



Special Event: Forests and Energy (doc C2007/INF/17)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

[Let me begin by stating my delegation's pleasure in hearing Portuguese spoken in this room, and in seeing you presiding over this session.]

Brazil would like to thank FAO for promoting an opportunity for Members to discuss this important topic. Brazil has always defended FAO's central role in the international debate on forests, as part of a framework that includes the UNFF and other international fora.

The relation between forests and energy is a complex one, and involves many different aspects. Due to time constraints, I would like to focus on specific topics, mostly related to liquid biofuels.

Brazil recognizes that a global increase in the production of liquid biofuels, if not properly managed, might lead to an increase in land use for agriculture and possible deforestation, with implications for biodiversity, climate change, and water. It can also, as President Pedro Pires of Cape Verde has reminded us, represent a considerable opportunity for developing countries, in their efforts to combat hunger and poverty.

The Brazilian government has applied a multidisciplinary approach to this question, taking into account social, environmental and commercial factors, as well, of course, the energy aspect. Due to a vast availability of land in our territory and to increasing productivity, the production of sugarcane-based ethanol, as well as of biodiesel from oil-producing plants, has ample room to increase without any risk to forest cover. As a matter of fact, it should be noted that there has been a fall of 52% in the deforestation rates in the Amazon region, even as Brazil's agricultural output has increased significantly.

Mr Chairman,

We welcome the document C2007/INF/17 and the useful and concise information provided therein. Brazil agrees with the assessment that wood-based bioenergy offers an opportunity to improve the energy security of all countries. The use of wood energy can indeed help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and thus contribute to climate change mitigation. If appropriate policies are put into place, wood energy can also contribute to

poverty reduction. Brazil is striving to put into place and implement adequate policies, to tackle the changes ahead and ensure that our forests benefit as much as possible from the opportunities generated by the global increase in energy consumption.

In this sense, Brazil has often recalled that forests have been victims of the indiscriminate use of fossil fuels, related to unsustainable standards of production and consumption, mainly by developed nations. As the IPCC has pointed out, one of the consequences of global warming may be the "savannah-zation" of about 30% of the Amazon forest. One of the national initiatives to avoid this situation is the promotion of an incentive scheme to reduce deforestation rates, within the framework of the UNFCCC.

Regarding the specific recommendations on document before us, we would like to address the 4th bullet on paragraph 21, page 5. The list of alternative and renewable energy systems includes small hydroelectric turbines. Brazil recalls that there can be no discrimination between small and large hydropower sources. More importantly, the list does not mention liquid biofuels. We recall that there is a universally accepted definition of renewable energy, contained in the Third Report of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

On the 7th bullet, the proposal discriminates against liquid biofuels, as it puts forward the idea of safeguards for its production. Such differentiated treatment is not acceptable to my delegation. If our common objective is to increase the share of renewable energy in the global energy matrix, safeguards should be used not only to liquid biofuels, but to the whole spectrum of production and use of renewable energy.

Thank you.