



SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

"FORESTS IN THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT"

Pan-European workshop as a basis for a regional contribution to the United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF)

*Koli, Joensuu, Finland
3 – 5 September 2008*

Background

In October 2000, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) established the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) with the main objective to promote "... *the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end...*" based on the Rio Declaration, the Forest Principles, Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the outcome of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) -processes and other forest related achievements.

According to the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the UNFF, its 8th session in early 2009 will address, among its agenda items, forests in a changing environment. This will include thematic issues on forests and climate change; reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation in all types of forests and combating desertification including low forest cover countries; and forests and biodiversity conservation, including protected areas.

Topics of the 8th session of the UNFF are also addressed by other fora, notably the three Rio conventions United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention on Combating Deforestation (UNCCD) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Strengthening cooperation and synergies between these conventions, forest-related organizations and processes is essential and regularly emphasized by their governing bodies.

The UNFF at its 7th session invited relevant regional and sub-regional forest related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes to address issues and agenda items planned for each UNFF session and to provide a concise summary of their deliberations. These should be submitted to the

UNFF secretariat well in advance in order to contribute to the discussions of UNFF sessions. The secretariat will prepare a summary report on the basis of regional inputs.

The Ministerial Conference of the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in Warsaw November 2007 welcomed the achievements of the 7th session of the UNFF and highlighted the importance of providing European inputs to the international forest policy dialogue. The European countries committed themselves to develop in cooperation with other regional bodies, processes and agreements, consistent inputs to the work of UNFF, inter alia, through sharing regional perspectives, approaches and experiences. The Warsaw Ministerial Declaration and the two Resolutions addressed several substantive issues for enhanced collaboration, including:

- Enhance regional contribution to the achievement of Four Global Objectives on Forests agreed by the UNFF and the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests;
- Role of forests and their products in climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Role of forests in combating desertification;
- Implementation of the relevant work programmes on biological diversity;
- Joint activities of the forest and water sectors, including mitigation of natural hazards such as floods and droughts;
- Support Forest Law Enforcement and Governance processes;
- Enhance use of wood as a renewable raw material and source of energy.

As part of the MCPFE Work Programme for 2008 - 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland, with the financial support of the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, will organise a Pan-European workshop “Forests in the changing environment” on 3 - 5 September 2008. The workshop will provide a basis for discussion and elaboration of a contribution from Europe to the 8th session of the UNFF to be held in New York from 20 April to 1 May 2009.

Objectives

The workshop will have a European perspective to global issues. The objectives of the workshop are:

- Explore what are the priority issues related to the role of forests and sustainable forest management in the changing environment: climate change, loss of forest cover, forest degradation, desertification, biodiversity, protected areas;
- Share views on how to address these priority issues;
- Discuss how to ensure coherent actions at the national, regional and global levels;
- Provide a basis for a regional contribution to the work of UNFF.

The outcome of the workshop will be presented at the European Forest Week in 20 to 24 October 2008 and at the MCPFE Expert Level Meeting 12 to 13 November 2008, and forwarded to the UNFF secretariat.

Participants

Participants will include:

- European policy makers from governmental bodies, covering forest and environmental policies, and economic development;
- Representatives of the different European stakeholders, including major groups;
- Representatives from the intergovernmental bodies;
- Other invited experts.

Organization

- The workshop is an integral part of the MCPFE Work Programme. The preparation and implementation of the workshop will be coordinated with the Liaison Unit Oslo (LUO).
- The Steering group facilitates the preparation and implementation of the workshop. It includes a limited number of eminent experts from selected European states (Austria, Finland, France, and the Czech Republic), MCPFE/LUO and three regional/intergovernmental bodies (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Environment for Europe/Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy and European Forest Institute).

Workshop programme

2 September 2008	
	Arrival of the participants at Koli
16:00 – 21:00	Registration of participants, Sokos Hotel Koli
19:00 – 22:00	Informal get-together “Ice-breaker”, Sokos Hotel Koli

3 September 2008	
7:30 – 9:00	Registration of participants
9:00 -	Opening of the workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome address by Finland, <i>Ms. Sirkka-Liisa Anttila, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry</i>• Opening remarks by MCPFE, <i>Mr. Knut Øistad, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Norway</i>• Opening remarks by the UNFF Secretariat
9:45 -	Introduction: Forests in the changing environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key note presentation on the direct and indirect causes of deforestation, forest degradation and desertification, <i>Dr. Markku Kanninen, Director, Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Indonesia</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key note presentation on the role of forests and climate change: impacts, adaptation and mitigation, <i>Dr. Gert-Jan Nabuurs, Ass. Prof., Alterra, the Netherlands</i> • Key note presentation on the role of forests and biological diversity, <i>Dr. Elena Kulikova, Forest Programme Director, WWF, Russia.</i> • Presentation on the Pan-European commitments, achievements and plans for future implementation concerning forests in the changing environment, <i>Mr. Arne Ivar Sletnes, Head of the Liaison Unit Oslo, MCPFE</i> • General discussion
12:30 -	Lunch
13:30 -	<p>Working group session I, Priority issues in the context of the themes of the UNFF8 session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the priority issues concerning deforestation, forest degradation and desertification; • Identifying the priority issues concerning forests and climate change; • Identifying the priority issues concerning forests and biological diversity; • Exploring possible linkages between the identified priority issues. <p>Plenary session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting back • General discussion
18:30 -	Evening programme

4 September 2008	
9:00 -	<p>Working group session II; Further work on the priority issues, guiding questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to be done in relation to the identified priority issues? • What should be discussed at the 8th session of the UNFF in relation to identified priority issues? • How to ensure coherent action at national, regional and global level, including between different bodies? <p>Plenary session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting back • General discussion
13:00	Lunch
14:15 -	Excursion

5 September 2008

8:30 - 12: 00	Plenary session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the workshop report/summary• Discussion on the workshop report• Concluding remarks
12:00 -	Lunch
	Departure