

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the second meeting of the UNFF10 Bureau
2 November 2011-New York

Participation

Bureau members: Mr. Mario Ruales Carranza (Ecuador), Mr. Srecko Juricic (Croatia) Ms. Shuli Davidovich (Israel), and Mr. Saiful Azam Martinus Abdullah (Malaysia)
Ms. Masinga, the Bureau Member from Zambia was not able to attend the meeting

UNFF Secretariat: Ms. Jan McAlpine, and the UNFF staff

Secretary of the Forum: Ms. Vivian Pliner was not able to attend the meeting.

Others: Mr. Joan Andres Salvador (Ecuador) and Ms. Zalwani Zalkaply (Malaysia)

Opening of the Meeting

Ms. Jan McAlpine, Director of the UNFF Secretariat, welcomed Bureau members to the secretariat. Mr Ruales, Chair of the UNFF10 Bureau, in his opening remarks thanked the Bureau members for their attendance, as well as the UNFF Secretariat for organizing the meeting. He informed that Ms. Masinga, the Bureau member from Zambia, was not able to attend this meeting due to the need for her to address some urgent issue in her home country. On behalf of the Bureau of UNFF10, he also expressed solidarity with the Government of Turkey over the tragic earthquake in that country. The Chair then presented the provisional agenda for the second meeting to the Bureau, which was adopted. The agenda of the second meeting of the Bureau included the following items:

- 1- Preparations for the tenth session of the UNFF:
 - i. ECOSOC Decision on the dates and venue of UNFF10
 - ii. Main issues on the agenda of the tenth session
 - iii. Documentation
 - iv. ECOSOC Decision on submission of the UNFF9 Ministerial Declaration to Rio+20, and the related action by the UNFF10 Bureau Chair
 - v. UN Inter-Departmental Coordination and meeting with Turkish Delegation during the General Assembly
 - vi. Development Account Project: Strengthening National Reporting Capacities of countries
- 2- The UNFF intersessional activities on forest financing including the preparation for the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing:
 - I. AHEG2
 - i. Note Verbale to Member States
 - ii. CPF/AGF (work plan, OLI, donor countries support...)
 - iii. Election of AHEG2 Co-Chairs
 - iv. Notifications to UNFF Major Groups, Regional Processes
 - II. Facilitative Process

- i. SIDS and LFCCs Project
 - ii. Africa and LDCs Project
 - iii. REDD+ implications on Forest Financing
- 3- Recent and upcoming events
 - i. CPF activities (Paper to Rio+20 Preparatory Process on Forests)
 - ii. German CLI: Contribution of Forests to Green Economy
 - iii. Closing ceremony for the International Year of Forests
 - iv. Forest Day 5: UNFF Discussion Forum on Forests and Rio+20
 - v. Joint meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau and the Chairpersons of functional commissions-January/February 2012
- 4- Future meetings of the Bureau
- 5- Other matters
 - i. Staffing of UNFFS and Trust Fund, including travel support for the Bureau:
 - USG's letter to CPF on staff secondment and responses
 - Director's letter to donor countries
 - Finland limited support

1. Preparations for the tenth session of the UNFF

i. ECOSOC Decision on the dates and venue of UNFF10

Under this agenda item, Ms McAlpine explained the ongoing activities by the secretariat on preparation for the tenth session of the UNFF. UNFF Secretariat staff also made a brief presentation on preparations for UNFF10. The Bureau was informed of the decision of ECOSOC (2011/249) on the date and venue of UNFF10, in which the Council welcomed and accepted Turkey's offer to host the UNFF10 session in Istanbul. Accordingly, UNFF10 will be held from 8-19 April 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey. ECOSOC in its decision 2011/250, also took note of the UNFF9 report, including the UNFF10 provisional agenda.

ii. Main issues on the agenda of the tenth session

iii. Documentation

The Bureau was also informed of the main issues on the agenda of the tenth session, as well as its documentation. The main theme of UNFF10 is "Forests and Economic Development", with four sub-themes:

- Forest products and services
- National forest programmes and other sectoral policies and strategies
- Reducing risks and impacts of disasters
- Benefits of forests and trees to urban communities

Other items in the agenda of this session include: progress made on the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the GOFs, regional and sub-regional inputs, emerging issues (which in the previous sessions were integrated in the Secretary General reports on the main theme of the session), enhanced cooperation and coordination, means of implementation for SFM (including forest financing), multi-stakeholder dialogue, UNFF trust fund, CLI reports ... UNFF staff explained that all documentation for the tenth session has to be submitted for translation and publication ten weeks before the tenth session. The UNFF Secretariat will post on its website the advance unedited copies of the documents in English, prior to official distribution

of the final documents in all official languages. The Bureau members expressed their satisfaction with the preparations for the tenth session of the UNFF.

iv. ECOSOC Decision on the submission of the UNFF9 Ministerial Declaration to Rio+20, and the related action by the UNFF10 Bureau Chair

ECOSOC in its decision 2011/248 decided to transmit the UNFF9 Ministerial Declaration to the General Assembly for its endorsement, as a contribution of UNFF to the Rio+20 Conference. In this connection, a letter was sent by the Chair of the UNFF10 Bureau to the Co-Chairs of the Rio+20 Preparatory Process and to Mr. Sha, the Secretary General of the Conference in September 2011, informing them of the adoption of the Declaration by UNFF9, as a contribution to the Rio+20 conference.

The Bureau also stressed the need for a follow-up action at the 2nd committee of the General Assembly, in response to the ECOSOC decision on this matter. With regard to the formality of submission of the Declaration, the Bureau agreed to work through Member States to ensure that the UNFF9 Ministerial Declaration is going to be transmitted officially by the 2nd Committee to the Rio+20 conference. To this end, it was agreed that the delegation of Ecuador (Chair of the UNFF10) prepare a procedural decision in the Second Committee, and for other members of the Bureau support the speedy action on this matter.

v. UN Inter-Departmental Coordination on UNFF10 and meeting with Turkish Delegation during the General Assembly

The Bureau was also briefed on the state of coordination with the Government of Turkey and within different UN departments and offices, in preparing a host country agreement for the UNFF10 session, and was informed that a mission to Istanbul is planned for early January 2012. The Bureau members expressed their satisfaction with the preparations for the tenth session of the UNFF, and requested the Secretariat to keep the Bureau informed of all related developments.

vi. Development Account Project: Strengthening national reporting capacities of countries

Regarding national reporting to UNFF10 on implementation of the forest instrument, the Secretariat made a presentation on the ongoing project to strengthen national reporting in support of the implementation of the forest instrument (FI). This project is funded through the UN Development Account. The three main objectives of the project include: strengthening and support for the national reporting capacity of UNFF national focal points; enhancing the UNFF national focal points' understanding of the FI and the importance of its implementation; and providing an opportunity for countries to discuss the proposed monitoring architecture and finalize the format and guidelines for national reports.

The UNFF Secretariat is closely cooperating with FAO in implementing this capacity building project. FAO has a similar 2-year project funded by the Government of Japan. Both UNFFS and FAO cooperation efforts involve joint planning and the holding of five capacity building regional workshops, targeting UNFF, FRA and NFP focal points. During workshops, UNFFS will focus on analysis of reporting trends and developing a streamlined reporting format, while FAO will address awareness building on the importance of the forest instrument and its implementation.

In addition to increased awareness and understanding of the forest instrument, the project would culminate in a finalized reporting format and guidelines for reporting to UNFF10 and to future

sessions of the Forum, specifically, on the progress in implementing the FI and its four GOFs, and the overall and special themes of future sessions, including their contribution to the achievement of the MDGs. The Bureau members requested that the draft template questionnaire developed by the secretariat be made available to the Bureau for comments, and queried whether it would be finalized before UNFF10. The Secretariat confirmed that the questionnaire and guidelines would be finalized before the Forum session.

2. The UNFF intersessional activities on forest financing including the preparation for the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing:

I. AHEG2

- i. Note Verbale to Member States**
- ii. CPF/AGF (work plan, OLI, donor countries' support...)**
- iii. Election of AHEG2 Co-Chairs**
- iv. Notifications to UNFF Major Groups, Regional Processes**

Ms. McAlpine introduced the planned UNFF intersessional activities, including for the second Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting (AHEG2). The Secretariat informed the Bureau and that a note verbale was sent in September 2011 to all NY Missions, and a similar notification e-mails to all UNFF National Focal Points, regional processes and major groups, reminding them to provide substantive submissions by 1 March 2012 on:

- Strategies to mobilize resources from all sources to support the implementation of SFM, the achievement of the GOFs and the implementation of the forest instrument, including, inter alia, strengthening and improving access to funds and establishing a voluntary global forest fund, and
- The advantages and disadvantages of different options, envisaged functions, structures, requirements and deliverables of these options.

In regard to the work of the Advisory Group on Finance of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF/AGF), the UNFF staff informed the Bureau that the CPF/AGF met two times in June 2011, during which it agreed on its work plan, as well as the outlines of the expanded and updated 2008 study. UNFFS as the lead on forest financing within the CPF, coordinates the work of the AGF, and is in the process of hiring a number of consultants. The AGF output should be ready by May 2012. AGF supports the work of the consultants, and provides necessary information as may be required to carry out their responsibilities, as well as overall guidance to their work. AGF also makes necessary arrangements to facilitate timely submissions by the CPF members, as envisaged in the UNFF9 Resolution.

In regard to the Organization-Led Initiative, the CPF is considering holding such an event back to back to the COFO meeting in September 2012. This is yet to be confirmed by the CPF. Currently only Finland has pledged a limited amount of money for this purpose.

The secretariat also referred to the official letter sent by the Chair of the Bureau to countries on 15 September 2011, to nominate two co-chairs for the AHEG2 by 1 March 2012. Early nomination of the AHEG2 co-chairs will ensure their substantive involvement in the preparatory activities for AHEG2 including their participation in the OLI and the open-ended informal briefing in New York, which have to be held prior to AHEG2 in 2012.

II. Facilitative Process

- i. SIDS and LFCCs Project**
- ii. Africa and LDCs Project**
- iii. REDD+ implications on Forest Financing**

The UNFF Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the status of three Facilitative Process projects on SIDS and LFCCs, Africa and LDCs and REDD+ implications on forest financing. The Secretariat provided an update on the progress made on these 3 projects, noting that (i) the first workshop of the SIDS-LFCC workshop is to be held in Tehran on 12-17 November, followed by Niger, Trinidad and Tobago and Fiji workshops, and that (ii) most sources of funding had already been secured for the Africa-LDCs project and the REDD+ initiative. UNFF staff added that the intersectoral perspective formed an essential and cutting-edge cross-cutting theme of all projects of the Facilitative Process.

3. Recent and upcoming events

i. CPF activities (Paper to Rio+20 Preparatory Committee on Forests)

Ms Jan McAlpine briefed the Bureau on the CPF activities on the Rio+20 preparations and presented the CPF paper to the Rio+20 Preparatory Committee on Forests. She informed the Bureau of the submission by the CPF to the Rio+20 Preparatory Committee. The UNFF10 Bureau welcomed this substantive contribution and considered it as a comprehensive and well-thought input on forests, and expressed its compliments to the CPF member organizations, including the UNFF, for this input. The Bureau members also offered to circulate this paper to their respective regions.

ii. German Country-Led Initiative: Contribution of Forests to a Green Economy

The Secretariat provided a brief report on the conference on the contributions of forests to a green economy. This conference was held from 4 to 7 October 2011 in Bonn, Germany. The conference was a Country-Led Initiative (CLI) in support of the UNFF, and was aimed at providing recommendations on the realization of forests' potential for building a green economy, and contributing to the Rio+20 preparatory process and UNFF10. Institutions, governance; forest valuation and financing; and benefiting people, as well as cross-cutting issues, were the main themes for discussion during the conference. The co-chairs' summary has been submitted to the Rio+20 Preparatory Committee, and the report of the conference will also be submitted to the UNFF10.

Ms. McAlpine informed the Bureau of the focus of the German CLI (forests' contribution to a green economy) and added that the decision to hold this CLI was taken before the UNFF9 adoption of new guidelines for organizing CLIs. She expressed her concern that CLI on some occasions were not in direct support of the UNFF, and stated that the Bureau and the UNFF Secretariat should ensure that these initiatives are organized in support of the UNFF session themes.

The Bureau took note of the UNFF Secretariat's views and suggestions, and expressed that the CLIs although in some cases not directly contributing to UNFF10, were still relevant and provided opportunities for stakeholders to come together and discuss related issues.

iii. Closing ceremony for the International Year of Forests

On the IYF closing ceremony, the Secretariat informed the Bureau of planned closing events organized by a number of countries, and outlined the closing ceremony planned at UN Headquarters on 19 January 2012. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that a note verbale on the 19 January closing ceremony would be sent to the Permanent Representatives of Member States, specialized agencies of the UN and related organizations via the UN Correspondence Unit, and that this note verbale would also be forwarded to the UNFF national focal points, CPF members and major groups. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on some key components of the proposed programme of the event, which will include a presentation of the Forest Heroes awards; a film festival component; children's participation (winners of the 2011 UPU letter contest and announcement of winners of 2011 children's art contest); as well as the launch of the "Forests for People" book produced in collaboration with Tudor Rose. The Bureau Chair congratulated the Secretariat in organizing the IYF, and suggested that similar communication and outreach activities be continued in 2012 and beyond.

iv. Forest Day 5: UNFF Discussion Forum on Forests and Rio+20

UNFF staff also informed the Bureau that Forest Day 5 will be held on 4 December 2011 in Durban. There are nine Discussion Forums (DFs) on various forest-climate change related topics. UNFF is co-sponsoring with ITTO and IUCN the DF on forest finance. UNFF is also the main sponsor for the DF on Forests and Rio+20. The UNFF Director will moderate this panel, which includes Norway, Germany and FAO Assistant Director-General as the panelists. Mr. Sha, Secretary General of the Rio+20 conference, is also invited to be the keynote speaker for the DF on Forests and Rio+20 (confirmation is pending).

v. Joint meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau and the Chairpersons of the functional commissions-January/February 2012

The secretariat informed the Bureau of the annual joint meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau and chairpersons of the functional commissions which is usually held mid-January or early February. The last meeting was held on 16 February in New York, in which the Bureau Member from Malaysia, Ambassador Abdullah, participated and delivered a speech. The Bureau agreed to inform the secretariat in advance of the next annual meeting on who should represent the UNFF10 Bureau at this meeting.

4. Future Meetings of the Bureau

In light of the upcoming deadline of 1 March 2012 for submission of input and nomination of the AHEG2 co-chairs, as well as proximity to the Rio+20 conference, the Bureau agreed with the secretariat's suggestion to hold its third meeting mid-March 2012.

5. Other matters: Staffing of UNFFS and Trust Fund, including travel support for the Bureau:

- **USG's letter to CPF on staff secondment and responses**
- **Director's letter to donor countries**
- **Finland limited support**

Under this agenda item, the Bureau was briefed on the latest status of available resources for its future meetings as well as the secretariat staff situation. The UNFF Director communicated specifically with donor countries, requesting them to provide support for travel of the Bureau members to its meeting. Today, only Finland has provided limited financial support. This amount, however, is not adequate to cover upcoming meetings of the Bureau, and more resources are needed.

In regard to UNFF staffing, the UNFF Director reminded the Bureau that, while there are increasing tasks for the UNFF secretariat, the staffing falls far shorter than what is needed. In this context, she referred to the special situation of the UNFF secretariat this year, as a result of departing staff and budget cuts. To address partially the problem, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs wrote a letter to the CPF heads, encouraging secondment to the UNFF secretariat. Fortunately, FAO has agreed to second a junior staff, and ITTO is also going to second a short-term consultancy for UNFF.

The Bureau commended the quality work done by the secretariat and took note of the report on the staffing situation of the secretariat as well as the available resources left for the Bureau travels. The Bureau members also accepted the challenge to convey this message to donors and to their respective governments, in order to encourage them to provide resources to the UNFF Trust Fund. The Bureau also considered a teleconference as a possible way to diminish the impact of lack of travel support for Bureau members.

Closing of Meeting

Mr Ruales Carranza, Chair of the UNFF10 Bureau, thanked the Bureau members and the Secretariat for their participation in the meeting and adjourned the meeting at 3:00pm.