

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the UNFF11 Bureau Teleconference, 12 September 2013 - New York

Participation

Bureau Members: Ambassador Macharia Kamau (Kenya), Mr. Raphael Azeredo (Brazil), Mr. Wu Zhimin (China), Mr. Heikki Granholm (Finland)
Mr. Srecko Juricic was absent.

UNFF Secretariat: Ms. Jan L. McAlpine, Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi, Ms. Njeri Kariuki, Ms. Thida Sam, Ms. Anneke Rooth, Mr. Mark Petimezas

Others: Ms. Mari Ahmed (Finland), Mr. Tobias Ogweno (Kenya)

Key Decisions

1. The Bureau selected the following consultants to carry out the IAF independent assessment:

Africa:	Mr. Mafa Chipeta (Malawi)
Asia:	Mr. Ricardo M. Umali (the Philippines)¹
Eastern Europe:	Dr. Maxim Lobovikov (Russian Federation)
GRULAC:	Mr. José Antonio Prado (Chile)
WEOG:	Mr. Juergen Blaser (Switzerland)

2. The Bureau also agreed on the following individuals as the back-up candidates:

Africa:	Mr. Peter Gondo (Zimbabwe)
Asia:	Ms. Wu Shuirong (China)²
Eastern Europe:	No candidate
GRULAC:	Dr. Jorge Illueca (Panama)
WEOG:	Ms. Stephanie Caswell (United States)

3. The Bureau extended the deadline for nomination of the Asian consultant until 20 September 2013; the consultant for Asia shall be selected by the Bureau during the week of 23 September with communication by email.
4. The Bureau selected Mr. THANG Hooi Chiew (Malaysia) as the co-facilitator from the South, and Mr. Hans Hoogeveen from the Netherlands as the co-facilitator from the North.
5. The Bureau members agreed to send individual letters to the Ambassadors and their representatives in the 5th committee in New York, as well as to DESA senior officials, urging them to give a higher profile to forests on the international agenda, and to review the UNFFS human and budget resources more specifically with the view to providing additional resources to the UNFFS.
6. The Secretariat was also requested to prepare a technical explanation to be attached to the Bureau members' letters to the 5th Committee.

¹ Please see footnote 3.

² Please see footnote 4.

**Agenda of the Teleconference of the UNFF11 Bureau
12 September 2013
UNFF Secretariat office - New York**

1. Identification of the consultants to carry out the IAF Independent Assessment and their back-up
2. Appointment of the co-facilitators
3. Update on the upcoming Vienna workshop and Bureau meeting
4. Raising the profile of forests in the global agenda and addressing the insufficiency of the UNFF Secretariat human and budgetary resources

1. Identification of consultants to carry out the IAF Independent Assessment

After review of the names and CVs of the proposed candidates, the Bureau identified the following top four consultants:

Africa: Mr. Mafa Chipeta (Malawi)

Asia: Mr. Ricardo M. Umali (the Philippines)³

Eastern Europe: Mr. Maxim Lobovikov (Russian Federation)

GRULAC: Mr. Jose Antonio Prado (Chile)

WEOG: Mr. Juergen Blaser (Switzerland)

Note: Pursuant to the previous agreement of the Bureau to extend the deadline for nomination of the Asian consultant until 20 September 2013, the Bureau postponed the identification of the consultant for Asia to the week of 23-27 September 2013, which will be done through email.

The Bureau also identified the following consultants as back-up names (second name in the list):

Africa: Mr. Peter Gondo (Zimbabwe)

Asia: Ms. Wu Shuirong (China)⁴

Eastern Europe: (No backup)

GRULAC: Mr. Jorge Illueca (Panama)

WEOG: Ms. Stephanie Caswell (USA)

2. Appointment of the Co-Facilitators

After review of the names and CVs of the proposed candidates, the Bureau selected *Mr. Thang Hooi Chiew* from Malaysia as the Co-Facilitator for the South. Regarding the Co-Facilitator for the North, there were divergent views among the Bureau members over the issue of whether or not the appointment of the proposed co-facilitator by the WEOG creates "conflict of interest". There were also some discussions about the procedures for the selection of the co-facilitators. On this latter point and in response to Mr. Granholm, the Chair clarified that the selection of the co-facilitators is exceptionally done by the Bureau, while the selection of the co-chairs of AHEG will be done by the "South" and the "North", as indicated in the letter of the Chair to countries on 27 June 2013. In light of the discussions, the Bureau agreed with the request of Mr. Granholm to give him 48 hours to consult with Mr. Srecko Juricic and other respective members of his group over the discussions of the Bureau on this matter, and inform the Bureau of the result. Based on the result of this consultation and agreement of Mr. Granholm, the Bureau appointed Mr. Hans Hoogeveen from the Netherlands as the co-facilitator from the North.

3. Vienna Workshop and next Bureau meeting

The Secretariat reminded that the second meeting of the UNFF11 Bureau will be held on 21 October 2013, to be followed by the IAF workshop on 22 and 23 October 2013 in Vienna, Austria. The invitation to these meetings will be sent to the Bureau Members today. The eligible Bureau Members have already been requested to submit the necessary documents to the Secretariat to arrange for their timely travel to Vienna. Given the deadline of 30 September 2013, the Bureau Members were also urged to contact their respective regional political groups to expedite the nomination of the AHEG co-chairs (one from the North and one from the South).

The Secretariat also informed that the provisional agenda of the next meeting of the Bureau, as well as the organization of work of the workshop will be sent to the Bureau Members shortly. The Chair of the Bureau will preside over the plenary sessions of the workshop, and the Bureau should designate two vice-chairs to

³ The Bureau selected the consultant for Asia and his back-up after the extended deadline of 20 September and during the week of 23 September 2013 via email.

⁴ Ibid.

conduct the discussion in each breakout group on the afternoon of 22 October 2013.

4. Decisions and steps to raise the profile of forests in the global agenda, and address the insufficiency of the UNFF Secretariat human and budgetary resources

Ambassador Kamau informed the Bureau of the key issues that he raised during his meeting with the USG of DESA (Mr. Wu) this week. During this meeting, he raised the Bureau's concern over lack of balanced attention to "forests" *vis-a-vis* other issues like climate change, biodiversity, the ozone layer ... The Ambassador explained to the USG that part of this problem is due to the fact that "forests" do not have the same institutions as climate change ... "Forests" also lack high level leadership at the ASG or USG level within the UN. He also referred to the insufficiency of human and budget resources of the UNFF Secretariat, compared to similar secretariats, and sought the help of the Bureau to work together to raise the profile of forests in the international agenda and to address these imbalances and insufficiencies.

Referring to the points raised by Ambassador Kamau and in line with the need to address the human resource and budgetary insufficiency of the UNFF Secretariat, UNFF Director Ms. Jan McAlpine called for the Bureau of UNFF11 to send a specific request to the 5th Committee of the General Assembly. This will contain a request to allocate three regular P3 posts to the UNFF Secretariat, as well as to upgrade a current regular P5 post in the Secretariat to D1.

In light of the above, Ambassador Kamau specifically called the Bureau Members to write individually to Ambassadors and their representatives in the 5th Committee, as well as to DESA senior officials to review the UNFF budget and human resources more specifically with the view to providing additional resources for the UNFFS. He further requested the UNFFS to spell out the justifications and prepare technical details to be attached to these letters for the discussions in the 5th Committee. Ambassador Kamau further stated that the Bureau members can provide political support, as appropriate, but it will remain the responsibility of DESA to provide justifications for additional resources. Ambassador Kamau noted that it was inexplicable that the Secretariat continues to work on shoestring resources.

Mr. Granholm fully supported the Ambassador's call to raise the profile of forests in the international agenda. However, he made reference to his request during the first Bureau meeting and further requested information on the budgetary issues and the intersessional activities. Addressing Mr. Granholm's request, Ms. McAlpine further added that following the discussions during the first Bureau meeting, information regarding the available regular and extra budgetary resources and required budget, as well as the activities and budgets for various intersessional activities have been prepared, and will be sent shortly to the Bureau members. Mr. Granholm also asked the secretariat to send the draft programme for the Vienna workshop to bureau members before forwarding it to wider audience.

Ambassador Kamau thanked all the Bureau members for their constructive engagement in the teleconference, as well as the UNFF Secretariat for organizing and providing substantive support for the discussion.

The Bureau concluded its teleconference at 10:15 hours on 12 September 2013