the United Nations has been sent for consideration of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica. The Government of Costa Rica is now actively engaged in making arrangement for the second session. It has established a national organization committee involving several governmental agencies as well as UNDP and other international and regional organizations.

### **4. Multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD)**

The Bureau noted the progress towards the preparations of its first multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD) at UNFF2. The Bureau wished to make MSD truly interactive between the government delegations and stakeholders as well useful to the intergovernmental process. A flexible approach, within the framework of ECOSOC Rules of Procedure and drawing upon the CSD experience, will be taken to encourage increased participation.

### **5. Side events at UNFF2**

The Bureau noted that arrangements for side events during UNFF2 is underway, and the Secretariat is receiving requests for interested organizations to host side events.

### **6. Coordination with other functional commissions of ECOSOC**

Bureau Chairman, Knut Øistad, briefed the Bureau about the letter from the President of ECOSOC, who referred to the resolutions adopted by the recent session of ECOSOC, inviting all functional commissions to strengthen coordination among their activities and also to take into account the policy recommendation adopted by the Council.

One of the policy recommendations of the Council is to hold joint Bureaux meetings among the relevant functional Commissions. The Bureau noted that it has been a practice of the UNFF Bureau to organize joint Bureau meetings with the Bureau of the WSSD. Mr. Anaedu, who is also the member of WSSD Bureau, agreed to coordinate the next joint meeting. The tentative date for the joint meeting is set for Sunday, 27 January 2002.

### **7. Informal briefings of delegations in New York on preparations for UNFF2**

Bureau decided to organize an informal briefing to the delegates from the Permanent Missions in New York on the current activities of the Bureau including the preparations towards UNFF2 and the status of documentations on Wednesday, 28 November 2001.

## **8. Secretariat staffing**

The Bureau noted the planned departure of the two senior staff members of the UNFF Secretariat, Jag Maini and Jaime Hurtubia by the end of December 2001, and expressed deep concern about the lack of staff in the Secretariat in context of the magnitude of the substantial tasks ahead. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau about the recruitment process of its new posts. The UN has already classified the four professional and two general service posts, which are now ready for advertisement. The post of Coordinator and Head is expected to be advertised within a week in international journals in English, French and Spanish. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that Mr. Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, has placed a very high priority to recruit the post of the Coordinator and Head of the Secretariat.

## **9. Other Business**

a) Country-led initiatives on monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR), Yokohama, Japan, 5-8 November 2001

b) CPF meeting, Yokohama Japan, 9-10 November 2001

Mr. Øistad, the Chair UNFF Bureau and Jag Maini attended both the expert meeting on MAR and CPF meeting in Yokohama, Japan. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the Government-led initiative on MAR in Yokohama, Japan on 5-8 November 2001. The meeting was highly relevant to the programme of work of UNFF, where possible terms of reference for the proposed ad hoc Expert Group on MAR was also discussed briefly.

Mr. Øistad attended the recent meeting of CPF, as suggested by the Bureau at its first meeting. He found the CPF members highly committed to support UNFF and actively working on describing their contributions to UNFF deliberations and implementation of UNFF Plan of Action.

## **10. Next meetings of the Bureau**

The next meeting of the Bureau is tentatively set for Sunday, 27 January 2002 to coincide with the joint bureau meeting between UNFF and WSSD.

The members of the Bureau expressed their appreciation to the Secretariat for the excellent planning and execution of the Bureau meeting, in spite of its limited human resources.