



International Tropical Timber Council addresses trade-related issues

The International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) is the governing body of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and includes all 59 ITTO members: 33 producer countries and 26 consumer countries. ITTO's membership represents 90 percent of world trade in tropical timber and 80 percent of the world's tropical forests. The council meets twice a year.

At its 37th session, held from 13 to 18 December 2004 at ITTO headquarters in Yokohama, Japan, delegates examined not only ITTO's biennial work plan, but a range of other issues. The session covered measures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of ITTO's project cycle; strengthening the Asia Forest Partnership; progress in reaching the ITTO Objective 2000; and an annual review and assessment of the international timber situation, focusing on trends in the production, imports, exports and prices of tropical timber products.

Delegates adopted revised ITTO criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, which maintain the existing seven criteria with some modified language and reduce the indicators from 63 to 56 and the reporting requirements from 89 to 56. In addition, delegates reached agreement on sometimes contentious topics such as listings of tree species in Appendix II of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES); certification of tropical timber producing forests; and illegal logging, its associated trade and forest law enforcement.

ITTO is the only organization to have addressed the need for capacity building in relation to CITES compliance. A decision was adopted on assistance to members in the effective implementation of the CITES listing of ramin and mahogany in Appendix II (see pp. 44–45 in this issue).

Procedures for the implementation of phased approaches to certification in tropical timber-producing countries were discussed. A meeting on international and national forest certification schemes was proposed to discuss modalities for the phased approach, to encourage its inclusion in international criteria for acceptable systems, and to promote pilot projects for certification of small-scale forest management units and community forests. ITTO will hold an international workshop on phased approaches in Berne, Switzerland in April 2005.

Reports were presented on forest law enforcement and governance in the context of sustainable forest management in Honduras and in Malaysia, where comprehensive legislation has been implemented to control illegal imports of roundwood and squared timber from Indonesia.

A draft report examined measures for expanding and diversifying international trade in tropical timber and timber products. Producing countries could be helped through improved technology transfer



FAO/CIH/UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Negotiating a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994

The International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), the treaty under which ITTO operates, was negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to provide an effective framework for cooperation and consultation between countries producing and consuming tropical timber, particularly regarding international trade, structural conditions in the tropical timber market, improving forest management and wood utilization, and national policies for the sustainable conservation and use of tropical forests and their genetic resources. The original ITTA entered into force in 1985; a successor agreement, ITTA, 1994, entered into force on 1 January 1997. It is scheduled to expire at the end of 2007.

Delegates to the first session of the United Nations Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to ITTA, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 26 to 30 July 2004, were unable to finalize the terms of the new agreement. Main areas of contention included the scope of the successor agreement's objectives; the frequency and location of council sessions; whether to establish an executive board; funding sources and mechanisms; distribution of votes and assessment of contributions; and obligations and compliance. A second session will be held in Geneva, Switzerland from 14 to 18 February 2005 to try to resolve the disagreements.



and the creation of an information dissemination system. For consuming markets, recommendations included ensuring that government procurement policies are not used as trade barriers, and steps to harmonize standards, testing procedures, quality and other requirements.

The council discussed the ongoing negotiations for a successor to the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), 1994 (see Box), and the importance of concluding them in February 2005 was stressed. Throughout the council session, delegates convened informally to try to resolve their differences.

The meeting drew attention to positive trends in the workings of ITTO in recent years, noting its leadership on trade issues within the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and improved relationships among the various groups represented and with CITES, FAO and civil society. A divergence was noted, however, between demand for ITTO's various outputs, in terms of policy and project work, and the willingness or ability to pay for those outputs.

Trade trends and new markets for ecosystem services in East Asia and China

The International Conference on the Future of Forests in East Asia and China: New Markets for Ecosystem Services/Trends in Regional Forest Trade and Finance, organized by Forest Trends and TropBio, was held from 7 to 8 October 2004 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The objective of the conference, which was attended by approximately 80 participants, was to address the following:

- recent and projected trends in trade in China and the East Asia region, and their implications for the future;
- the status and potential of markets for forest-based ecosystem services, and how innovators around the world and from diverse sectors have been able to capture financial benefits from them;
- recent trends in regional finance and forest products trade, including critical issues such as the due diligence requirements of investors in the forest sector (related to issues such as certification and the links between illegal logging and money laundering).

The meeting was organized in three thematic sessions. The first, on trends and implications of new markets for forest ecosystem services, provided a good introduction to the topic, although little was presented with respect to actual experience in developing and implementing such markets. The second, on trends and issues in regional trade, focused on China and the major impact of the recent surge in Chinese imports. The presentations highlighted the lack of accurate data on current and future domestic timber supplies and trade for China – a challenge well recognized by various international organizations. The final session provided

informative presentations on trends and issues in regional forest sector finance. Unfortunately there were few Asians among the main presenters; a more appropriate balance would have been welcomed in such a regional gathering.

During the conference, Forest Trends announced the launching of a Web-based "Ecosystem Marketplace" (www.ecosystemmarketplace.com) to provide information on ecosystem service markets, price trends, deals and events, as well as resources and tools for buying, selling and investing in ecosystem services.

Third IUCN World Conservation Congress: People and nature – only one world

The environmental crisis continues: huge areas of wilderness are being lost every day, almost 15 600 animals and plants face extinction, and glaciers and polar caps are melting because of a 0.6°C increase in temperature. The third World Conservation Congress, held in Bangkok, Thailand from 17 to 25 November 2004, called for a worldwide effort to reverse this trend by working together to conserve the environment, and in doing so, assist in poverty reduction, peace building, food and water security and economic development.

The World Conservation Congress, held every three to four years, is the general assembly of the members of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The 2004 congress was attended by more than 4 800 participants, including over 40 government ministers, 1 000 scientists, 200 business representatives and hundreds of representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The event was structured in three parts: the Commissions at Work, which assessed the work of the six IUCN commissions; the World Conservation Forum; and the Members' Business Assembly. The 300 sessions of the World Conservation Forum were organized under four main themes:

- Ecosystem management – bridging sustainability and productivity;
- Health, poverty and conservation – responding to the challenge of human well-being;
- Biodiversity loss and species extinction – managing risk in a changing world;
- Markets, business and the environment – strengthening corporate social responsibility, law and policy.

The Congress approved 118 resolutions and recommendations aimed at safeguarding land- and seascapes and the biological diversity that is present in them. Recommended initiatives included, for example:

- collaboration of the conservation community with other sectors to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention;
- the drafting of a charter of ethics for biodiversity conservation;



- the development of a plan of action to guide members in areas related to genetically modified organisms and associated risks, for example in terms of biodiversity and nature conservation;
- the formulation of principles of good governance of natural resources;
- the establishment of a World Conservation Learning Network among universities and training institutes to build capacity of conservation and development professionals;
- updating of the 1994 IUCN guidelines on protected area management categories, and work with governments on the application and use of the category system;

The congress urged the use of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species to support national legislation, international conventions, conservation planning and priority setting, and scientific research. It recognized the conservation significance of Community Conserved Areas and the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in managing them. It also called for the promotion of actions that contribute to combating poverty by fostering conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

The congress supported a landscape approach to conservation, which would integrate regional, national and subnational systems of protected areas into broader landscapes, and it encouraged national and regional governments and civil society to develop innovative governance systems and strategic programmes to foster this integration.

With specific regard to forests, the Congress urged Canada and the Russian Federation to recognize, preserve and protect ecological processes to sustain the health of boreal forest regions.

The congress marked an unprecedented level of private-sector participation, and many important joint initiatives were unveiled to advance world conservation efforts, including a partnership with NASA (the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration) for the use of remote sensing data.

For further information, see: www.iucn.org/congress

Ecoagriculture – integrating food production and ecosystem functions

As the global population increases, the need to increase agricultural, forestry and fisheries production and to sustain rural livelihoods increasingly comes into conflict with the need to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services on which both people and wildlife depend. A new concept in land use, referred to as ecoagriculture, focuses on integrating food production with the provision of ecosystem functions at the landscape scale. It embraces a range of systems and practices, including those that:

- use organic and low-external-input agriculture and emphasize locally adapted methods;

- minimize pollution through reduction and management of agricultural inputs and farm waste;
- sustainably increase the productivity of land already in use to reduce or reverse conversion of wild lands;
- include protected areas in landscape planning.

Over 200 community leaders, farmers, conservationists, land-use planners, policy-makers, researchers and private-sector representatives attended the International Ecoagriculture Conference and Practitioners' Fair, held at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) in Nairobi, Kenya from 27 September to 1 October 2004. Its objective was to assess the state of ecoagriculture systems and practices and to develop a strategy to promote and support ecoagricultural development around the world.

The conference was organized by Ecoagriculture Partners, an umbrella organization of ecoagriculture innovators from all sectors which was created at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and is jointly sponsored by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Forest Trends and ICRAF.

Subjects addressed included the following:

- the need for research on interactions between wild biodiversity and agricultural production and/or livelihoods;
- the recognition of soil as an ecological service and the identification of other ecological services that benefit farmers in the short term;
- holistic means to support, adopt and advance ecoagriculture, including interdisciplinary curriculum development, a fund for partnerships to develop concepts and methodologies, study of local knowledge systems, and financial and non-financial incentives at both the producer and consumer levels;
- the need for mechanisms to institutionalize ecoagriculture





policy and programme development with the participation of all stakeholders.

The meeting adopted the Nairobi Declaration on Ecoagriculture in which participants made a commitment to ensure that large-scale development of ecoagriculture contributes to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The declaration recognizes that grassroots communities and farmers around the world have practised ecoagriculture for millennia, and calls on policy-makers at the local, national, regional and global levels to promote it further. The full text is available online: www.ecoagriculturepartners.org

Traditional forest-related knowledge: improving implementation of international commitments

Indigenous and other forest-dependent people can contribute significantly to the conservation and sustainable development of forest resources. Traditional forest-related knowledge can be effectively introduced into international policy-making and forest management, allowing local communities to shape international processes related to forestry.

With this in mind, the International Alliance of Indigenous Tribal Peoples of Tropical Forests organized an expert meeting on traditional forest-related knowledge from 6 to 10 December 2004 in San José, Costa Rica. Its primary focus was to assess the progress of national implementation of international commitments relating to indigenous people, local communities, traditional forest-related knowledge and social and cultural aspects of forests. Indigenous experts met for an initial two-day preparatory meeting, and were then joined by representatives of national governments and international institutions. The International Alliance commissioned 12 case studies to serve as a basis for discussions and analysis of the current international situation.

Participants signed the Corobici Declaration, recognizing certain general principles related to indigenous peoples, *inter alia*:

- the right to self-determination and to a development that is appropriate and guided by their indigenous peoples;
- the recognition of ownership of indigenous knowledge;
- the need for a rights-based approach towards dealing with forests, traditional knowledge and the eradication of poverty;
- the need to strengthen the role of women in the preservation and transmission of indigenous knowledge.

The meeting produced 81 practical recommendations for fulfilling international commitments on traditional forest-related knowledge, aimed at national governments, international organizations and indigenous people themselves, which will be presented at the fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in May 2005.

The meeting pointed out that national implementation of related

commitments under existing international forest-related agreements remains inadequate and does not sufficiently involve indigenous people. The participants recommended that governments:

- involve indigenous people in documentation of traditional knowledge;
- recognize that documented knowledge continues to be the property of the indigenous people concerned, and ensure that they receive benefits from the use of this knowledge;
- ensure that all technologies drawing from traditional forest-related knowledge clearly acknowledge the origins of this knowledge.

Also highlighted was the need to protect indigenous people's rights to their territories through constitutional reform and legislation and through restoration of their ownership of protected and forested areas.

The participants requested that any future international arrangement on forests include the full participation of indigenous people and mainstream indigenous people's issues across all thematic areas.

The Secretariats of UNFF and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) contributed to the technical and logistical organization of this event. For further information, see: www.international-alliance.org/tfrk_expert_meeting.htm

Developing multi-stakeholder dialogue in national forest programmes

The National Forest Programme Facility, operational since June 2002, has focused especially on knowledge sharing and capacity development to ensure the informed participation of a broad range of stakeholders in the development and implementation of national forest programmes. Through innovative partnerships with developing countries, international donors and FAO, the Facility has established more than 80 projects in developing countries, of which more than 50 are carried out by non-government stakeholders.

In the Philippines, for example, the Facility has helped to stimulate healthy debate among civil society and government in order to channel information from stakeholders on the ground to policy-makers. In 2003, the Philippines, one of the leading proponents of community forestry, sought assistance from the Facility to resolve problems faced by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as well as local governments and communities in implementing community-based forest management. Based on the findings of case studies on community forestry practices at six selected areas, the department is currently drafting a new implementation strategy for community forestry. The practical multi-stakeholder approach to



the examination of the impediments, challenges and opportunities concerning community forestry is making the department's policy formulation on community forestry more effective and transparent.

In Honduras, the Facility helped draw farmer organizations and local communities into the national forest programme process. The Facility established contracts with NGOs representing agroforestry cooperatives, foresters, the government and private forest owners, to build stakeholders' capacity to participate in the implementation of the country's national forest programme. The seminars, field visits and training workshops supported by the Facility helped to improve communication and consensus among forestry stakeholders in Honduras.

In Uganda, the Facility has partnered with the Uganda Forests Working Group (UFWG), a network of civil society organizations,

academics and individuals, to provide a much-needed linkage between the national forest vision and local forestry coordination. Forests are important to Uganda's economy and especially to rural livelihoods, but the country suffers from a high rate of deforestation. To tackle this problem, the Ugandan Government is decentralizing its forest administration to district forest services operating under a National Forestry Authority. To facilitate the process, the Facility and UFWG launched awareness-raising activities in five pilot districts. Progress to date has included the sensitization of local stakeholders on the new forestry policy and law, awareness raising on the role and potential of forestry activities in enhancing livelihoods, and the training of UFWG members in agroforestry and participatory forestry extension.