

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the Bureau of the Eleventh
Session, 16 January 2015¹ (5:30 – 9:00 pm)

Participation

UNFFS Office, New York

Bureau Members: H.E. Mr. Noel Nelson Messone (Gabon), Mr. Wu Zhimin (China), Mr. Srecko Juricic (Croatia), Mr. Heikki Granholm (Finland), Mr. Vicente Bezerra (Brazil)

UNFF Secretariat: Mr. Manoel Sobral Filho, Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi, Ms. Barbara Tavora-Jainchill, Ms. Njeri Kariuki, Ms. Afsa Kemitale, Mr. Benjamin Singer, Mr. Ryo Nakamura, Ms. Thida Sam, Mr. David Henderson-Howat

Deputy Secretary of the Forum: Ms. Sangeeta Sharma

Others: Ambassador Bibalou (Mission of Gabon), Ms. Emilia Van Veen (Mission of Finland) Mr. Thiago Cavalcanti (Brazil)

Summary of Key Actions/Decisions

1. Remind Member States about the 30 January 2015 deadline for input on suggested building blocks for the UNFF11 Ministerial Declaration.
2. Hold an informal consultation with Member States on 9 March 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York to seek further views from Member States on the elements and components of: i) the Recommendations of the AHEG Co-Chairs (contained in Section XII of the Annex to the AHEG2 report) for the UNFF11 resolution on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, and ii) the UNFF11 Ministerial Declaration.
3. Adjust provisional organization of work for UNFF11 to include a presentation on the independent assessment report on the IAF.
4. Ask Member States who have made pledges to the UNFF Trust Fund to transfer the funds if possible prior to UNFF11, and to continue efforts to secure further contributions.
5. Mr. Vicente Bezerra (Brazil) to represent the UNFF Bureau at the Joint Meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau with Chairs of the Functional Commissions on 28 January.
6. The resumed 6th Bureau meeting was held in Interlaken on 5-6 February 2015. The next meetings of the Bureau will be held in New York on Monday, 9 March, on Friday, 17 April (if necessary) and on Sunday, 3 May 2015.

¹ Following informal consultation among Bureau members during AHEG2, the Bureau members agreed to change the original date of their 6th meeting from 17 January to the evening of 16 January 2015, immediately after the conclusion of AHEG2. Furthermore, the Bureau held the resumed 6th meeting on 5 and 6 February 2015 in Interlaken in conjunction with the Swiss CLI to complete its deliberation on item 2 of the agenda, in particular, on post-AHEG2 intersessional activity, leading up to UNFF11.

Provisional Agenda
6th meeting of the UNFF11 Bureau
16 January 2015¹
UNFFS Office, New York

- 1- Brief review of the outcome of the AHEG2
- 2- Preparations for the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests:
- 3- Update on recent and upcoming events
 - i. CPF meeting in Lima
 - ii. Swiss CLI
 - iii. Major Groups-Led Initiative in Nepal
 - iv. Post-2015 development agenda
- 4- Date and venue of the next UNFF11 Bureau meetings
- 5- Other matters:
 - a. The secretariat staffing situation and the status of its Trust Fund, including travel support for experts/delegates participating at UNFF11
 - b. Joint meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau with Chairs of the Functional Commissions

¹ Please see previous footnote.

The Chair of the UNFF11 Bureau welcomed members of the Bureau to the meeting. The provisional agenda of the 6th meeting was adopted.

1. Brief review of the outcome of the AHEG2

The Bureau considered the outcome of the AHEG2 and expressed its appreciation to the leadership of the Co-Chairs, Mr. Charles Barber (United States of America) and Mr. Raymond Landveld (Suriname). Bureau members also noted that all the work carried out over the previous two years, including the outcome from both AHEG meetings, the China CLI, the views and proposals submitted by Member States and other stakeholders, and the report of the independent assessment of the IAF would collectively provide a solid basis of inputs for UNFF11. The Bureau recorded its thanks to the AHEG Co-Chairs, the IAF Co-Facilitators and consultants, and secretariat for their important contributions in this regard.

The Bureau said that, as requested at AHEG2, it would be helpful if the secretariat could provide further background information on some of the questions raised during the meeting.

The Bureau agreed to send a further reminder to Member States about the 30 January 2015 deadline for providing input on suggested building blocks for the UNFF11 Ministerial Declaration and, at the same time, to provide Member States with the link to the documents relating to the review of the IAF.

2. Preparations for the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

The Bureau recognized that, prior to UNFF11 and in consultation with Member States, it would need to conduct informal consultations to seek further views from Member States on the elements and components of the: i) Recommendations of the AHEG Co-Chairs (contained in Section XII of the Annex to AHEG2 report) for the UNFF11 resolution on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, and ii) UNFF11 Ministerial Declaration. In this regard, the Bureau members agreed to hold an informal consultation with Member States on 9 March 2015 in the UN headquarter in New York.

In addition, the Bureau further considered the provisional organization of work for UNFF11, including the need to allow time for a presentation about the report of the independent assessment of the IAF. It was agreed that this would take place alongside the other presentations scheduled for the afternoon of Monday 4 May. There will be no substantive discussion on this report at the plenary.

The Forum Secretary explained that official *notes verbales* regarding UNFF11 would be sent to Member States from the SG's office 12 weeks in advance of the Session, and that further details would be published in the Journal 4 weeks in advance of the Forum's session in May 2015. The Journal would explain that the time limits for opening statements would be 7 minutes (for political groups), 5 minutes (for Member States) and 2-3 minutes for interventions in round-table discussions. The Journal would also explain that the meetings would be held in Conference Room 4 (the larger one, more suitable for plenary sessions) and Conference Room 2; subject to clarification about availability and costs, the Bureau requested two medium-size rooms for informal consultations and the contact groups during the Session.

Preparations for the High Level Segment were also discussed. The secretariat said that it was drafting 2-3 page concept notes, which it would share with the Bureau. There will be a list of speakers in advance of

the plenary opening session for the High Level Segment. There would not be a speakers' list for the round-table discussions, but Member States would be invited to express a preference about which parallel round-table they wished to attend. In addition, the Bureau would need to designate, at appropriate time, Co-Facilitators (one from the North and one from the South) for each round-table.

The secretariat also informed the Bureau about the side events and the relevant guidelines, which were noted by the Bureau. The Bureau agreed that, in order to contain costs and not to conflict with the negotiations, there would be a limit of two side-events per day, to be held at lunch time.

3. Update on recent and upcoming events

i. CPF meeting in Lima

The Director reported that the CPF had met in the margins of the Global Landscape Forum meeting, held in Lima, Peru in December 2014, to discuss the contents of its written input for AHEG2.

ii. Swiss CLI

Mr. Christoph Düerr (Switzerland) attended for this part of the agenda to present information about the CLI to be held from 3-6 February 2015 in Interlaken, Switzerland, on *Governing Forest landscapes – lessons learned from ten years' experience and the way forward post-2015*. He explained that this would be the sixth in a series of workshops on forest governance; previous workshops had been held in Interlaken (2004) on decentralisation, federal systems in forestry and national forest programmes, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2006) on governance and sustainable forest management, in Durban, South Africa (2008) on governance and protected areas, in Oaxaca, Mexico (2010) on governance and REDD+, and in Lviv, Ukraine (2012) on governance and green economy. He further explained that it was intended that a report would be adopted at the CLI which could be transmitted as an official document to UNFF11. Bureau members welcomed this initiative, stressing the importance of the topic under consideration and the need to deepen understanding of all aspects of governance including legal/institutional frameworks and associated capacity-building requirements.

iii. Major Groups-Led Initiative in Nepal

The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the status of preparations for a Major Group-led initiative on *Designing vehicles for securing means of implementation of SFM*, to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 2-6 March, 2015.

iv. Briefing on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

The Director updated the Bureau on the post-2015 development agenda. He explained that outcome document from the September 2015 Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda may include a declaration, the SDGs and associated targets, means of implementation, global partnership for sustainable development and follow-up and review. He also highlighted other components of the post-2015 development agenda, including the High-Level Political Forum and the preparations for the 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held from 13-16 July 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He explained that IAF had been contributing to this work through technical support to

Member States during the OWG process and by helping the UN Technical Support Team to develop the Forest Issue Brief, as well as forest-related elements of negotiating documents and the SG's Synthesis Report.

Looking ahead, the Bureau noted that a Ministerial Declaration from UNFF11 could be officially transmitted to the September 2015 Summit, and encouraged the secretariat to continue to work with Member States and within the UN system to help influence the development of forest-related indicators and preparations for the September Summit and the meeting in Addis Ababa. The Bureau expressed its appreciation of the regular updating of the UNFF website information about the post-2015 development agenda.

4. Date and venue of the next UNFF11 Bureau meetings

The Bureau agreed to hold its resumed sixth meeting in Interlaken on 5-6 February 2015, its seventh meeting in New York on Tuesday 10 March, its eight meeting (if required) in New York on Friday 17 April 2015, and its ninth meeting in New York on Sunday 3 May 2015, immediately before UNFF11.

5. Other matters:

a. The secretariat staffing situation and the status of its Trust Fund, including travel support for experts/delegates participating at UNFF11

The Director updated the Bureau with regard to the status of the Trust Fund. He explained that, on the assumption that all the money which had been pledged by countries would be transferred to the Trust Fund, the Trust Fund is currently forecast to have a deficit of \$346,000 in 2015. Unlike other DESA Divisions (where staffing is largely funded from the Regular Budget), the UNFF secretariat relies heavily on its Trust Fund to pay staff costs; in addition, the budget for travel and DSA costs associated with AHEG2 and UNFF11 is \$800,000. The Director further explained that the Regular Budget for the biennium had included \$600,000 for non-staff costs, but the remaining balance is now only \$200,000. In the light of this difficult situation he had been visiting missions and capitals to seek additional contributions to the Trust Fund. He expressed his fear that, in the absence of adequate funding, it might be necessary to adjust the number of delegates whose travel to UNFF11 could be supported. Uncertainty about contributions to the Trust Fund is also in danger of making it difficult to retain staff. The Bureau offered to support the Director in his efforts to secure additional and sustained funding, and also suggested that he write to countries that had made pledges asking them if possible to transfer funds prior to UNFF11 in May.

v. Joint meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau with Chairs of the Functional Commissions

The Bureau Chair indicated that unfortunately he would not be available to represent the UNFF Bureau at the Joint meeting of the ECOSOC Bureau with Chairs of the Functional Commissions, to be held in New York on 28 January. The Bureau agreed that it should be represented by Mr. Vicente Bezerra (Brazil).

The meeting was suspended at 9:00 pm on 16 January 2015. The meeting was resumed on 5 February 2015 and concluded on 6 February 2015 at 1:00 pm.