

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the Bureau of the Eleventh Session
21 October 2013
Vienna, Austria

Participation

Bureau Members: Ambassador Macharia Kamau (Kenya), Mr. Wu Zhimin (China), Mr. Srecko Juricic (Croatia), Mr. Heikki Granholm (Finland); Mr. Raphael Azeredo (Brazil) was absent and Mr. Thiago Cavalcanti represented him at this meeting.

UNFF Secretariat: Ms. Jan L. McAlpine, Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi, Ms. Njeri Kariuki, Mr. Tomasz Juszcak, Ms. Thida Sam, Ms. Edith Niamke

Summary of Key Actions/Decisions

1. **The Bureau accepted the offer of Kenya to host the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group on the international arrangement on forests in Nairobi, Kenya from 24 to 28 February 2014. The Bureau also agreed that the second meeting of the AHEG on IAF be held in New York in December 2014 or January 2015.**
2. **The Bureau reviewed a funding proposal prepared by the Secretariat, and prioritized the intersessional activities. The Bureau also supported the proposal to be sent to donor countries as a means for fundraising for the UNFF11 intersessional activities.**
3. **The Bureau decided to extend the deadline for submission of views and proposals on the IAF to 30 November 2013.**
4. **The Bureau decided that a communiqué shall be sent to Member States to encourage them to actively participate in the eighth meeting of the Open Working Group on the SDG addressing forests in February 2014.**
5. **The Bureau paid tribute to Jan McAlpine for her dedicated service to the Forum and great achievements during her directorship.**

Agenda of the 2nd meeting of the UNFF11 Bureau
21 October 2013, Vienna, Austria
10:30am – 6pm

1. Review of the key issues including responsibilities of the Bureau Members during the Vienna Workshop
2. Key UNFF intersessional activities, timelines and required budget leading up to UNFF11
3. Update on the IAF intersessional activities:
 - a. Independent Assessment of the IAF: Initial report by the co-facilitators and the consultants on their plan (meeting with co-facilitators and consultants)
 - b. Responses to the IAF survey
 - c. Nomination of the Co-Chairs of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on the IAF
 - d. Venues of the first (invitation by Kenya) and second meeting of AHEG
4. Update on the consultations of the SDG Open Working Group on forests and preparation of the Forest Issue Brief
5. Other matters
 - a. Update on the staffing of UNFFS including the appointment of the Acting Director and the new Director

The Chair of the UNFF11 Bureau Ambassador Macharia Kamau opened the meeting and invited the Bureau to adopt the provisional agenda for the second meeting of the Bureau. The provisional agenda was adopted.

1. Review of the key issues including responsibilities of the Bureau Members during the Vienna Workshop

The Bureau discussed the organization of work of the IAF Workshop. For the breakout groups on the afternoon of 22 October, the Bureau decided that Mr. Srecko Juricic and Mr. Thiago Cavalcanti would jointly chair the breakout group on national actions, and Mr. Wu Zhimin and Mr. Heikki Granholm the breakout group on regional actions. The Bureau further decided to continue with two parallel breakout groups for the morning of 23 October focusing on elevating forests in the SDGs and post-2015 UN development agenda processes, so as to facilitate an active dialogue among participants. The Bureau agreed that Mr. Juricic will take up the chairmanship when Ambassador Kamau is absent.

The Bureau emphasized that the workshop is an opportunity for countries to become more familiar with the intersessional activities on the IAF, how to engage in the process, and how to prepare themselves for the first AHEG. It also offers an occasion for participants to refocus on the interface of the UNFF/IAF/SDG/post-2015 processes. The workshop also provides a venue for participants to communicate in an open way with the consultants and co-facilitators of the IAF independent assessment. In this regard the workshop is neither a negotiating forum nor a replacement for AHEG. To this end, there will be no official report and only oral summary by the chair of the workshop will be presented at the end of the workshop, as well as to the first meeting of the AHEG.

2. Key UNFF intersessional activities, timelines and required budget leading up to UNFF11

Pursuant to previous discussions of the Bureau on this matter, the Secretariat, prior to the 2nd meeting of the Bureau, presented a funding proposal and a summary of key activities and respective budget, leading up to UNFF11 to the Bureau. After reviewing the proposal in detail, the Bureau made several suggestions in regard to giving priority to IAF-related intersessional activities, as well as the areas where further saving might be possible, namely, in regard to communication, forest and economic development and implementation of the forest instrument. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to revise the funding proposal. The Bureau lent its full support to the funding proposal for the purposes of fundraising. The Bureau considered the funding proposal as a strong tool for the new UNFF Director to bring these issues to the attention of countries. The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to distribute a summary of key timelines and intersessional activities between now and 2015 among the participants in the workshop.

In particular, Mr. Granholm expressed his thanks to the Secretariat for providing the Bureau with the funding needs of the Secretariat. He noted appreciation for the opportunity to review and comment on the intersessional activities and associated budgets. Mr. Wu also informed the Bureau that China is considering holding a country-led initiative in relation to the IAF. The details will be provided in due course.

3. Update on the IAF intersessional activities

a. Independent Assessment of the IAF: Initial report by the co-facilitators and consultants on their plan (meeting with co-facilitators and consultants)

The co-facilitators and consultants for the IAF independent assessment, as well as the co-chair of the AHEG on the IAF from the North, joined the Bureau meeting. Mr. Hans Hoogeveen (co-facilitator, The

Netherlands), Mr. Mafa Chipeta (consultant, Malawi), Mr. Juergen Blaser (consultant, WEOG), Mr. Jorge Illueca (consultant, Panama), Mr. Ricardo Umali (consultant, Asia), Mr. Maxim Lobovikov (consultant, Eastern Europe), and Mr. Charles Barber (co-chair AHEG, USA) introduced themselves, and explained the significance of the intersessional work on the IAF, their respective responsibilities, and their initial work plan.

The secretariat informed that Mr. Chiew, the appointed co-facilitator from the South, informed the Secretariat that he was no longer able to carry out the task and has excused himself from accepting this responsibility. Ambassador Kamau informed the Bureau of the temporary arrangement for the independent assessment, whereby Mr. Mafa Chipeta, consultant from the Africa region, would act temporarily as co-facilitator from the South during the workshop in Vienna, as there was no new co-facilitator appointed yet from the South.

Mr. Wu noted that the consultants could encourage countries to participate more actively in UNFF11 and its intersessional activities. Ambassador Kamau requested the consultants to crystallize what they see as deliverables for the Bureau, and requested them to keep in the forefront of their work the reality that SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda will be a huge debate. He also requested consultants to not lose sight of financing and implementation issues, as well as how forests can contribute to other issues.

b. Responses to the IAF survey

To allow countries to provide more inputs, the Bureau decided to extend the deadline for submission of views and proposals on the IAF to 30 November 2013.

c. Nomination of the Co-Chairs of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on the IAF

Mr. Charles Barber of the United States was nominated for the North. As of the time of the Bureau meeting there was no nomination for the South. The Bureau requested the urgency of this matter to be brought to the attention of the G77 and China.

d. Venues of the first and second meeting of the AHEG (invitation by Kenya)

The Bureau discussed Kenya's offer to host the first AHEG in Nairobi and to host the second AHEG in New York. The Secretariat explained the cost difference between hosting an AHEG in New York and Nairobi, which incurs an additional \$130,000 (mainly the cost of interpretation). Other cost implications, such as travel of participants, are negligible. It was decided that the Secretariat would submit a letter to Ambassador Kamau to forward to his government, as well as to other donor countries requesting funds to cover the additional costs of hosting the AHEG in Nairobi.

Mr. Granholm also shared with the Bureau the concern expressed by some countries in his region about the security situation in Nairobi, and asked for further information on this matter when deciding on the venue of the first AHEG. The secretariat also informed that it has been in contact with UN security in Nairobi in regard to holding the AHEG1 from 24-28 February 2014 in Nairobi. To this end, the Secretariat distributed the response from the UN Security office in Nairobi among the Bureau members. The response stated that they do not anticipate any problems at that time and asked the Secretariat to proceed with planning of AHEG1 in Nairobi. In response to Mr. Granholm, Ambassador Kamau explained that while terrorist attacks have also occurred in New York, London, etc., the recent terrorist attack in Kenya, just as in the other locales, did not take place at the United Nations. This act was an act of international as well as domestic terrorism, and the Government of Kenya does not feel that we should give way to terrorist acts and react by cancelling activities in Nairobi.

The Bureau eventually decided to hold the first AHEG in Nairobi, Kenya from 24-28 February 2014, and that the second AHEG would be held either in December 2014 or January 2015 in New York. The Bureau also agreed to hold its next meeting on 23 February 2014 in Nairobi, prior to AHEG1.

4. Update on the consultations of the SDG Open Working Group on forests and preparation of the Forest Issue Brief

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the preparation of the Forest Issue Brief, which was led and coordinated by the Secretariat for the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals, in collaboration with many CPF and non-CPF organizations. The Bureau welcomed the preparation of this Brief.

The Bureau further emphasized the need for strong voices from countries on the significance of forests during the meeting of the OWG/SDG in February 2014. The Bureau also discussed the possibility of a side event for the February meeting. Mr. Granholm expressed the interest of Finland to host or co-host a side event or similar during the February meeting. The Bureau emphasized the need for further awareness-raising, as well as the possibility of devoting time during the first meeting of the AHEG in February to discuss the SDGs. The Secretariat suggested sending a communiqué to Member States on this matter, and that the Bureau emphasize it to their constituencies, highlighting the importance of the eighth meeting of the OWG that shall address forests.

Ambassador Kamau briefed the Bureau on the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and its likelihood of becoming the premier platform in the UN for political follow-up to a number of processes. He added that there will be much focus on this process, as this is where the SDGs will be adopted, as well as where much of the follow-up work on the post-2015 development agenda will be done, particularly the work on monitoring.

5. Other matters

a. Update on the staffing of UNFFS including the appointment of the Acting Director and the new Director

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the process for selection of a new UNFF Director was underway. Mr. Cavalcanti announced that there is a Brazilian candidate, Manoel Sobral, former Director of ITTO, who is being supported by the Brazilian Government.

Ambassador Kamau briefed the Bureau on his meeting with the Under-Secretary-General for DESA, where he stressed the following: (1) the mismatch between the profile of forests within the UN system, compared to other issues such as climate change, biodiversity, etc.; (2) the fact that the UNFF is the only entity of its nature approved by the General Assembly, but remains with little support; (3) that the Secretariat consistently has to seek funding, even for core activities; (4) the urgency with which the Bureau wants the post of the UNFF Director to be filled, and (5) the fact that the UNFF is poorly staffed, together with the mismatch between levels of staffing and required outputs.

The Bureau also recalled its decision at its teleconference of 12 September 2013 to send individual letters to the 5th committee for resourcing the UNFF Secretariat, and agreed to follow-up on this matter.

In light of her retirement, the Bureau also paid tribute to Ms. Jan McAlpine for her dedicated service to the Forum and the great achievements during her directorship.

The meeting was called to a close at 5:49pm Vienna time