

Summary Report: 15th Meeting of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

15 and 22 May 2005, New York, USA

Chair:	Hosny El-Lakany (FAO)	UNCCD:	Melchiade Bukuru
Secretary:	Mia Söderlund (UNFF)	UNFF:	Pekka Patosaari
FAO:	Tiina Vähänen		Peter Csoka
ICRAF/CIFOR:	August Temu		David Henderson-Howat
IUCN	Stewart Maginnis		Michel Laverdiere
	Stephen Kelleher	UNFCCC:	Regrets
ITTO:	Amha bin Buang	UNDP:	Nina Roy
IUFRO:	Risto Seppälä	UNEP:	Barbara Ruis
	Peter Mayer	World Bank:	Gerhard Dieterle
CBD:	Manuel Guariguata		David Cassells
GEF:	Mark Zimsky		

1. Opening of the meeting

Mr. Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department, FAO, and Chair, Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), welcomed all participants to the fifteenth meeting of the CPF. Mr. Pekka Patosaari, Director UNFF Secretariat, also welcomed all participants to New York and the new office of the Secretariat.

CPF members approved the agenda.

2. Preparation for the fifth session of UNFF

The UNFF Secretariat presented an overview of the organization of work for the fifth session of the UNFF, from 16 to 27 May 2005, in New York at UN Headquarters. CPF members discussed their expected participation in the high-level segment, and finalized the presentation of the CPF Framework 2005 and preparations for the CPF side event.

Members introduced a few amendments to the joint statement, see annex 1, which emphasized, inter alia, CPF members' commitment to continue to work together at all levels and expectations for funding for joint activities that UNFF would guide CPF to undertake. Members also agreed that the revised version of the concept paper on strengthening the CPF provided a good basis for sharing their views on this issue with Governments. Furthermore, most CPF members confirmed that they had requested individual speaking slots for the various themes of the high-level segment, as well as side events throughout the two week meeting of UNFF5.

3. Update on on-going CPF joint initiatives

UNFF Secretariat and FAO briefed participants of the recent Expert Consultation on Streamlining Forest Related-Reporting held in New York on 13-14 April 2005 (summary of the meeting is posted on the CPF website). In addition to task force members, experts from five countries of different regions that had been invited to the meeting provided feed-back to the proposed joint Information Framework. They had welcomed the effort of the task force to facilitate access to forest-related country reports to all the major international processes through the CPF Portal on Forest Reporting, and acknowledged the step made to organize the information according to the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management. CPF members took note of these developments and encouraged its task force to continue the streamlining work. In addition, they encouraged efforts to take into account poverty reduction and other MDG areas in this work.

IUFRO informed members of the latest developments on the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS), which should be fully functional in August 2005 for the IUFRO Congress in Brisbane, Australia. Furthermore, IUFRO informed about a planned CPF panel event that is scheduled for the afternoon on Tuesday 9 August 2005 during the IUFRO Congress. Several CPF members confirmed their participation in this upcoming event. IUFRO agreed to provide CPF members with further details on the scope and focus of the panel discussion at a later stage.

4. Proposed new initiatives and collaborative activities

The UNFF Secretariat proposed two initiatives for consideration of CPF. The first initiative was about clustering the internationally agreed forest commitments according to the seven thematic areas of sustainable forests management. A number of CPF members commented that this work relates to the CPF task force's efforts to develop a joint information framework, under which FAO, ITTO and CBD Secretariat have outlined linkages between and potential to categorize forest-related information that countries report to them according to the thematic elements of SFM. CPF members agreed that, subject to decision on the future IAF, such initiative might contribute to facilitating implementation of actions agreed and reporting on progress to various fora.

The other initiative proposed by the UNFF Secretariat was to prepare a global overview of progress towards sustainable forest management. Some participants expressed concern regarding the linkage between this effort and already on-going activities by a number of CPF members.

It was agreed that UNFF Secretariat would circulate electronically the concept papers for the proposed initiatives and that CPF members could provide feed-back and discuss them further at the next CPF meeting, considering the outcome of UNFF-5 and guidance to CPF.

ICRAF/IUCN presented updates on two collaborative activities, namely the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration and the Rainforest Challenge. Both these initiatives are important avenues to promote the concept of "Trees outside Forests" and valid mechanisms to raise the profile of smallholder farmer contributions to forestry and advocate landscape-scale approaches to management of forests in the tropics. CPF members who are yet not involved in these projects were encouraged to join.

The UNFF Secretariat also briefed on some planned activities within the interagency expert group on MDG indicators, such as a review and possible revision of existing indicators of targets under goal 7, ensuring environmental sustainability. They also informed members that the UN Chief Executive Board for Coordination had taken note of CPF and that they will link their website to CPF.

5. CPF's interaction with Major Group representatives

CPF members present at the meeting reconfirmed their commitment to building stakeholder confidence in the CPF work by increasing the transparency of its operations and expressed their readiness to collaborate with the Major Groups. Participants also welcomed the meeting with the representatives of the Major Groups on Wednesday 18 May. A summary report of this meeting is available separately.

6. Agency report

See annex 2 below.

7. Next CPF meeting

It was decided that the CPF will organize a retreat either before or after the seventh Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD to be held in Nairobi 17 to 28 October 2005. ICRAF and UNEP offered to jointly host the retreat in Nairobi and ICRAF also offered to organize one day field trip with an agroforestry-related theme. With appreciation, members accepted their offer.

8. Other matters

Participants was informed that Ms. Ghazal Badiozamani will temporarily serve as a Secretary of the CPF for few months, as of end of August, while Ms. Mia Soderlund will be on maternity leave. Furthermore, David Cassells, World Bank, informed CPF members that he is leaving the Bank and will return to Australia to work as a professor and launch a consultancy career. Members expressed a great appreciation to David's long-term involvement and dedication to contribute to the Partnership.

Annex 1. CPF Joint Statement UNFF 5 High-Level Segment, 26 May 2005

Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to make this statement on behalf of the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

Mr Chair, since its establishment four years ago, CPF members have demonstrated their strong support to UNFF; to enhance collaboration and coordination on forest issues, and especially to assist countries in their endeavours to achieve sustainable forest management.

Indeed, as countries make up UNFF, they are also the ones responsible for the implementation of its decisions and recommendations. CPF's main function is to support such efforts, within their respective mandate and the available resources of its member organizations.

As part of the international arrangement on forests, members of CPF have assisted country-led efforts including:

- better recognition of the contributions that forests make to sustainable development and the MDGs;
- recognition of the importance of forests and trees outside forests to sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction;
- rehabilitation and restoration of degraded forest lands, in particular in low forest cover countries;
- a greater degree of participation of civil society in decision-making at the national level;
- new financing mechanisms to capture the value of environmental services from forests, ?
- development and implementation of national forest programmes and criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management around the world;
- better recognition of diverse arrangements for forest ownership and use rights;
- new efforts to improve forest law enforcement and governance; and
- improvement of information base and scientific knowledge on forests.

We continue to work together to minimize duplication and overlaps in areas such as streamlining forest reporting; to providing information on forest funding; to harmonizing forest-related definitions; and to facilitating access to information through the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS). Awareness raising and capacity building to implement international forest commitments and the internationally agreed development goals are at the core of many of the members' activities.

Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,

CPF members wish to express their sincere appreciation to the Member States of UNFF for their support and guidance to this partnership – a partnership that one might describe as a multi-disciplinary adaptive network with an emphasis on practical implementation.

Based on feedback from UNFF, we firmly believe that CPF has provided a useful mechanism to enhance cooperation and coordination on forest issues and to avoid duplication of work among its members. Its success can be attributed to four factors: guidance from UNFF; strong commitment

of member organizations to work together; support from their respective governing bodies; and the voluntary and informal nature of the partnership.

Mr Chair, despite these achievements made so far, we – the CPF members - feel that there is considerable room for improvements. Firstly, we would like to focus more on supporting national and regional efforts for implementation in a more coordinated and synergistic manner, in particular by making the linkages between forests and reduction of rural poverty more explicit. Secondly, we are committed to developing joint and especially cross-sectoral activities relevant to the priorities of the international arrangement on forests. Thirdly, we are also committed to building greater collaboration with the Major Groups of civil society.

Yet, Mr Chair and distinguished delegates, in order to make full use of CPF's potential, its work will require financial resources and continued guidance from a high-level policy forum on forests. However, I would like to emphasize the fact while CPF, as a partnership, welcomes guidance from UNFF, its individual member organizations receive their guidance from, and are accountable to, their own governing bodies. Therefore, consistent messages from countries to our governing bodies are more important than ever, in order to achieve the objectives of the international arrangement on forests.

Mr Chair, CPF would welcome modalities and identification of priorities that UNFF might recommend to enable us to continue and strengthen our collective support to countries, as part of the future international arrangement on forests. To this end, we would be ready to develop a targeted programme of work for our joint initiatives. Furthermore, we expect that countries would ensure adequate funding to support the activities they request CPF to undertake.

CPF members trust that the format to be decided for the future international arrangement on forests will enable more effective policy guidance and more support to action towards the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests, and thereby the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

In closing, Mr. Chair, Excellencies,

CPF members reaffirm their commitment to continuing to work together, and with governments and other partners to help achieve these objectives world-wide.

Annex 2. Agency Report

ICRAF

- ICRAF is proposing that CPF consider the “Rainforest Challenge” initiative be targeted as a priority for implementation in the future work of CPF.
- A publication on Forestry Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southwest Asia: Trends, Myths and Realities was recently launched.

IUFRO

- Launch a summary of a book on Forest for the Millennium at the UNFF 5. The actual book will be released at the IUFRO Congress in August 2005.

FAO

- Working on the preparations for the FAO regional commissions in 2006. CPF members will be invited to these regional meetings.
- Initial work has begun on the next issue of the State of the World’s Forests in 2007. CPF members will be consulted on the themes and to contribute to the issue.

ITTO

- Recent meeting:
 - An ITTO workshop on phased approaches to certification certification was held in April 2005 in Bern, Switzerland.
- Upcoming ITTO meetings :
 - 38th ITTC session from 18 to 22 June, Brazzaville, Rep. of Congo.
 - 3rd session of UN Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to ITTA 1994 from 27 June to 1 July 2005 in Geneva, Switzerland.

World Bank

- Continue to support Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) processes around the world. Currently preparing for a Ministerial FLEG meeting to be held in November 2005 in Saint Petersburg, Russia .

CBD

- Upcoming meetings :
 - Third meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Review of Implementation of the Forest Work Programme. July 25 to 29 in Bonn, Germany.
 - Ad Hoc Open Ended Working Group on Protected Areas. 13 to 17 June in Montecatini, Italy.
 - Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention. 5 to 9 September in Montreal, Canada.
 - Eleventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to the Convention. 28 November to 2 December in Montreal, Canada.