

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 meeting to the Bureau, which was adopted. The agenda of the third meeting of the Bureau included the following items:

1. **Preparations for the Tenth session of the UNFF (UNFF10)**
 - a. Logistical Preparations
 - b. Pre-session Documentation
 - c. Preliminary "Organization of Work and Decisions"
 - d. Strengthening and Streamlining Reporting
 - e. Emerging Issues (letter of the President of ECOSOC on Post-2015 and its connection to UNFF10 work)

Under this agenda item, the UNFFS Secretariat explained the ongoing activities by the Secretariat on logistical preparations for UNFF10 in Istanbul, Turkey, pre-session documentation, the preliminary "organization of works and decisions", strengthening and streamlining reporting to UNFF and emerging issues, including the issues raised in the letter from the President of ECOSOC on the post-2015 development agenda and its connection to UNFF10's work.

a. Logistical Preparations

The UNFF Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the latest progress in terms of logistical preparations for UNFF10 which are underway between the UN and the Government of Turkey. The Bureau

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 logistics, including information on hotels, visas, and the contact information of the liaison officials in Turkey should be posted on the UNFFS website as soon as possible.

b. Pre-session Documentation

The Secretariat provided an overview of the documentation for UNFF10, including the types and number of official reports and documents. The provisional agenda for UNFF10 is the basis for preparing pre-session official documents for the UNFF10 session. Ms. McAlpine informed the Bureau that in addition to substantive reports which may include some recommendations, the Secretariat will aim to produce consolidated Secretary General's reports with conclusions and recommendations on (i) Forest Finance, (ii) Forests and Economic Development and (iii) Emerging Issues. The Bureau welcomed such an approach which will provide a firm basis for deliberations and resolutions.

Most of the official documentation will be available on the UNFF website in late January 2013 as advance unedited versions, and the official versions in all UN languages a few weeks after. The Secretariat presented a draft organization of work of the whole two weeks of the Forum session, which included scheduling of the plenary, two working groups and side events.

c. Preliminary Organization of Work and Decisions

The Secretariat distributed the draft preliminary organization and division of agenda items between the two Working Groups (WGs). Each working group will be co-chaired by two Vice Chairs. WG1 will address agenda item 5 (Forests and Economic Development), item 3 (Progress Made on the Implementation of the Forest Instrument) and item 4 (Regional and Sub-regional Inputs), and WG2 agenda item 9 (Means of Implementation), item 6 (Emerging Issues) and item 8 (Enhanced Cooperation). The discussion in each working group will each lead to a resolution. In this regard, there will be a total of two resolutions coming out of the two Working Groups. In addition to resolutions, the UNFF10 outcome would include Chairman's summaries of the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, panel discussions (if any) and decisions (if needed). The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for this proposed organization of work and noted that this is a reasonable approach to the organization and division of work. The Bureau also took note of the suggestion by Ms. Davidovich (Israel) that the drafts under negotiation during the session be made accessible online through a restricted access system (password-protected access to Member States) such as eRoom..

As regards to consultations with major groups during UNFF10, the Bureau considered the model adopted by CSD and the Rio process to consult and brief major groups during UNFF10. The Bureau decided to further discuss relevant modalities for such consultations at a later stage.

Ms. Davidovich (Israel), supported by Mr. Juricic (Croatia) stressed the importance of developing a road map for the period after UNFF10, leading up to UNFF11 in 2015. In this context, she

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 11. Background information and workshop reports are already available on the UNFFS website. The Bureau commended the Secretariat for this important task, and requested that relevant documentation and workshop reports be made available to the Bureau as well.

e. Emerging Issues (letter of the President of ECOSOC on Post-2015 and its connection to UNFF10 work)

The Bureau was briefed that the letter from the President of ECOSOC sought views from UNFF on the post-2015 development agenda before the end of the year. The secretariat also indicated that 2015 is the time that the Forum should review the effectiveness of the International Arrangements on Forests (IAFs). The Secretariat also highlighted the fact that the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference might have some implications for forests. The Bureau considered all of these issues to be of high importance and relevance to the work of the Forum; in particular, in respect to the work of the UNFF11 in 2015. The Bureau also recognized the interlinkages among the three issues of the post-2015 development agenda, IAFs and the Rio+20 outcome, and agreed to consider these topics under an agenda item on "emerging issues" for discussion at UNFF10.

In regard to the letter of the President of ECOSOC, the Bureau decided that Mr. Ruales, through a formal letter to the UN-based Missions, solicit the views of Member States on the post-2015 development agenda. The deadline for submission of such these views will be 30 September 2012. The Bureau also agreed that after the deadline, the Secretariat should synthesize those inputs and submit it to the Chair of the UNFF10 Bureau, who will officially submit the synthesis to the ECOSOC President.

UNFFS Director McAlpine also highlighted the emerging view of looking at forests from a landscape perspective. She informed the Bureau that there has been an increased interest in looking at forests from a landscape perspective, since forests' values are cross-sectoral and cross-

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

The Bureau was informed of a similar project that will analyze access to forest financing in Africa and the least developed countries. Two workshops are planned for 37 African countries and LDCs to exchange experiences on accessing forest financing. The workshops will be held in the second half of 2012. In addition to the workshops, four thematic background papers and four case studies will be produced. The outcomes of these workshops will feed into the work of the AHEG2.

iii. REDD+ and implications on Forest Financing

The Secretariat informed the Bureau of two studies that are being conducted by the UNFF secretariat on examining the implications of REDD+ on broader forest financing. These studies are being prepared in response to the UNFF9 resolution. The first study, funded by Norway, assesses the potential impact of a price on forest carbon through results-based REDD+ finance on the economic financing forests and related land use. The second study reviews the implications of REDD+ on broader forest financing. These studies are expected to be completed by August, with the key findings of these studies to be presented at the CPF Organization-led Initiative.

iv. 2012 AGF Study on Forest Financing

The Bureau was informed that pursuant to the resolution of UNFF9 requesting updating and expanding of the 2008 AGF Study, the UNFFS leads the work of the Collaborative Partnership

on Forests (CPF) Advisory Group on Finance (AGF). The AGF has held three meetings in 2011 and one teleconference in February 2012. The preparation of the 2012 Study is well underway, and the 2012 AGF Study on Forest Financing is expected to be completed before the end of June 2012. The AGF Study will be posted on the UNFF website, once is ready, and will be submitted to the CPF Organization-Led Initiative. The AGF Study will also be included as a background paper for AHEG2 and UNFF10. The main components of the 2012 AGF study as agreed by CPF include: identifying finance sources at the national, regional and international levels; gaps in and opportunities for forest financing including the impacts of new and emerging forest financing-related mechanisms; overcoming forest financing barriers; forest financing success stories, and forest finance options.

v. Compilation of input by Member States, regional processes, major groups

The Bureau was informed that only 3 countries (Finland, Japan and New Zealand) had submitted substantive input on forest financing by the deadline of 1 March 2012 which was set in the UNFF9 Resolution. In light of requests from some Member States, the Bureau decided to extend the deadline of 1 March 2012 to 30 April 2012. The Bureau also agreed that the Chair formally inform New York Missions of this extension. Other Bureau members will also coordinate with their respective regional groups to ensure submission of their substantive input before the extended deadline. The Bureau also stressed the importance of confidentiality of the inputs, and requested the Secretariat not to distribute or post any of the received input, until the official compilation of input is released, as a document for the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing (AHEG2).

b. CPF Organization-led Initiative

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on its activities in preparation of the CPF Organization-Led Initiative (OLI) including its work on preparing a draft concept note for the OLI in collaboration with FAO. The Secretariat requested the Bureau to consider approaching potential donors for financial support for the OLI, as the OLI still lacks necessary funding. The Bureau also recognized the practical constraint that the CPF needed to hold the OLI by 1 June 2012, as requested in the UNFF9 Resolution, and supported the views of the CPF to move the OLI to be in conjunction with the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) in September/October 2012. The Bureau also agreed that the Bureau Chair should send a letter to the CPF Chair indicating its appreciation for the CPF's support for the OLI, and also underscoring the need to send the OLI invitations to participants as a matter of urgency.

c. Open-Ended Informal Briefing on Intersessional Activities on Forest Financing

As reflected in the UNFF9 Resolution, the co-chairs of the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing (AHEG1) should hold an open-ended informal briefing for Member States prior to AHEG2. After an explanation by the Secretariat, the Bureau agreed to hold a half-day briefing by the AHEG1 co-chairs on the progress in the intersessional activities on forest financing for Member States toward the end of November 2012 in New York. Member States will be informed of the exact date of the briefing at a later stage.

d. Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on Forest Financing (AHEG2)

- i. Election of AHEG2 Co-Chairs*
- ii. Date and venue of AHEG2*
- iii. Organization of Work*

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 Member States, regional organizations/processes and major groups on forest financing, as per the UNFF9 resolution. The 2012 AGF study, along with other reports of the Facilitative Process workshops, will be also available online as background documents.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that all information regarding AHEG2 including logistical information will be communicated officially to Member States in due course.

e. Forests and Economic Development

“Forests and economic development” is the overall UNFF10 theme, and its four sub-themes encompass a number of issues. The Bureau was informed that the UNFF Secretariat was working on pre-UNFF10 activities intended to facilitate informed discussions at UNFF10 on the session’s theme and sub-themes. In this context, The Bureau was also informed that the Secretariat would organize an open-ended expert group meeting to discuss the role of forests in economic development, looking at the impediments and opportunities toward realizing the full potential of forests. This small preliminary expert meeting would discuss the scope, architectural framework and context for upcoming studies by UNFF Secretariat consultants on forests and economic development. These studies are aimed to provide substantive input to UNFF10 documentation on forests and economic development. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that these intersessional activities on forests and economic development would be funded through the recently signed MoU with DFID. The Secretariat also emphasized that some of the outputs from this work will feed into the work of OLI, to show the interlinkages between forest financing and forests and economic development. The Bureau welcomed this initiative, expressed its support for the

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 the Forum to the Rio+20 process. The Bureau also highlighted the need to address forest issues through a cross-sectoral and cross-institutional approach, considering all socio-economic and environmental potential of forests. Only through such an approach would the full potential of forests be unleashed for sustainable development at the national, regional and international levels. The Bureau members then agreed to consult with their respective constituencies in order to ensure reflection of these important issues in the negotiating text.

The Bureau was also informed of side events organized by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) during the Rio+20 Conference. In particular, the Secretariat informed the Bureau of a high level event on forests potentially during high-level segment of the Rio+20 on 21 June. Details of the event are still underway and being developed by the UNFFS and World Bank as the key coordinators for the event, on behalf of the CPF. Other CPF forest-related side events at Rio include a technical discussion about forests in the context of forest goods and services organized by CIFOR on 19 June, and forests within a landscape approach, in the context of Agriculture and Rural Development Day on the 18th led by the Agriculture Coalition, World Bank and other partners.

The Bureau welcomed this information and stressed the need to have an issue brief on forests and SFM to be included on the Rio+20 (UNCSD) website in order to inform policymakers and other interested stakeholders of the interconnection between forests and other social, economic and environmental issues, as well as their potential contributions the objective and themes of the Rio+20 conference.

4. Recent and upcoming events

- a. Country-led Initiatives (CLIs), Major Groups Initiative*

- i. Viet Nam CLI*

The Bureau was briefed on the Viet Nam CLI. The conference was co-organized by Viet Nam and the Netherlands, and co-sponsored by Finland in support of the UNFF and was held from 10

to 13 January 2012 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. The conference served to foster dialogue and cooperation to enhance synergies across sectors, and underscored the linkages between agriculture, food security and Sustainable Forest Management within a broader landscape approach.

ii. Kiev CLI

The Bureau was informed that the Kiev CLI will be held from 11-14 September 2012. This CLI is a joint initiative between Switzerland and the Ukraine. The CLI's main objective is to mainstream the green economy into the reality of participating countries from Eastern Europe and North and Central Asia.

iii. Major Groups Initiative

The Bureau was informed that the Major Group-led Initiative (MGI) in Support of the UNFF10 work will be held in Teresopolis, Brazil from 13-17 June 2012. This second Major Groups-led Initiative would focus on positioning forests to contribute to green economy. It is hosted by Brazil with the financial support from the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture (BMELV) with support from UNFFS, ITTO and IUFRO, and is coordinated by the Canadian Environmental Network. The report of the MGI will be also presented in a side event during the Rio+20 conference.

As a general remark, Ms. McAlpine stressed the importance of the CLIs as a tool for deepening the engagement of relevant stakeholders in the work of the Forum. To maximize the potential of these meetings, however, she emphasized the need for CLI to be of direct relevance and support to the work of UNFF and its main themes. To this end, she pointed out that the Bureau and the UNFF Secretariat should ensure that these initiatives are organized in support of the UNFF session themes. The Bureau acknowledged some of the practical difficulties associated with the CLIs and emphasized the important contributions that these initiatives could provide to the UNFF.

b. International Year of Forests

The Bureau was briefed on the successful convening of a special event to commemorate the closing of the International Year of Forests on 9 February 2012. The event featured the award ceremony for the first ever Forest Heroes, launch of the Forests for People book published by Tudor Rose, winners of the UPU international letter writing contest and announcement of the winners of an international children's art contest. Films from the award-winning International Forest Film festival were showcased at the event, and the UNFF Secretariat and Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival announced that a 2nd film festival would be held in 2012-2013, focused on short films. The Bureau was also informed that in response to the December 2011 note verbale, national reports were currently being received on Forests 2011 activities. The Bureau recommended that a follow-up reminder be sent to countries to ensure that information was received from a wide number of countries.

Ms. McAlpine expressed her thanks to the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests CPF for its role in support of the International Year of Forests. She also thanked the Government of Croatia for being the architect behind the launch of the Year and for having the vision and the dream, and for contributing to the observance of the Year.

5. Future meetings of the Bureau

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.