

**United Nations Forum on Forests**  
**Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Bureau of the Eleventh Session**  
**25 and 26 June 2013 - New York**

**Participation**

**Bureau Members:** Ambassador Macharia Kamau (Kenya), Mr. Raphael Azeredo (Brazil), Mr. Wu Zhimin (China), Mr. Srećko Juričić (Croatia), Mr. Heikki Granholm (Finland)

**UNFF Secretariat:** Ms. Jan L. McAlpine, Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi, Ms. Njeri Kariuki, Ms. Afsa Kemitale, Ms. Mita Sen, Ms. Sylvia Chen, Mr. Benjamin Singer, Mr. Tomasz Juszczak, Mr. Mikko Kurppa, Ms. Thida Sam, Mr. Ryo Nakamura

**Deputy Secretary of the Forum:** Ms. Sangeeta Sharma

**Others:** Ms. Mari Ahmed (Finland) and Mr. Tobias Ogwen (Kenya)

**Summary of Key Actions/Decisions**

1. The Bureau finalized the terms of reference for the consultants for the Independent Assessment of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) and decided to request Member States to nominate qualified consultants to carry out the Assessment.
2. The Bureau decided to appoint two Co-Facilitators, in addition to the five consultants, to act on its behalf and to facilitate the submission of one consolidated output by the consultants.
3. The Bureau also agreed to request regional political groups to nominate two co-chairs for the meetings of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on the IAF, one from the North and the other from the South.
4. The Bureau decided to hold a virtual meeting in September 2013 to identify the shortlist of consultants including the top five consultants. The Bureau also decided to hold its second meeting in October 2013 to, inter alia, consider the list of key intersessional activities and their timelines, and to discuss how the Bureau can play a proactive role in mobilizing political support to elevate forests in the SDG process and the post-2015 UN development agenda.
5. The Bureau also decided to meet with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, Ambassador Wu Hongbo, to emphasize the need to expedite the process of selection of the new Director, appointment of Acting Director in the transition period and the need to ensure sufficient resources for and functioning of the Secretariat of the Forum.

**Agenda of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the UNFF11 Bureau**  
**25-26 June 2013**  
**UNFF Secretariat - New York**

- 1- Introduction of the UNFF11 Bureau Members
- 2- Review of the outcomes of the UNFF10:
  - a. Forests and Economic Development
  - b. Implementation of the forest instrument
  - c. Regional and sub-regional inputs
  - d. Enhanced cooperation and policy coordination
  - e. CPF framework
  - f. Multi-stakeholder dialogue
  - g. International arrangement on forests (IAF)
  - h. Forest financing
- 3- The UNFF intersessional activities, including the international arrangement on forests:
  - a. Terms of References for the Independent Assessment of the IAF
  - b. Co-chairs of the ad hoc expert group on the IAF
  - c. Survey-Seeking the views of countries, organizations and major groups on the IAF
  - d. First Facilitative Process workshop on the IAF
  - e. Required budget for the intersessional activities (AHEG, independent assessment...)
- 4- Preparations for the eleventh session of the UNFF:
  - a. Main issues on the agenda of the eleventh session
  - b. Dates and venue of UNFF11
- 5- Recent and upcoming events:
  - a. CPF Retreat
  - b. Update on the consultations on the Rio+20 follow-up (High Level Political Forum, SDGs), and the post-2015 UN development agenda (High Level Panel Report, Interagency Technical Support Team of the Open Working Group on the SDG, Forest Issue Brief, GA Special Event on Achieving the MDGs)
- 6- Future meetings of the Bureau
- 7- Other matters:
  - a. Staffing of UNFFS

## **1. Introduction of the UNFF11 Bureau Members**

UNFF Director, Ms. Jan McAlpine, opened the meeting and welcomed the Bureau members to the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the UNFF11 Bureau. After introducing the Bureau members and the UNFF staff, she invited Ambassador Kamau to chair the meeting.

Ambassador Kamau, as Chair of the UNFF11 Bureau, welcomed the Bureau Members and emphasized the small size of the team and the responsibilities that lay upon the Bureau and the Secretariat over the next two years. He then invited the Bureau to adopt the provisional agenda. Mr. Granholm and Mr. Wu both pointed out their wishes to share information on the potential country-led initiatives under agenda item 3. The Bureau agreed with this suggestion and adopted the provisional agenda.

## **2. Review of the outcomes of UNFF10 (2a to 2h)**

The UNFF Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the main outcomes of UNFF10 contained in two resolutions, on forests and economic development, implementation of the forest instrument, regional and sub-regional inputs, enhanced cooperation and policy coordination, the CPF framework and the multi-stakeholder dialogue, international arrangement on forests (IAF) and means of implementation (forest financing). The Secretariat highlighted some key actions and agreement in these areas, including the intersessional activities on the IAF. These activities include an independent assessment of the IAF, soliciting views from Member States, CPF member organizations, major groups and other relevant stakeholders, and two meetings of the ad hoc expert groups (AHEGs) on the IAF before UNFF11. An information paper containing the UNFF10 key actions and agreements was circulated among the Bureau Members.

Mr. Wu emphasized the successful conclusion of UNFF10 including the key message on the multiple benefits of forests and the integration of forests in the SDGs and the post-2015 UN development agenda. He also recalled other important outcomes of UNFF10 e.g. the possibility of a global forest fund and that of a global convention, and the creation of a focal area on forests within the GEF. Mr. Wu also added that the CPF member organizations could have done more in supporting the work of the UNFF. More broadly, he called for forests to be placed higher on the political agenda, both within the United Nations and at national levels. He called upon the Bureau Chair to take account of forests in the discussions of the Open Working Group on the SDGs. Mr. Wu stressed that due to the significance of forests and the fact that we need to have a strong international arrangement on forests, the Secretariat of the UNFF should also be strengthened and its limited capacity should be enhanced.

Mr. Granholm also pointed out the success of UNFF10 in many different areas, including forests and economic development, forest financing and the IAF. The agreement on the intersessional activities on the IAF up to 2015 probably was the most important output of this session. He asked for the UNFF Secretariat to provide a list of key activities and timelines for the implementation of various intersessional activities on the IAF. He also emphasized the need to convey the specific invitations of the UNFF10 to the CPF member organizations, as well as the key messages on forests to the SDG process and the post-2015 UN development agenda. Mr. Azeredo explained the disappointment of developing countries in not seeing the establishment of a global forest fund during UNFF10. He, nevertheless, agreed with the Bureau Members to integrate “forests” in the broader context of the post-2015 UN development agenda, and the SDG process.

Mr. Juričić added that the work of the CPF in supporting UNFF could be improved. He considered the Independent Assessment of the IAF as an opportunity to provide views on this matter.

Referring to the interventions made by the Bureau Members, Ambassador Kamau understood that the UNFF11 Bureau would like to assume a leadership role in the lead up to UNFF11, and more generally on elevating the profile of forests in the global political agenda. The Bureau needs a checklist of deliverables and activities by the Bureau and the Secretariat, so as to identify the shortfall and decide on how to address them. He mentioned the Bureau can play a leadership and proactive role on forests, and emphasized that the Bureau should not hesitate to meet with the heads of different organizations, including the GEF, FAO and other CPF members to call for their further engagement. Thus, the top interlocutor institutions need to be identified – the Secretary-General’s office and CPF members are examples, but others can surely be identified to raise the resources necessary to strengthening UNFF. He emphasized the need to make forests more exciting and create the buzz this deserves, as this lends itself well to a “warm and fuzzy feeling” among public opinion. He added that we are in a competitive environment and nobody will give forests priority unless forests are promoted aggressively and boldly by us and the Member States of the Forum in the discussions and deliberations of the SDG Open Working Group and the post-2015 UN development agenda. He stressed the Bureau should be ready to tone down the bureaucratic process and do business differently. Ambassador Kamau stressed that the Bureau should be ready for the SDG Open Working Group’s discussion on forests in February 2014 and mobilize more voices in support of forests in the SDG process.

Mr. Azeredo agreed with the vision that was proposed by Ambassador Kamau and called for the Bureau to be creative, since many decisions and discussions that affect “forests and UNFF” are being taken in other processes. To this end, he emphasized the need for the Bureau to be creative as coordination and integration of forests within the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDG process is challenging. Mr. Granholm and Mr. Azeredo embraced Ambassador Kamau’s call for the Bureau to assume a leadership role. Mr. Azeredo emphasized how important UNFF11 would be in this respect, as it will also be held in 2015 when the new UN development agenda sees the light of day. Mr. Wu and Mr. Juričić joined the other Bureau members in calling to facilitate inclusion of forests in the two major processes of the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDGs.

Mr. Juričić requested the UNFF Secretariat to put together a list of priority activities during the intersessional period with related timelines for the Bureau members. Ambassador Kamau seconded this request and handed over the floor to the UNFF Secretariat.

Ms. McAlpine welcomed the enthusiastic Bureau and recognized the connectivity of UNFF to the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDG process. She mentioned that forests fly below the radar, both at national and international levels. Whatever the reasons, this should not stop the Bureau from outlining the vision and strategy to change the status quo. The UNFF Secretariat will do whatever it can do and will provide the Bureau with a list of key actions and timelines for the intersessional activities on the IAF. However, she pointed out that a number of key posts in the Secretariat are going to be vacant in the coming months, and a number of extra budgetary post are not going to be in place due to budget constraints. The UNFF Secretariat as the most efficient division within DESA has the smallest budget in the Department. Given the current circumstance, the Secretariat has reached the tipping point and with the remaining limited staff is under extreme pressure. This issue has to be addressed and Member States have to make an effort to address the budgetary constraints of the Secretariat. On the issue of the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDG process, Ms. McAlpine informed the Bureau that the UNFF Secretariat is a co-lead

for preparation of the Forest Issue Brief for the SDG Open Working Group meeting in February 2014. To this end, the UNFF Secretariat is coordinating the preparation of this Issue Brief with the CPF members and other interested organizations.

### **3. The UNFF intersessional activities including on the international arrangement on forests (3a to 3e)**

Ms. McAlpine explained the various components of the IAF and pointed out that in addition to its previous resolutions, UNFF10 in Istanbul agreed on specific intersessional activities on the IAF, in the lead up to UNFF11 in 2015. She provided explanation on the draft terms of reference (ToR) for the consultants for the Independent Assessment of the IAF, prepared by the UNFF Secretariat.

Mr. Juričić added that in finalizing the ToR, the Bureau should stay as much as possible faithful to the provisions of Resolution 2 of UNFF10. The Bureau then engaged in a thorough discussion on various parts of the draft including the process of selection of the consultants, the type of report by each consultant, the suggestion of appointing two Co-Facilitators, the assignments for the consultants, the budget for the Independent Assessment of the IAF and the working modalities. Based on the discussions among the Bureau Members and their suggestions, the ToR for the consultants for the Independent Assessment of the IAF was finalized and adopted by the Bureau.

Accordingly, the Chair of the UNFF11 Bureau will send a letter with the ToR to Member States. In this letter, the Chair will inform Member States of the finalization of the ToR and invite them to send the names of the qualified consultants with their CVs to the UNFF11 Bureau and the UNFF Secretariat by a certain deadline. The Secretariat will compile all these names and CVs for consideration of the Bureau who will identify, from the compiled list, a short list of 10 to 15 consultants (2 to 3 per region). Out of the shortlist of 10 to 15 names, the Bureau will also identify the first top five consultants and provide the shortlist to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will then proceed with the recruitment of the qualified consultants. In addition, the Bureau decided to appoint two eminent Co-Facilitators, (one from the North, one from the South), separate from the five consultants, to act on its behalf to facilitate the consultants to consolidate their reports and facilitate the production of a single output for submission to the ad hoc expert group on the IAF. The Bureau agreed to include information on this matter in the letter of the Chair to Member States. The Co-Facilitators will not be remunerated and only the costs for their travels to relevant meetings will be paid. To expedite the process of selection of the qualified consultants, the Bureau decided to have a virtual meeting around mid-September 2013 to review the names and CVs of the nominated consultants and identify the shortlist of 10 to 15 consultants including the top five consultants from this list. The Bureau Members stressed that the consultants should work in a manner to provide initial input to the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group and submit the final output prior to the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on time. Regarding the budget for the Independent Assessment of the IAF, Mr. Granholm sought more information about the budget calculations for this work. He especially noted the high staff support cost of the Secretariat that were added in the revised version circulated on the morning of the first day of the Bureau meeting. In addition Mr. Granholm requested information on available extra-budgetary and regular budget resources for all planned activities for this work. In response, Ms. McAlpine explained that there are some resources that are available through the DFID MoU to begin this work and to hire the consultants. However, this work requires additional resources to cover several travels for the consultants and the Co-Facilitators as well as the staff support costs.

The Bureau also agreed to invite regional political groups to nominate two representatives, one from the South and one from the North, to co-chair the two meetings of the ad hoc expert group on the IAF.

The Secretariat also informed the Bureau that pursuant to resolution 2 of UNFF10, the Secretariat will soon solicit views of Member States, CPF member organizations and major groups on the IAF. All responses will be compiled and submitted to the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group on the IAF. The Secretariat also informed the Bureau that, through the resources provided under the DFID MoU, a workshop is planned for October/November 2013 in New York. This workshop is an opportunity for raising awareness about the scope and components of the IAF, and the outcome of UNFF10 on this matter, including relevant intersessional activities. The Bureau Members considered this workshop useful, in particular, in terms of deepening understanding about the IAF. Ambassador Kamau also pointed out to use the workshop to encourage countries to identify ways and means to raise the profile of forests in the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDG process.

Mr. Wu informed the Bureau that China, in collaboration with Canada, Switzerland and Austria, are brainstorming on jointly holding a Country-Led Initiative in support of UNFF11. Interested countries are warmly welcome to co-sponsor and/or join the preparation. The details for this CLI will be worked out and released at a later stage.

#### **4. Preparations for the eleventh session of the UNFF (4a, 4b)**

The Secretariat reminded the Bureau of the main issues in the agenda of UNFF11 and its provisional agenda, as adopted in Istanbul. Regarding the date and venue for UNFF11, the Secretariat informed the Bureau that 2015 is an important and quite busy year in terms of the calendar of conferences and meetings in New York. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the ECOSOC will take note of the report of UNFF10 (including its two resolutions) during its Substantive Session in July 2013 in Geneva. The Secretariat reminded that according to a UNFF10 decision, the ECOSOC will decide on the dates and venue of the UNFF11. The Secretariat further added that the decision on the date and venue of UNFF11 can be taken by the ECOSOC in its Resumed Session later this year. The Secretariat also provided explanation of the available time slots for UNFF11 in New York. One possible time slot is the two-week time period in May 2015 which has been traditionally allocated to the CSD. Depending on the outcome of the on-going consultations on ECOSOC reform and the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), this time slot might become available for UNFF11. Based on this explanation, the Bureau agreed to hold UNFF11 sometime between May to early July 2015. On the venue of UNFF11, Mr. Ogwenko from the Mission of Kenya reminded the Bureau of the requests that were made by the African countries to hold UNFF11 in Nairobi. The Bureau also received an estimate of the additional costs for holding UNFF11 in Nairobi, and postponed the decision on the exact dates and venue of UNFF11 to a later date when consultation on the HLPF is over, and there is more information on the additional costs of holding UNFF11 in Nairobi.

#### **5. Recent and upcoming events (5a, 5b)**

The Bureau was briefed on the recent and upcoming meetings and events, including the CPF retreat in July in Rome, Italy. The UNFF Director informed that the CPF retreat will consider several issues including the invitations that were sent to them at UNFF10 including in relation to the IAF intersessional activities. The CPF member organizations will be informed of the state of consultations on the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDG process. They will also review the draft outline of the Forest Issue Brief for the SDG process which has been prepared by

the UNFF Secretariat. Ms. McAlpine added that the CPF members will also discuss when the CPF brand should be used.

Mr. Granholm and Ambassador Kamau asked how much of the CPF work revolves around direct support for UNFF, how much of the programmatic footprint of the CPF converges with UNFF, and what CPF means to UNFF. The Director informed the Bureau members of the informal and voluntary nature of the CPF in terms of its institutional origin, structure, and funding in support of UNFF while the substantive work of the CPF is led by the UNFF Secretariat. She highlighted Forest Day as a good example of CPF work involving a wide variety of forest stakeholders including CPF member organizations, Member States and major groups.

Mr. Juričić, Mr. Wu and Mr. Granholm expressed the need to strengthen functionality of the CPF in support of UNFF, including by incorporating UNFF priorities in the CPF's programme of work. Ambassador Kamau pointed out the absence of legal platform between CPF and the UNFF, suggesting that the Independent Assessment examine the effectiveness of their current legal and programmatic relationships.

In regards to the SDG Open Working Group and the contribution of the UN system to its February meeting on "forests", the UNFF Director explained that the Secretariat is consulting with CPF member organizations and other contributing organizations to finalize the draft outline of the Forest Issue Brief. The Secretariat plans to finalize the work by the end of September 2013 and submit it, along with other co-leads of the Issue Brief, to the co-chairs of the Open Working Group.

Bureau Members considered the ongoing consultations on the post-2015 UN development agenda, the SDG and HLPF processes, as well as the ECOSOC reform, as opportunities to raise the profile of forests in the global political agenda. In addition, the consultations and conclusions of these processes may have impacts on forests and the UNFF, and as such, the Bureau was of the view that it would be beneficial to keep members of the Forum informed of these consultations including through posting relevant information on the UNFF website. Ambassador Kamau highlighted the five work streams derived from the Rio+20 conference and post-2015 UN development agenda: the SDGs process, HLPF, the Inter-governmental Expert Committee on Financing Sustainable Development, the General Assembly Special Event on the MDG review in September 2013, and the ECOSOC reform processes. He pointed out that the UNFF is competing with numerous other development issues and urged to find the "right balance for forests" through political lobbying work. Mr. Granholm expressed the need to clarify how Members of the Forum can and should contribute to these work streams. He suggested that interested partners could raise the profile of forest issues in relevant UN consultations in New York and consider organizing an event in conjunction with the Bureau meeting in October/November 2013 or during the February meeting of the Open Working Group on the SDGs. He indicated that Finland would be interested to co-organize one or two events. Ambassador Kamau expressed Kenya's interest in co-organizing this side event on forests with Finland in February.

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

Based on the suggestions made by the Secretariat, the Bureau agreed that it should meet regularly including in conjunction with the two AHEGs before UNFF11. The suggested tentative timing for future meetings of the Bureau is as follows: October/November 2013, February 2014, June 2014 November 2014 and February 2015. Mr. Granholm suggested also making use of telephone or video conferences. Mr. Wu suggested that the Bureau meetings, to the extent possible, should

be held in conjunction with other important intersessional meetings such as the meetings of the ad hoc expert group on the IAF. The Secretariat informed the Bureau of the indicative and potential time periods for the two meetings of the AHEG on the IAF in February/March 2014 and December 2014/January 2015. The Secretariat emphasized that these dates are tentative and not confirmation of the final dates and venues of these meetings are entirely subject to the availability of the conference services.

To allow enough time for preparations, Mr. Juričić and Mr. Granholm requested that all relevant documentation to be sent to the Bureau members, at least one week before the future meetings.

## **7. Other matters – Staffing of the UNFF Secretariat**

Based on the explanation provided by the UNFF Director (please refer to item 2, page 4 above), Ambassador Kamau stressed the need for the Bureau to provide guidance on the prioritization of intersessional work to be carried out by the Secretariat and to convey its views, including on increased staffing of the Secretariat, the expeditious appointment of its new Director and an Acting Director in the transition period, to the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs. Mr. Azeredo stressed the need for mobilizing funding including extra-budgetary resources for this issue. He added that the Bureau may wish to discuss progress in this matter later this year. Mr. Granholm asked for an overview of information on available human and financial resources including regular and extra-budgetary resources as well as cost estimates for activities until 2015. Mr. Wu joined Ambassador Kamau on the prioritization of the intersessional work of the UNFF Secretariat. Based on this discussion, the Bureau agreed that the Chair of the UNFF11 Bureau to meet with the Under Secretary General of DESA to convey the message from the Bureau.

***The Bureau finished its meeting at 13:15 hours on 26 June 2013.***