

## Second meeting of the Ad hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests

Co-chairs, Your Excellency Minister Mesone, chair of the UNFF11 Bureau, distinguished experts, dear colleagues,

2015 is extremely important in humankind's quest for a sustainable future, with several milestones to be reached in this year. While we expect the whole new Post 2015 agenda to be established including the adoption of the sustainable development goals, no less important decisions are expected on our own field and we are offered with a unique chance to shape the global architecture for sustainable forest management (SFM) like the Paris COP 21 or the coming XIV World Forestry Congress in Durban.

The review of the international arrangement on forests has been in progress for quite some time now with an important momentum generated by member states, international organizations, major groups and all other stakeholders. A great deal of work has been accomplished already including through the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group, several country-led initiatives and other endeavors, and now the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of this Expert Group has an important opportunity not only to conclude its work on reviewing the IAF but also to make far reaching recommendations for the future, both for strategic directions and institutional arrangements, which will then be considered and decided upon by the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The OLI organized by the CPF in 2012 on forest finance contributed as well to bring light to one the most contingent issues in this field.

The challenge is immense: it is about defining what sustainable forest management, an over 300 year old and constantly evolving concept, could further do in preserving and restoring the world's forests resources and unlocking the potentials they offer to support a more sustainable future, free of hunger and poverty based on a balanced and integrated perspective of the 3 pillars of sustainability. We know it is an objective possible to reach and we know SFM and forests have a key role in it. What needs to be decided now is how best do it and what would be the best way for the international community to unite for achieving these objectives.

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests has been supporting Member States since the establishment of UNFF and has done everything in its capacity to deliver on its mandate and to provide the inputs requested from it. Our commitment is equally deep to support the review process as it was requested by UNFF at its 10<sup>th</sup> session. CPF's efforts were also supported by many of their governing bodies, including FAO's Committee on Forestry, considering the review of the IAF and giving guidance to streamline and facilitate our work further.

Following the recommendation by AHG1 and the country-led initiative in China, CPF provided its joint vision on possible options for the CPF in a future international arrangement on forests. We tried to be self-critical but also proactive and forward looking in our recommendations. We will have the opportunity to bring this input to your attention on Wednesday afternoon as part of the discussion under agenda item 3. Still, I would like to take this opportunity to reconfirm, at the opening of this session, CPF's deep commitment to support you in the review process and beyond, and work towards a renewed and more effective international arrangement on forests.

Thank you, Mr. Co-chair.

Eduardo Rojas-Briales  
Chair, Collaborative Partnership on Forests