

Minutes of the first meeting of the UNFF2 Bureau

2. Preparation for the second session of UNFF (4-15 March 2002)

2.1. Organization of work for UNFF2

The Secretariat introduced an organization of work for UNFF2, with revisions based on the suggestions made at by the informal consultation with some Bureau members on 2 August 2001. The Bureau reviewed the organization of work and allocation of time in context of the UNFF mandate, priority to the substantive items under consideration at the second session and practical considerations. The Bureau appreciated suggestions and proposals received from countries on the organization of work for UNFF2.

The Bureau made the following suggestions:

- Allocate only one half-day meeting for "Trade and sustainable forest management";
- Allocate two full days (4 Plenary meetings) for Ministerial Dialogue with heads of CPF organizations and
- High-level ministerial segment on 13-14 March (Wednesday and Thursday);
- Arrange a plenary meeting on the morning of Friday, 15 March to jointly consider the reports of two working groups; and
- Undertake advance preparation towards expected outcomes of the high-level ministerial segment.

2.2. Status of documentation for UNFF2

The Bureau expressed satisfaction with the arrangements and progress being made on the preparation of documents by the Secretariat and CPF member organizations. CPF member organizations have agreed to assume focal agency roles for specific topics.

selection of experts, as well as on the composition, terms of reference and scheduling of meetings; and the Secretariat will draft terms of reference for each international expert group for the consideration by the Bureau at its next meeting.

2.8. Informal briefings of delegations in New York on preparations for UNFF2

Bureau members noted the usefulness of such briefings in the past and encouraged the Secretariat to organize similar meetings once the documents are finalized. The Bureau members suggested organizing general briefing as well as separate briefings to regional groups. The Bureau members will make efforts to participate in such briefings.

3. Update on CPF activities

3.1. Focal Agency role

3.2. Framework for the CPF's Contribution to the work of the UNFF

3.3. Next CPF meetings

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau of the activities of the CPF, including the outcome of the recent CPF meeting of 6-7 August in Rome. CPF has been established by the members of the previous "Inter-agency Taskforce on Forests (ITFF)", with three additional international instruments and organizations (FCCC, CCD and GEF) as its new members. So far, CPF has held three meetings, and two meetings are scheduled in the near future (8-9 October in New York, and 9-10 November in Yokohama). The Bureau appreciated the ongoing activities of the CPF in support of the UNFF. In particular, it noted with appreciation the finalization of "Focal agency" roles of CPF members, preparation of the SG's reports for UNFF2, and the work in progress on CPF "Framework".

It is suggested that it would be desirable for the Chairman or a representative of the Bureau to attend the future meetings of the CPF.

4. Follow-up to the informal consultation meeting of 2 August

4.1. Letters to Governments from DESA

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the letter by Mr. Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary General sent to all permanent missions to the United Nations in New York requesting, by 15 October 2001, to provide:

- voluntary country reports on implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action;
- suggestions on intersessional work to be undertaken by ad-hoc expert groups and country sponsored initiatives; and
- nomination of a national focal point in each country on matters related to UNFF matters.

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4.3. Secretariat staffing

The Bureau expressed deep concern about the inadequacy of staff in the Secretariat in context of the magnitude of the substantial tasks ahead.

The Bureau also discussed this matter with Mr. Desai and inquired about DESA's plans towards the recruitment of the next Coordinator and Head, other staff members and secondment from CPF member organizations. Mr. Desai assured that he was expediting the process as much as it can be done under the circumstances. He explained that he has no authority to recruit the personnel until the regular budget, for the biennium 2002-2003, is appropriated by the General Assembly.

5. Future meetings of the Bureau

Bureau agreed to hold at least two meetings before March 2002. A tentative date for the next meeting is set for 26 or 27 November 2001.

6. Other matters

6.1. Planned country-led initiatives on monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR)

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the Government-led initiative on MAR in Yokohama, Japan on 5-8 November 2001. Considering its relevance to the work of UNFF2, the Bureau underscored the need for wider participation by countries in it. The Bureau members also requested the Chairman to attend the meeting and to reinforce the Bureau's interest in it.

The Bureau was also informed of another possible MAR meeting in Rome, currently under consideration by some interested governments and organizations. The Secretariat will keep the Bureau members informed of the status of both of these meetings.

6.2. Other issues

The Bureau appreciated Mr. Desai for joining the meeting and for sharing his views on planning for the