

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Bureau of the Tenth Session
28 March 2012 - New York

Participation

Bureau members: Mr. Mario Ruales Carranza (Ecuador), Mr. Srecko Juricic (Croatia), Ms. Shuli Davidovich (Israel), Mr. Saiful Azam Martinus Abdullah (Malaysia), and Ms. Anna Masinga (Zambia)

UNFF Secretariat: Ms. Jan McAlpine, and UNFFS staff

Deputy Secretary of the Forum: Ms. Sangeeta Sharma

Others: Mr. Joan Andres Salvador (Ecuador), Ms. Tania Valerie Raguz (Croatia) and Mr. Loh Seck Tiong (Malaysia)

Opening of the Meeting

Mr. Ruales, Chair of the UNFF10 Bureau, thanked the Bureau members in his opening remarks for their attendance, as well as the UNFF Secretariat for organizing the meeting. The Chair then invited Ms. Jan McAlpine, Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, to give the Bureau a brief overview of the Agenda. Ms. McAlpine welcomed the Bureau members to the secretariat and provided an overview of the agenda of the meeting. She also informed the Bureau that the United Kingdom had agreed to provide financial support for Bureau members' travel. Ms. McAlpine then introduced Ms. Sangeeta Sharma who represented the Secretary of the Forum from the ECOSOC Secretariat. The Chair then presented the provisional agenda for the third

was informed that since November 2011, two inter-departmental coordination meetings have been held in preparation for UNFF10. The first planning mission to Istanbul was held in November 2011. As a result, a meeting venue was identified, and it was agreed that the UNFF10 will be held at the same conference venue where the LDC conference was held in 2011. This location was chosen based on its close proximity to hotel accommodations and other logistical and practical matters for international conferences. The second planning visit by UN team is scheduled for the first week of April 2012. It is expected that the Host Country Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Turkey will be concluded by the end of July 2012. Drawing from lessons learned in preparing for the Rio+20 conference, the Bureau requested that information on the meeting and logi

proposed that a road map be developed by the Bureau. Such a road map, in their view, would be beneficial for Member States' discussion at UNFF10, and would enable UNFF11 to effectively address its agenda. Other members of the Bureau informed that they would come back to this point, after consulting with their regional groups. The Bureau took note of the request made by Ms. Davidovich and Mr. Juricic. Ms. Davidovich also indicated the need to maintain a balance among substantive elements of the UNFF10 agenda, in particular, between forest financing and forests and economic development.

After discussions, the Bureau adopted the preliminary organization and division of work, noting that further changes can be made later, based on need and new developments.

d. Strengthening and Streamlining Reporting

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on an ongoing capacity building project to strengthen and streamline voluntary national reporting to UNFF. The project focuses on developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and aims to strengthen and streamline national reporting by UNFF and FAO focal points; enhance countries' understanding of the forest instrument, contribute to monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR); and reduce countries reporting burden. In implementing the project, the UNFFS has collaborated with FAO and has organized three capacity building workshops in Bangkok, Nairobi and Accra from October 2011 to February 2012, and will organize the last two workshops in Beirut and Santiago in April 2012. The workshops' expected outcomes include a draft streamlined and simplified reporting format and guidelines, an increased awareness and understanding of the forest instrument and the importance of its implementation, and an increased number of countries reporting to UNFF10 and

~~Background information for UNFFS~~

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institutional in nature, and cover a vast variety of socio-economic and environmental issues. In this context, she also proposed the “landscape approach to forests” to be considered as a fourth emerging issue which UNFF10 may wish to consider. The Bureau welcomed this proposal and agreed to come back to this issue, after consulting with their respective constituencies.

The Bureau also agreed that the Chair of the Bureau should represent the Bureau at the upcoming joint meeting of the chairpersons of the functional commissions with the Bureau of ECOSOC on 2 May 2012 in New York. In case the Chair could not attend this meeting, it was agreed that Ms. Shuli Davidovich would represent the Bureau at the meeting.

2. UNFF Intersessional Activities

a. Overview of the Secretariat activities on Forest Finance

The Bureau was briefed on UNFF Secretariat activities on forest financing, which include numerous activities in preparation for the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing and UNFF10. The Bureau was informed of these activities, as outlined below.

i. Facilitative Process Workshops on Forest Financing in SIDS and LFCCs

The Bureau was briefed on ongoing work related to the project on forest financing in low forest cover countries (LFCCs) and small island developing countries (SIDS). The project aims to identify gaps, obstacles and opportunities to forest financing. Two workshops targeting representatives from LFCCs have already been held in Iran (November 2011) and Niger (Jan.-Feb. 2012). The next two workshops will target SIDS and are planned for April 2012 in Trinidad and Tobago and July 2012 in Fiji. The main outcomes of the workshops will be reflected in the 2012 AGF study.

ii. Facilitative Process Workshops on Forest Financing Africa and LDCs

iv. AHEG2 documentation

The Bureau was briefed on ongoing preparations for AHEG2, the election of the AHEG2 co-chairs, the organization of work and AHEG2 documentation. The Bureau was informed of the official re-nomination of Mr. Jan Heino by the North (developed countries) as a co-chairman for AHEG2. Due to the importance of the early nomination of the AHEG2 co-chair for the South, relevant members of the Bureau agreed to remind the Group of 77 and China to expedite nomination of their respective AHEG2 co-chair.

The Bureau was briefed on a number of options for holding AHEG2. Due to the heavy schedule of important international conferences and meetings in December 2012 and the unavailability of conference services in UN cities such as New York and Geneva during this period and most of January 2013, and the conflict of the first two weeks of January with important holidays for a large number of countries, the Bureau finally decided to hold the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing from 14-18 January 2013 in Vienna, Austria.

The Secretariat provided brief overview on the organization of work of the AHEG which would normally consist of plenary sessions, working group meetings, and presentations on the key issues and outcomes of the intersessional activities on forest financing. Due to the specific mandate of AHEG as envisaged in the resolution of the UNFF9 special session, however, a large portion of this meeting will need to be devoted to discussion among experts in order to fulfill their mandate. After discussion, it was agreed that an initial organization of work for AHEG2 will be prepared for consideration by the Bureau at a later stage.

The Secretariat also informed the Bureau that apart from the annotated provisional agenda for AHEG2, there will be two other official documents for AHEG2, namely: the OLI report, and the compilation of substantive submissions by Memb

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Secretariat activities and requested the Secretariat to keep the Bureau informed of related developments.

The UNFF10 Bureau thanked UNFFS for the wide scope of activities that it is undertaking in preparation for UNFF10, and expressed its satisfaction and appreciation for the work being done by the Secretariat, so far.

3. Rio+20 Conference

- a. Forests and Rio+20 conference*
- b. UNFFS/CPF events during Rio+20 conference*

The Bureau reviewed the state of negotiations on the Rio+20 zero draft document. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the Secretariat was closely following the deliberations during the informal consultations and the third intersessional meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Rio+20 Conference, held on 26-27 March 2012. The Bureau recalled that the UNFF9 Ministerial Declaration was the concrete contribution of th

The Bureau agreed with the proposed timing for its future meetings suggested by the Secretariat. Accordingly, the Bureau of UNFF10 will meet in conjunction with: the upcoming OLI in Rome, the open-ended informal briefing in New York toward the end of November 2012, the AHEG2 (14-18 January 2013, Vienna) and in February 2013 in New York.

6. Other matters

a. DFID MoU

Ms. McAlpine informed the Bureau that the secretariat recently signed a MoU with DFID. This MoU focuses on four main areas: i) Realizing the economic development potential of sustainably managed forests, ii) Preparing for the Forum's decision on the international arrangement on forests and the UNFF, iii) Country participation in UNFF sessions and inter-sessional activities and iv) Deepening substantive and evidence-based outreach on forests world-wide. DFID, through this MoU, has provided a grant of GBP 1.5 million (US\$ 2.4 million) for the period of 2012 – 2013. The objective of this MoU is to build awareness and consensus on the inter-governmental arrangements on forests and their contribution to economic development. Ms. McAlpine expressed her gratitude for this timely and generous support from the United Kingdom to the work of the Forum and suggested that the Bureau send a letter of appreciation to the UK/DFID. The Bureau welcomed this initiative and expressed its appreciation to the DFID for supporting the work of the Forum, especially in the critical areas outlined above. The Bureau also agreed to send a letter of appreciation to DFID through its Chair.

Closing

The Chair thanked the Bureau members and the secretariat for their active participation in the meeting, and closed the third meeting of the UNFF10 Bureau at 5:15 pm.