



**Process for CFS Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Voluntary Guidelines (VG) for the
Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests
in the Context of National Food Security
March Session**

Dr. Gregory Myers, Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group – VG

5 February 2012

This process letter advises Members and Participants on the latest details in preparation for the next round of negotiations for the Voluntary Guidelines to be held in Rome, March 5 through 9, 2012. This letter should be read in conjunction with my communication dated 12 December 2011.

The FAO Secretariat has arranged for interpretation for all sessions when the plenary meets (morning, afternoon and evening) and also for morning and afternoon sessions of the Language Harmonization Group. As in the past, each session will last three hours. Our first session will start promptly at 10:00 Monday morning in the Red Room. In case negotiations will be extended by one day, interpretation could be made available for two sessions on Saturday.

In our first plenary session on Monday morning we will start by addressing the outstanding paragraphs that were sent to Friends of the Chair (FoC) and not addressed or concluded in plenary during our last negotiation, specifically:

- Paragraph 8.3
- Paragraph 9.4
- Paragraph 11.2
- Paragraph 19.1, and
- Section 23 (inclusive).

The Chair will work with the FoC and the Secretariat in Rome the week before the negotiations to reach agreement on the status of each of the outstanding paragraphs and prepare a presentation for the first plenary. We will work to reach consensus on these paragraphs in the morning session.

Once these paragraphs are closed, the plenary will continue where we stopped in October, with paragraph, 4.9 and continue forward to the end of the document. Prior to concluding the morning session, we will also have a short presentation by the Language Harmonization Group on the status of their work on the annexes between October and February.

The Language Harmonization Group (LHG) will not meet during the morning of March 5. The first meeting of the LHG will be in parallel session during the afternoon of March 5. The LGH will meet in the German Room (C 269).

As with the meetings in July and October, the Intergovernmental Negotiation will follow the rules established by the reformed CFS, and implemented by the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on the Voluntary Guidelines. The Intergovernmental Negotiation will be opened and closed by the Chair of the CFS, Ambassador Yaya A.O. Olaniran, and negotiations will be facilitated by the Chair of the OEWG, Dr. Gregory Myers. As in the past, Dr. Myers will be assisted by the Chair's Representative, Ms. Elisabeth Kvitashvili.

The Chair wishes to remind Members and Participants of the principles we have agreed to in past sessions:

- The Chair will not reopen paragraphs that have been previously agreed to and closed.
- Avoid repetitive or duplicative language
- Avoid creating new definitions for terms that have already been defined under accepted instruments

The negotiation will work with the "Consolidated Changes to the First Draft of the Voluntary Guidelines...12-15 July and 10-15 October 2011," produced by the Secretariat and available on the CFS website (<http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/land-tenure/en/>) in all official UN languages.

The Chair of the OEWG strongly urges Participants and Members to review the "Consolidated Changes to the First Draft," posted on the CFS website prior to the negotiations in March and to take note of the fact that approximately 50 paragraphs and the annexes remain to be negotiated. All delegations are urged to arrive with clear instructions/mandate to finalize the Voluntary Guidelines, and are encouraged to work with Regional Chairs.

I wish to re-iterate the historic importance of completing the negotiations. This will constitute an important step towards improving the lives and livelihoods of many we endeavor to help around the world.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory Myers". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Gregory Myers
Chairperson
Open Ended Working Group on Voluntary Guidelines
on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests
in the Context of National Food Security