

**REPORT**

**of the**

**TWENTIETH SESSION**

**of the**

**LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Havana, Cuba  
10-14 September 1998



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## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS

### STATE OF FORESTRY IN THE REGION

1. The Commission recommended that forest fires be dealt with in a subregional group context and requested the corresponding support from FAO (para. 11).
2. The Commission recommended that FAO continue to support some of the activities of the subregional group for Central America and Mexico, i.e. criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of forests, forest fires, wildlife, protected wildlands, the Mesoamerican biological corridor and forest policy (para. 12).

### **FAO REPORTS: FAO forestry strategy and implications for future Programme of Work and Budget**

3. The Commission recognized that the forestry strategies proposed within the region had to be formulated with people's aspirations in mind in order to avoid forestry activity being directed by pressure groups whose interests were often of a different nature and emphasized the need to acknowledge the impact of other sectors on deforestation and forest degradation. It recommended that FAO undertake further analytical work to help resolve existing problems and raise people's awareness (para. 16).

### **FAO REPORTS: Review of FAO Regular and Field Programmes, including follow-up to the recommendations of the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission**

4. The Commission noted the concern of many countries over the reduction in the field programme in the region, as compared to other regions, and recommended that FAO emphasize aspects that had been of high priority in the past and that are still important, such as the gathering, processing and handling of data, dendroenergy and, especially, forest management and conservation (para. 19).
5. The Commission recommended that FAO take steps to expedite the processing and negotiating of project documents. In addition, it requested FAO to help countries increase their formulation and negotiation capacity for forestry projects (para 20).

### **FAO REPORTS: Technical Cooperation Networks**

6. Taking into account the financial problems, the time of existence of certain networks and the time constraints affecting proper performance by the Technical Secretariats, the Commission recommended that the FAO Regional Office, in consultation with national forest authorities, examine the future of the Technical Cooperation Networks with their Regional and National Coordinators and report back on the matter to the next session of the LACFC (para. 28).
7. The Commission accepted that there were no overriding reasons to maintain the Committee on Forestry Research and considered the decision of the Conference to be appropriate, but at the same time recommended that FAO and Member Nations of the region reinforce interlinkage and the exchange of technical and scientific information from research, through horizontal technical cooperation among countries, in the framework of the subregional groups, with the support of FAO (para. 30).

## **FOLLOW-UP TO UNCED IN FORESTRY: IPF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION AND THE IFF PROCESS**

8. The Commission expressed its concern that, as the CSD/IPF/IFF process was very complex, it was important to keep countries informed of recent developments and recommended that FAO contribute to this process (para. 36).

### **IN-SESSION SEMINAR: FOREST VALUATION**

9. The Commission had increased its awareness of the importance of forest valuation, noting the lack of knowledge of available tools for this, and of information on physical data and prices to conduct such a valuation. In view of this, the Commission recommended: (a) training on the methodology and dissemination of practical tools for forest valuation; (b) case studies to test and validate the tools for forest valuation; and (c) sharing this information through an informal network within the Commission (para. 57).

### **MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY**

10. The Commission requested that the following items be drawn to the attention of the Committee on Forestry at its next session:

- The need to reinforce the Field Programme, including FAO support to countries in project formulation and negotiation to attract more funds from donors to this end;
- The importance of conducting studies into the causes of deforestation to help resolve this major problem and raise people's awareness of this issue;
- Because of the lack of know-how regarding available practical tools for forest valuation and the shortage of trained personnel in this field, the Commission requested related support from FAO and the international community;
- In view of the importance attributed by the LACFC to its Subregional groups, the Commission requested that FAO and other bodies provide support for implementation of the intersessional programmes of work that had been drawn up at the 20<sup>th</sup> Session;
- The need for the national forestry programmes to be supported at top national policy-making level (para. 59).

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held its 20<sup>th</sup> Session in Havana from 10 to 14 September 1998, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Cuba. The session was attended by delegates from 20 Member States, representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and observers from four international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The agenda is given in *Appendix A*, a full list of participants in *Appendix B*, and a list of documents submitted for consideration by the Commission in *Appendix C*.

2. Mr Dimas Arcia, the outgoing Chairman of the LACFC presided over the inaugural ceremony, which was held in the presence of Mr Fidel Ramos, Vice-Minister of Agriculture for Forestry Activities of Cuba. Mr Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department of FAO welcomed participants on behalf of the Director-General of FAO. Her Excellency Mrs Rosa Elena Simeón, Minister of Science, Technology and Environment welcomed the participants on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cuba and declared the session open.

3. The Commission was honoured by the presence of His Excellency Mr Alfredo Jordan Morales, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Cuba, at its last working session, who delivered a message on behalf of the Government stressing the importance of forestry in the programme of agricultural and national economic development and urging other countries to take similar actions.

## ADOPTION OF AGENDA (Item 1)

4. The Provisional Agenda was adopted without change.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Item 2)

5. In accordance with Articles II-1 and II-5 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission elected a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and two Rapporteurs. The following Members of the Commission were unanimously elected:

Chairperson:	Fidel Ramos (Cuba) Caribbean Subregional Group
Vice-Chairpersons:	Dimas Arcia (Panama) Central America and Mexico Subregional Group Atilio Ligrone (Uruguay) Southern Cone Subregional Group Josefina Takahashi (Peru) Amazon Subregional Group
Rapporteurs:	Atilio Ligrone (Uruguay) Marcos Nieto Lara (Cuba)

Mr Kyran Thelen, Senior Forestry Officer of FAO, served as Secretary.

## STATE OF FORESTRY IN THE REGION (Item 3)

6. The Commission reviewed the state of forestry in the region on the basis of Secretariat Note FO:LACFC/98/2 which had drawn upon the national reports available at the time of drafting and other sources. The document should therefore be considered as preliminary and will need to be updated and expanded after the session, when a more detailed account of the state of forestry in the region will be published when all the reports are received.

7. The Secretariat outlined the state of forest resources in the region, indicating that there were 950 million hectares of forest land in 1995 according to the FAO *State of the World's Forests 1997* report. Many countries pointed out, however, that the figures needed to be updated and if possible consider in more detail the causes of deforestation and the locations by type of forest and susceptibility to degradation of the environment. In this connection, the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000 is expected to provide a more complete and accurate picture.

8. All the countries of the region are engaged in efforts to control deforestation and promoting reforestation and afforestation as a central component of their forest policies and activities. Many countries have, or are considering implementing, related incentive programmes.

9. The Commission noted with satisfaction that growing national concern over the future of forest resources and their linkage with environmental protection had led many countries of the region to adjust their forestry legislation accordingly.

10. Many countries had reviewed their national institutions responsible for forest administration or were in the process of doing so, with the intention of aligning them to the new requirements of sustainable forest development. Often, however, the problems affecting public forest institutions continued to persist. For example, there is a lack of a rank and political status in proportion to the importance and new demands of the sector, and inadequate resources to perform their various administrative and technical functions properly. There is also a frequent lack of coordination and dovetailing between institutions involved in the forestry sector as well as in the administrative and/or technical functions that are carried out by different ministries or agencies.

11. The Commission noted with concern the recent increase in the number and scale of forest fires, that coincided with the droughts associated with the El Niño phenomenon. In this connection, it welcomed the Secretariat's announcement that a meeting on the policy issues related to the underlying causes of forest fires would be held at FAO Headquarters in Rome from 28 to 30 October 1998. The Commission recommended that this topic be dealt with in a subregional group context and requested the corresponding support from FAO.

12. The Secretariat of the Central American Council on Forests and Protected Areas (CCAB-AP) presented a report on activities conducted since the last LACFC session by the subregional group for Central America and Mexico, emphasizing those related to criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of forests, forest fires, wildlife, protected wildlands, the Mesoamerican biological corridor and forest policy. The Commission recommended that FAO continue to support some of these activities.

13. The Southern Cone Subregional Group reported on its activities during the same period. It drew attention to a recent meeting of the group in Santiago, Chile, where discussions had

centred on forest land cadaster and implementation of a forest information network, as well as issues and activities of the group to be discussed at the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the LACFC.

#### **FAO REPORTS (Item 4)**

##### **a. FAO forestry strategy and implications for future Programme of Work and Budget**

14. The Commission was informed of the draft FAO Strategic Plan for Forestry, based on document FO:LACFC/98/3, which describes the mission, objectives, implementation strategies and vision for the future for FAO's forestry programmes. The Strategic Plan provides the general guidelines on which the medium-term plan and the biennial Programme of Work and Budget will be based. The Commission was also informed that the Strategic Plan had been drafted by the Forestry Department prior to the formulation of FAO's General Strategic Plan. Elements of a revised Forestry Strategy aligned within the overall FAO Strategic Framework was therefore outlined.

15. The Commission welcomed the initiative to develop the Strategic Plan. It recognized that the proposed strategy implied that more financial resources would be required for FAO activities in forestry. However, better utilization of existing resources and more use of extra-budgetary funds could also be a means of implementing the strategy.

16. The Commission recognized that the forestry strategies proposed within the region had to be formulated with people's aspirations in mind in order to avoid forestry activity being directed by pressure groups whose interests were often of a different nature. It also emphasized the need to acknowledge the impact of other sectors on deforestation and forest degradation. The Commission recommended to FAO to undertake further analytical work to help resolve existing problems and raise people's awareness.

##### **b. Review of FAO Regular and Field Programmes, including follow-up to the recommendations of the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission**

17. The Secretariat introduced documents FO:LACFC/98/4a *Review of FAO's Regular Programme, including follow-up to the requests and recommendations of the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission* and FO:LACFC/98/4b *Review of FAO Field Programme*.

18. The Commission recognized the accomplishments in implementing FAO's Regular Programme in Forestry. It called for closer attention to the region's forestry sector and more funds for key activities, such as improved compilation and dissemination of information on forest resources, causes of deforestation and the impact of other sectors. The Commission stressed the need to link the social and economic factors that affected forestry activities for the benefit of other parties involved in the sector, such as economists, planners, policy makers and the public in general. It also expressed the need to provide greater resources for forestry education and research.

19. The Commission noted the concern of many countries over the reduction in the field programme in the region, as compared to other regions, and recommended that FAO emphasize aspects that had been of high priority in the past and that are still important, such as the gathering, processing and handling of data, dendroenergy, forestry education and training, and management and conservation of forests.

20. The Commission took note of the concern voiced by some countries regarding the length of time taken to process and negotiate project documents. It recommended that FAO take steps to expedite the process for the benefit of member countries. In addition, it requested FAO to help countries increase their formulation and negotiation capacity for forestry projects.

21. The Commission was informed of FAO's follow-up action to the recommendations made at its 19<sup>th</sup> Session and expressed its satisfaction with the results.

c. Technical Cooperation Networks, including the future of the LACFC Committee on Forestry Research

22. The Secretariat introduced documents FO:LACFC/98/5 *Technical Cooperation Networks in the Forestry Sector sponsored by the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean* and FO:LACFC/98/6 *The future of the Committee on Forestry Research of the LACFC*.

23. The Commission took note of the activities that had been conducted since its last session by the Technical Cooperation Networks (TCNs), with support from the FAO Regional Office and other institutions in the areas of National Parks, other Protected Areas and Wildlife; Watershed Management; Agroforestry Systems; Dendroenergy; and Forestry and Related Environmental Matters, for the Caribbean Countries.

24. The Commission recalled that some of its subsidiary bodies had been replaced by TCNs following a recommendation at its 15<sup>th</sup> Session in San José, Costa Rica, in 1986.

25. The Commission noted that, with the exception of the Caribbean Network, the other TCNs had been functioning for over ten years.

26. The Commission recalled with concern that the operating funds provided by FAO for the functioning of the Networks had decreased over the past years because of general budget restrictions and new priorities in the Forestry Department and the FAO Regional Office. This affected the implementation of activities and reduced the time available to the FAO Regional Office to act as Technical Secretariat to the TCNs.

27. The Commission however recognized that the TCNs had an important function in the forestry sector as they provided an effective mechanism for the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

28. Taking into account the financial problems, the time of existence of certain networks and the time constraints affecting proper performance by the Technical Secretariats, the Commission recommended that the FAO Regional Office, in consultation with national forest authorities, examine the future of the TCNs with their Regional and National Coordinators and report back on the matter to the next session of the LACFC.

29. The Commission was informed that the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of FAO had adopted Resolution 13/97 which, among other matters, recommended that the Parent Bodies responsible for the Subsidiary Bodies listed in Annex B, which included the Committee on Forestry Research of the LACFC, take the necessary measures to abolish them, unless they considered that there were good reasons for retaining any of these bodies, taking into account the financial and programme implications.

30. The Commission accepted that there were no overriding reasons to maintain this Committee and considered the decision of the Conference to be appropriate, but at the same time recommended that FAO and the Member Nations of the region reinforce interlinkage and the exchange of technical and scientific information from research, through horizontal technical cooperation among countries, in the framework of the subregional groups, with the support of FAO.

#### **FOLLOW-UP TO UNCED IN FORESTRY: IPF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION AND THE IFF PROCESS (Item 5)**

31. The Secretariat introduced document FO:LACFC/98/7 on the *Follow-up to UNCED in forestry: CSD/IPF/IFF process*.

32. The Commission was informed that at its Third Session in April 1995, the CSD had established the IPF, which has formulated coordinated proposals for action. When the IPF ceased its activities in February 1997, it had generated a better understanding of sustainable forest management of all types of forests, but left pending a few key questions of high political relevance.

33. The Commission took note that the results of the IPF process were discussed at the 19<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the UN General Assembly in June 1997 and that it had been decided to establish the IFF, which would report to the CSD at its Eighth Session in 2000. The Forum will work towards consensus for international arrangements and mechanisms on all types of forests. In this context, the question of whether these arrangements and mechanisms should have a legally binding character is very important. FAO, in its role as a neutral forum should facilitate the discussion of advantages and disadvantages of both options if requested by Member Countries.

34. The Commission was further informed that, in order to facilitate the work of the IPF, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF) was established as an informal working alliance incorporating many international organizations working in forestry development. It has proved to be a useful informal arrangement to coordinate the activities of its member organizations. The ITFF agreed to establish lead agency responsibility for each of the 12 programme elements of the Programme of Work of the IPF, covering the whole range of forestry related issues.

35. The Commission recognized the importance for countries to undertake a detailed analysis of the proposed action ensuing from the CSD/IPF/IFF process and to examine how it can be taken into consideration within the framework of their national forest programmes.

36. The Commission expressed its concern that, due to the complexity of the process, it was very important to keep countries informed of recent developments and recommended that FAO contribute to this process. In this regard, the Commission expressed its satisfaction that the next issue of FAO's *State of the World's Forests 1999* will dedicate one chapter especially to this subject.

#### The National Forest Programmes

37. The Secretariat introduced document FO:LACFC/98/Inf.6 *The National Forest Programmes*.

38. The Commission recognized the important role of the national forest programmes as a central element for implementation of the action proposed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests in the region, in addition to the enabling role of FAO, which was performed with the support of Project GCP/RLA/027/NET *Support to the National Forest Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

39. The Commission took note of the stocktaking of national forest programmes that FAO would conduct in the region in 1998 and whose outcome would be reported to the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry, to be held from 1 to 5 March 1999 in Rome, and the next session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, to be held in May 1999 in Geneva, Switzerland.

40. The Commission recognized the importance for the national forest programmes to receive support from top policy-makers if they were to carry out their role in the process of sustainable forest development and execute the proposals of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests.

#### **ACTIVITIES OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL/INTERGOVERNMENTAL/NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE REGION (Item 6)**

41. The Vice-President for International Development and Conservation of the World Resources Institute (WRI) delivered a statement on bioregional planning and management. The Institute had collaborated with FAO and countries of the region in the preparation of the Global Strategy for Biodiversity, and was in the process of coordinating activities with the Latin American Technical Cooperation Network on National Parks, other Protected Areas and Wildlife, to study and promote bioregional management in the Region.

42. More specifically, the aim was to reinforce forestry activities so as to safeguard the biodiversity and ecosystem services that were the building blocks for development. Expected changes in coming years indicated a need to complement the protected areas with additional strategies to deal with the impacts of fragmented forest cover, isolated wildlands and pollution, among other matters.

43. The Executive Secretary of the Central American Council on Forests and Protected Areas (CCAB-AP) described the Council. He stated that it had been set up by the Presidents of the Central American countries and that its Formal Members included Forest Administrators, Heads of Protected Areas and Coordinators of National Forest Programmes.

44. Other Central American organizations were associated with the work of the Council as Observer Members, for example, the Chamber of Forest Entrepreneurs of Central America, with whom three regional events had been organized, the Association of Forest Professionals of Central America, which is involved in organizing Forestry Congresses of Central America and the Coordinating Body for Indigenous and Rural Affairs which also holds its own events and places recommendations before the Council.

45. The challenge facing the Council is to halt the destruction and degradation of forests, which constitute the basis for overcoming poverty for some 30 million inhabitants of the region. The Council requested support from the LACFC in meeting this challenge.

46. The Director of the Brazilian Forestry Association (SBS), which represents the private sector, presented data on the contribution of forestry to the national economy: 2.2% GDP, 7%

of exports and the generation of 700 000 direct and 2 000 000 indirect jobs. He reported on cooperation programmes with the Federal Government aimed at guiding and strengthening public policies and developing forestry, with an emphasis on export programmes, streamlining of operations, participation in international fora (for example, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, meetings of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the LACFC and programmes to promote Brazilian exports).

47. The following suggestions were made to the participants on the basis of the experience of the SBS:

- to broaden dialogue between the production sector and the Government;
- to promote greater dissemination of the institutional aspects of the forestry sector among member countries;
- to promote internal debate among stakeholders within countries to reach a consensus over contentious issues such as international trade, the establishment of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, concepts of sustainability and eco-labelling;
- to implement communication strategies to inform the public about the benefits of forestry, forest plantations and environmental, social and economic aspects related to forests.

48. The representative of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Training Centre (CATIE) explained its functioning as a centre of excellence and drew attention to its capacity of assist countries in forestry education and research.

### **THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR FINANCING SUSTAINABLE FOREST DEVELOPMENT**

49. The Delegate of Bolivia, on behalf of the Delegation of Argentina, introduced document FO:LACFC/98/Inf.7 *The Kyoto Protocol: New Opportunities for Financing Sustainable Forest Development*.

50. The Commission was informed of the Kyoto Protocol and its Clean Development Mechanism as a new opportunity for financing the process of sustainable forest development in the region.

51. The Commission recognized the importance of the Protocol and the Mechanism and urged countries to look into the potential opportunities they represented.

52. The Commission was also informed of the Fourth Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), which would be held in November 1998 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and urged the members of the LACFC to participate in its activities.

### **PREPARATION OF WORK PLANS OF THE SUBREGIONAL GROUPS OF THE LACFC: CARIBBEAN, CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO, AMAZON AND THE SOUTHERN CONE (Item 7)**

53. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/98/8 *Preparation of Work Plans of the Subregional Groups of the LACFC: Caribbean, Central America and Mexico, Amazon and the Southern Cone* which referred to the creation of these groups at the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the

LACFC. The groups then assembled individually to programme their activities for the period 1998-2000. Their proposals are given in Appendix D.

#### **IN-SESSION SEMINAR: FOREST VALUATION (Item 8)**

54. The Secretariat introduced the item on the basis of Secretariat Note FO:LACFC/98/9 and reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of forest valuation practices, including the reason to accord special attention to this subject. Improved knowledge of forest values will place the forest sector in a better position when negotiating financial allocations to it, in land use issues and in formulating rules and regulations. However, in order to maximize the benefits of such improved knowledge, it must serve as a basis for informed decisions at the correct level. For example, a landless farmer who intends to clear land for subsistence farming will not be convinced of the value of forests unless he/she receives compensation, financial or otherwise, for not destroying the forest.

55. The International System of National Accounts provides a source for forest values, which could be better utilized by foresters. Special accounts covering the forest sector, such as the System of Integrated Environmental Accounting (SEEA) could provide valuable economic information for policy and funding decisions as well as for environmental monitoring.

56. The Commission noted that some of the issues concerning forest valuation can be solved at the national level, but many forest issues have to be resolved through international negotiations as the corresponding benefits accrue to the international community. Better valuation of forest cost and benefits would provide a strong bargaining position for those countries that have forests for common benefits such as carbon sequestration, climate change mitigation and conservation of biological diversity.

57. The Commission had increased its awareness of the importance of forest valuation, noting the lack of knowledge of available tools for this, and of information on physical data and prices to conduct such a valuation. In view of this, the Commission recommended: (a) training on the methodology and dissemination of practical tools for forest valuation; (b) case studies to test and validate the tools for forest valuation; and (c) sharing this information through an informal network within the Commission.

#### **SIDE MEETING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MAHOGANY NETWORK IN THE NEOTROPICS**

58. In accordance with Secretariat Note FO:LACFC/98/Inf.5, a side meeting was held to discuss the establishment of a mahogany network in the neotropics. Participants were informed about some of the most important activities that FAO has been conducting to support and promote the conservation and sustainable utilization of the genetic resources of mahogany. This was in response to recommendations from various bodies, but especially the FAO Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources. In addition, participants were informed on related activities that other institutions are carrying out independently.

#### **MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY (Item 9)**

59. The Commission requested that the following items be drawn to the attention of the Committee on Forestry at its next session:

- The need to reinforce the Field Programme, including FAO support to countries in project formulation and negotiation to attract more funds from donors to this end.
- The importance of conducting studies into the causes of deforestation to help resolve this major problem and raise people's awareness of this issue.
- Because of the lack of know-how regarding available practical; tools for forest valuation and the shortage of trained personnel in this field, the Commission requested related support from FAO and the International Community.
- In view of the importance attributed by the LACFC to its Subregional groups, the Commission requested that FAO and other bodies provide support for implementation of the intersessional programmes of work that had been drawn up at the 20<sup>th</sup> Session.
- The need for the National Forestry Programmes to be supported at top national policy-making level.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS (Item 10)**

60. The Commission expressed satisfaction for the invitation extended by the delegation of Mexico, in its capacity as Chair of the North American Forest Commission (NAFC), to the bureau of the LACFC to participate in the next session of the NAFC, in Villahermosa, Tabasco, Mexico, from 16 to 20 November 1998. Delegations were also invited to attend the Joint Meeting of the Silviculture and Forest Genetics Study Groups of the NAFC, scheduled to be held at the beginning of 1999 in Merida, Mexico.

61. The delegation of Peru informed the Commission of the Latin American Forestry Congress to be held in Lima, Peru in November 1999 and requested delegations to promote this event in their countries. The Commission took note of this initiative and agreed to publicize the Congress in their respective countries.

62. The delegation of Brazil announced the International Meeting of Experts on Forest Protected Areas sponsored by the Governments of Brazil and the United States that would take place in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in March 1999.

63. The delegation of Guatemala suggested that the agenda at next LACFC session include an item on forest resources and their industrial utilization.

#### **DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Item 11)**

64. The Commission welcomed the proposal of the delegation of Colombia to host the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the LACFC in the year 2000. Many delegations supported this initiative and thanked the delegation of Mexico for its offer at the 19<sup>th</sup> session which was graciously declined in favour of Colombia in the spirit of maintaining the principle of rotation among the subregions.

**APPENDIX A****AGENDA****Item**

1. Adoption of agenda.
2. Election of officers.
3. State of forestry in the Region.
4. FAO reports:
  - (a) FAO forestry strategy and implications for future Programme of Work and Budget.
  - (b) Review of FAO Regular and Field Programmes, including follow-up to the requests and recommendations of the nineteenth session of the Commission.
  - (c) Technical cooperation networks, including the future of the LACFC Committee on Forestry Research.
5. Follow-up to UNCED in forestry: IPF proposals for action and the IFF process.
6. Activities of other international/intergovernmental/non-governmental organizations in the Region.
7. Preparation of work plans of the subregional groups of the LACFC: Caribbean, Central America and Mexico, Amazon and the Southern Cone.
8. In-session seminar: Forest valuation.
9. Matters to be referred to the Committee on Forestry.
10. Other business.
11. Date and place of next session.
12. Adoption of report.

## APPENDIX B

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman:	Fidel Ramos (Cuba)
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## APPENDIX C

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	FO:LACFC/98/1	Provisional agenda.
3	FO:LACFC/98/2	State of Forestry in the Latin American and Caribbean Region: Period 1996-1997.
4a	FO:LACFC/98/3	FAO's Strategic Plan for Forestry.
4b	FO:LACFC/98/4a	Review of FAO Regular Programme, including follow-up to the requests and recommendations of the nineteenth session of the Commission.
4b	FO:LACFC/98/4b	Review of FAO Field Programme.
4c	FO:LACFC/98/5	Technical Cooperation Networks in the Forestry Sector Sponsored by the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.
4c	FO:LACFC/98/6	The Future of the Committee on Forestry Research of the LACFC.
5	FO:LACFC/98/7	Follow-up to UNCED in Forestry: Commission on Sustainable Development/Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (CSD/IPF/IFF Process).
7	FO:LACFC/98/8	Preparation of Work Plans of the Subregional Groups of the LACFC: Caribbean, Central America and Mexico, Amazon and the Southern Cone.
8	FO:LACFC/98/9	Background Information Paper on Forest Valuation.

**Information documents**

FO:LACFC/98/Inf.1	Information Note.
FO:LACFC/98/Inf.2	Provisional timetable.
FO:LACFC/98/Inf.3	List of documents.
FO:LACFC/98/Inf.4	Information Note. Excerpts from the Proceedings of the XI World Forestry Congress (Antalya, Turkey, 13-22 October 1997).

FO:LACFC/98/Inf.5

Information Note. Side Meeting on the Establishment of a Mahogany Network in the Neotropics.

FO:LACFC/98/Inf.6

FO:LACFC/98/Inf.7

Information Note. The National Forest Programmes. The Kyoto Protocol: New opportunities for financing sustainable forest development.

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Ecuador  
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Honduras  
Mexico  
Nicaragua  
Panama  
Paraguay  
Peru  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Uruguay  
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**APPENDIX D****PLANS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION'S SUBREGIONAL GROUPS:  
CARIBBEAN, CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO,  
AMAZON AND SOUTHERN CONE****REPORT AND WORKPLAN OF THE CARIBBEAN SUBREGIONAL GROUP**

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Cuba, Dominican Republic, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Group recognized and reaffirmed the relevance of the LACFC decision to work during the inter-sessional periods in a subregional framework in order to benefit from the advantages of sharing certain geographic, ecological, economic and cultural characteristics.

It also noted that few activities had been put into effect since the last session of the LACFC, mainly because of the shortage of funds.

It reiterated the need to take advantage of all the fora and frameworks for negotiation that had opened up in the subregion, such as the CARICOM and the recently established Association of Caribbean States, to promote debate and to raise governmental awareness of forest issues.

It also took note of the activities conducted by the Caribbean Technical Cooperation Network on Forestry and Related Environmental Matters, and called on the non English-speaking countries of the subregion to establish contact and look into the possibility of becoming members.

The Group unanimously reiterated the importance of maintaining a subregional negotiation framework, without regard to language, ecological and territorial differences, and expressed its firm intent to focus its attention on the common problems.

**2. PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE 1998-2000 BIENNIUM AND THE MEDIUM TERM**

The Group identified the following priority actions to be implemented with the support of the FAO Subregional Office:

- To immediately relay to the member countries of the Group that had not attended the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the LACFC a summary of the main aspects dealt with and the present programme of work, so as to solicit recommendations, suggestions and endorsement of the proposed activities.
- Through the current Chairman of the Group, to inform the Ministry of External Affairs of the coordinating country of the Group of the need to include the topic of sustainable forest development in discussions related to subregional negotiations as a way of expressing common concern for the protection of natural resources and the environment.

- With the technical support of the Subregional Office and by the end of 1998, to prepare a regional project of horizontal cooperation to implement the forest development strategy proposed by FAO, with an emphasis on support to the National Forest Programmes.
- With the purpose of exchanging experiences and defining a forest strategy for the subregion, to hold a meeting of the countries concerned in the first half of 1999, for which the group would request technical and financial support from FAO and from interested potential donors.
- On the basis of the above meeting, to formulate a detailed plan of action for the implementation of specific activities to be executed before the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the LACFC.

### **REPORT AND WORKPLAN OF THE CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO SUBREGIONAL GROUP**

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama.

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This plan of work of the Central America and Mexico Group includes aspects that relate to guidelines issued at the 19<sup>th</sup> LACFC Session and that need to be consolidated, and aspects that complement efforts by countries of the subregion, out of concern to address the subject of forests under a broad perspective. Other aspects reinforce the principle of sustainability and were discussed at the 20<sup>th</sup> LACFC Session.

#### **2. MEDIUM-TERM OBJECTIVES FOR THE SUBREGIONAL GROUP**

- To consolidate lines of action directed at forest sustainability
- To promote more efficient management of the financial resources needed for the Region.
- To raise national forest planning capacities, linking forests to the other sectors.

#### **3. PRIORITIES OF THE SUBREGIONAL GROUP BETWEEN THE 20<sup>th</sup> AND 21<sup>st</sup> SESSIONS**

- Forest policies and planning
- Forest protection (fires and disease)
- Criteria and indicators of forest sustainability
- Awareness of the state of research
- Forest products and services (valuation and markets)

#### **4. PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR INTERSESSIONAL PERIODS**

- To foster coherent forest policies both within the sector and with other sectors, and to give practical effect to National Forest Plans.
- To exchange experiences; training against fires and pests.

- To validate regional criteria and indicators at country level to facilitate their adoption.
- To critically assess the state of forest research and promote the exchange of knowledge.
- To prioritize and value forest assets and services.

## **REPORT AND WORKPLAN OF THE AMAZON SUBREGIONAL GROUP**

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The member countries of the Amazon Subregional Group attending the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC) elected Peru as Vice-Chairperson for the period from the 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Session. The Group, conscious of their responsibility for the sustainable conservation, management and development of the largest, richest and most luxuriant expanse of tropical forest on the planet, and of the difficulties in ensuring adequate coordination, cooperation and exchange of information amongst themselves, met with the intention of strengthening multinational relations and facilitating the participation of the Region in other regional and international bodies.

### **2. PRIORITY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**

The collaborative meeting unanimously identified and endorsed the following issues as priorities items for the forestry agendas of the member countries:

1. Monitoring of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.
2. Deforestation, reforestation and forestation.
3. Measures and activities to prevent and control forest fires.
4. Strategies for clean development.
5. Valuation of protected areas and forest production areas.

The initial activities envisaged for the corresponding period include:

- a) Opening of a Web page by member countries to exchange information on issues and activities addressed by the Amazon Group and inform other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- b) Compilation of information on national initiatives for forest conservation and management. This information should include activities developed by government bodies and by the national and international private sector in each member country.
- c) Coordination meeting to examine progress in the member countries of the Group, if possible in June 1999, in Peru.

### **NOTE:**

*In addition, every opportunity arising from meetings to be held in the region in the upcoming months will be taken (TAC, FRA 2000, etc).*

The member countries undertake to prepare periodic reports on the agreed topics, to be distributed by the Vice-Chair for general information and used in all relevant events to secure the required consensus.

## **REPORT AND WORKPLAN OF THE SOUTHERN CONE GROUP**

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The member countries of the Southern Cone Group (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) plus Bolivia, which joined the Group on this occasion on an ongoing basis, identified the need to continue to work together on matters that had been of common concern in the past and were still priorities in their respective forest sectors.

Issues were also identified for the Group's Plan of Work for 1999-2000. These areas of common concern are fundamental for bilateral or multilateral, cross-sectional cooperation, if programmes are to truly reflect countries' concerns and be tailored towards efficient use of available resources.

The countries in the Group are conscious of the differing levels of development that exist relative to the topic areas selected for this period and therefore see the need for both integrated action, involving the whole Group, and specific collaborative activity between countries with different levels of progress.

### **2. WORK AGENDA 1999-2000**

Issues of continuing collective interest are:

- Forestation and reforestation
- Control of pests and disease
- Management of shared watersheds
- Genetic enhancement of endangered species
- Programme against desertification
- Gender in forest activity
- Collaboration in policy orientation and forest legislation.

Suggested related activities include:

- Forest inventory and land register (1)
- National system of forest information (1)
- Sustainable management of native forests (1)
- Surveys of potential markets (2)
- Establishment of postgraduate school (2)
- Programme of appraisal of the role of plantations and native resources in the socio-economic and environmental development of the Region (2).

( ) Priority

The following priority (1) activities are proposed:

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- Project: forest inventory and land register  
General objective: to help interested countries with the many activities associated with compiling an inventory and land register.  
Duration: two years  
Funding: interested parties and international agencies.
  
  - Project: national information system  
General objective: to raise awareness and integration among the public and private sectors of the countries in the Group  
Duration: permanent  
Funding: interested parties
  
  - Project: sustainable management of native forests  
General objective: to determine sustainable management models for the native forests of the Region  
Duration: To be determined (3 years)  
Funding: European Union, Office National des Forêts (France)

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**MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION**

Argentina	Honduras
Barbados	Jamaica
Belize	Mexico
Brazil	Netherlands
Chile	Nicaragua
Colombia	Panama
Costa Rica	Paraguay
Cuba	Peru
Dominican Republic	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Ecuador	Suriname
El Salvador	Trinidad and Tobago
France	United Kingdom
Guatemala	United States of America
Guyana	Uruguay
Haiti	Venezuela