

Minutes of the

Third meeting of the UNFF 3 Bureau

UNFF Secretariat, DC-2 Building, New York

Wednesday, 26 February 2003

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Attendees

Bureau Members: Mr. Hossein Moeini Meybodi (Chairperson-designate, Iran), Mr. Gustavo Eduardo Ainchil (Argentina), Mr. Peter Csoka (Hungary), Ms. Conceição Ferreira (Portugal) and H.E. Mr. Matia Mulumba Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda)

CPF: Mr. Hosny El-Lakany, Chairperson and Assistant Director-General, FAO

UNFF Secretariat: Pekka Patosaari, Jorge Illueca, Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist, Mahendra Joshi, Mia Soderlund, Catalina Santamaria, and Barbara Tavora-Jainchill

ECOSOC Secretariat: Ms. June Chesney

The **third** meeting of the Bureau considered the following agenda items:

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Preparation for UNFF3
 - 2.1 Organization of work of UNFF3
 - 2.2 Status of documentation
 - 2.3 Country-led initiatives in support of UNFF
3. CPF activities
4. UNFF Secretariat Staffing
5. Other business
 - 5.1 Information on travel support, etc
 - 5.2 Briefing to the Permanent Missions
 - 5.3 National focal points
 - 5.4 Planning joint bureau meetings
 - 5.5 Next Bureau meeting

Welcome and introduction

Mr. Hossein Moeini Meybodi chaired the meeting and welcomed the members of the Bureau to the meeting. He also welcomed Mr. Pekka Patosaari as the new Coordinator and Head of the UNFF Secretariat. Mr. Patosaari expressed his appreciation to the Bureau and looked forward to working together in the coming days.

2. Preparations for UNFF 3

2.1. Organization of work of UNFF3

The Bureau considered the preparations for UNFF 3 on organization of work, division of work, multi-stakeholder dialogue, side events, etc. In order to make the UNFF 3 deliberations more comprehensive, focused and effective, the Secretariat proposed a new organization of work consisting of a few panel and round-table discussions, between the presentation of specific reports and the deliberations. The proposal included panel discussions on economic aspects of forests and on enhanced cooperation and coordination. The Bureau welcomed the proposal and advised the Secretariat to further develop the organization of work, based on the discussion at the meeting.

The Bureau decided to organize UNFF 3 work through plenary and two working groups, and when necessary, through informal contact groups. Mr. Moeini and Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka would chair the plenary sessions. Working group 1 would address “Maintaining forest cover” and “Voluntary national reporting format” and would be chaired by Mr. Peter Csoka. Ms. Conceição Ferreira would chair the Working Group 2, which would address the issues of “forest health and productivity” and “enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination”.

The Bureau also agreed that Mr. Gustavo Ainchil would chair discussions on “Economic aspects of forests”, and Mr. Hossein Moeini, Chairperson, would lead the discussion on ad hoc expert groups.

Mr. Peter Csoka would be the rapporteur of the session.

2.2 Status of documentation

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau about the status of preparation for documentation for UNFF 3. The Secretariat also informed the Bureau that a provisional agenda and three short notes have been submitted for official translation early this week. Those documents are:

1. Provisional agenda for UNFF 3
2. Note by the Secretary-General on multi-stakeholder dialogue
3. Note by the Secretariat on intersessional work, including further discussion on the ad hoc expert groups
4. Note by the Secretariat on the format for voluntary reporting by countries for UNFF 3

The Bureau expressed satisfaction with the progress of documentation.

2.3 Country-led initiatives

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau about the planned country-led initiatives in support of UNFF. The following three initiatives planned for March 2003, are expected to provide their reports to UNFF 3:

- Mangrove forests, Managua, Nicaragua (3-5 March 2003)
- MAR, Viterbo, Italy (17-20 March 2003)
- Planted forests, Wellington, New Zealand (24-28 March 2003)

More initiatives are being planned in the post-UNFF3 period.

3. CPF-related activities

Mr. Hosny El-Lakany, Chairman of CPF and Assistant Director of the Forestry Department, FAO, briefed the Bureau about the activities of CPF. In addition to providing substantive support to the Secretariat in the preparation of the Secretary-General's reports, CPF has been providing advice and technical support to countries and organizations on the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

Several bi-lateral and multi-lateral initiatives among the CPF member organizations are also being initiated in the intersessional period, including a comprehensive "sourcebook for funding SFM" with its own Online database, taskforce on streamlining reporting, common understanding on definitions, etc.

Next CPF meeting is scheduled for Sunday, 9 March 2003 in Rome. Mr. El-Lakany also informed that at this meeting, CPF would consider a request for membership by IUFRO, which represents more than 7500 scientists and over 1500 research institutes worldwide. With the inclusion of IUFRO, the total number of CPF members would be 14.

The Bureau expressed its satisfaction and appreciation of the works being done by the members of CPF, both collectively and individually. It also appreciated CPF secondments of staff to the UNFF Secretariat. The Bureau agreed that UNFF should provide clear guidance to CPF and its member organizations, to continue their support to UNFF more actively, and urged CPF member organizations to increase staff secondment to UNFF Secretariat. At present, only FAO and UNEP are providing their staff members as secondments. The Bureau also underscored that CPF is being widely recognized as an example of an effective inter-agency coordination mechanism.

4. Secretariat staff recruitment status

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the current status of the staffing and recruitment process. Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist (at P-5) and Mahendra Joshi (at P-4) have been selected for two positions, and the selection process for the remaining P-3 is underway. In addition, Kari Kangas, JPO from Finland, joined the Secretariat in late January of 2003. The Secretariat also briefed the Bureau on the internal strategic planning of the secretariat to clearly define its role and longer-term vision. It requested the Bureau to consider positively, the growing need of human, financial and other logistic resources of the secretariat, in the context of the growing workload and stakeholders' expectations.

5. Other business

5.1 Information on travel support, etc.

The Bureau was informed about the provision of travel support to the member states of UNFF. Those State Members, which are also members to CSD, are eligible for an economy class roundtrip airfare. In addition, the Secretariat has established a trust fund with limited resources, to support travel of developing countries which are not members of CSD. The request for travel support should be made through the Permanent Missions in New York. The Bureau advised the secretariat to make this information available to countries as soon as possible. In this regard, it was also advised that the official invitations to Governments to participate at UNFF 3 should be issued as soon as possible.

The Secretariat assured the Bureau that the necessary actions would be taken.

5.2 Briefing to the Permanent Missions

It was agreed that such a briefing would be extremely important to disseminate information on the preparation for UNFF 3. The Bureau members and the Secretariat would jointly organize such a briefing. The Bureau agreed to the suggestion by the Secretariat that such a briefing should be held in early April, once all UNFF 3 documents (as advance unedited documents) are posted on the UNFF website. Furthermore, it was suggested that the Bureau and Secretariat should make themselves available to brief the regional groups, if such requests are made.

5.3 National focal points

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that due to active encouragement by the Bureau members, a large number of countries have now informed the Secretariat of their national focal points. As of 26 February 2003, fifty-nine countries representing all geographical regions, have identified their focal points. The Bureau expressed satisfaction at the response by the Member States. However, Bureau members agreed to continue urging countries in their respective regional groups, that have not yet identified their focal points, to do so.

5.4 Planning joint bureau meetings

The Bureau was informed of the following requests from ECOSOC and its secretariat:

- Joint bureau meeting with ECOSOC Bureau, preferably during UNFF 3
- Contribution to the high-level segment of ECOSOC, by hosting a Ministerial roundtable during the ECOSOC session in July 2003
- Letter from President of ECOSOC to Mr. Moeini regarding the follow-up to ECOSOC decisions by its functional commissions.

The Bureau suggested that the Secretariat coordinate with ECOSOC Secretariat to schedule such a meeting, at a time mutually convenient to both Bureaux.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that it is working towards organizing the ministerial roundtable on the high-level segment, focused on the role of forests on rural development.

The Bureau also discussed possible ways to bring to the attention of UNFF, decisions made by ECOSOC.

The Bureau also expressed a need for further cooperation, collaboration and exchange of information with other functional commissions in the future. It suggested that the Secretariat explore the possibility of holding a joint bureau meeting with the Bureau of CSD, in the future.

5.5 Next Bureau meeting

The Bureau decided to leave the option open, dependant upon circumstances. If no need arises, then the next bureau meeting will be held in Geneva on Sunday, 25 May 2003.

Closing of the meeting

Mr. Moeini expressed satisfaction with the discussion held at the meeting, thanked the members of the Bureau, Secretariat and CPF chairperson, and concluded the meeting.