



CPF
Collaborative Partnership
on Forests

High Level Dialogue of Heads of Member Organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)

**Sunday, 06 September 2015
World Forestry Congress
Durban, South Africa**

1. On Sunday 6 September 2015, Heads of Member Organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) held a High Level Dialogue in Durban, South Africa. The aim of Dialogue was to contribute to developing a global vision for forests, forestry and people during the XIV World Forestry Congress, and to highlight the role of CPF in ensuring that this new vision becomes reality in the post-2015 era. The facilitator was Ms. Debora Patta.

2. In his opening statement, Mr. José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO and Chair of the CPF, welcomed participants and stressed the importance of international organizations working together to support sustainable development. He explained that forests have an important role play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also stated that the latest Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA-2015) shows that much still needs to be done to halt illegal deforestation and achieve sustainable forest management. He emphasised the need to address the challenges facing humankind in an integrated way, recognising the contributions of forests to improving food and nutrition security, eradicating poverty, improving rural livelihoods, preserving biological diversity and increasing resilience to climate change. Noting that the decisions taken by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in May 2015 gave CPF a clear mandate to promote the contribution of forests to the post-2015 development agenda, he invited participants to set out their ideas about a future vision for forests and forestry, and about how CPF and its member organisations can best contribute to realising this vision.

First round of questions: elements of the future vision

3. During the first round of discussion, Ms. Patta gave participants any opportunity to identify elements of this future vision from the perspective of their organization.

4. Mr. Manoel Sobral Filho, Director UNFF, referred to the UN Forest Instrument which, although it is not legally binding, has been agreed by all UN member states. He explained that this Instrument sets out a wide range of national and international policies and measures aimed at achieving sustainable forest management, but added that there is no single solution that will work everywhere. Thus, for example, in some countries the most important action might be to strengthen forest governance and create enabling conditions for investment; meanwhile, the best contribution by developed countries might be to offer

more assistance to developing countries for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

5. Mr. Braulio Diaz, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) stressed the importance of forests for biodiversity, explaining that if biodiversity is lost then this will have global consequences as, for example, resilience to natural disasters and climate change is diminished. There would also be adverse impacts on food security. Accordingly, he highlighted the need to recognise the value of biodiversity, including both species diversity and genetic diversity, at the landscape level and at the site level.

6. Mr. Peter Holmgren, Director General, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), said that forestry and forestry research should be understood in a broad, landscape-wide sense, taking account of the contribution of forestry to all the SDGs. He added that such an approach would help to mainstream the forest agenda, by creating stronger links with such high profile issues as biodiversity, poverty eradication, climate change and food production, and it would also enrich and expand the role of forestry research.

7. Mr. Emmanuel Zemeka, Executive Director, International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), said that the vision ITTO has for forests in the post-2015 era is to progress as swiftly as possible towards sustainable forest management in the context of sustainable land management. He emphasised the need to address threats outside forests, adding that tailored actions to promote sustainable forest management should target three main stakeholders, namely communities, the private sector and governments. He also underlined the importance of funding, investment and capacity building.

8. Mr. Tony Simons, Director General, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), noted that although policies about, investments in, and the management of forests and their component trees are necessarily long-term, agroforestry can bring short-term benefits. He also suggested that conventional definitions of “agriculture” and “forestry” should be reviewed as the distinction is not always helpful. In addition, he identified a number of ecological and socio-economic metrics that that could be developed as key proxy measures for sustainable landscape management.

9. Mr. Magdy Martínez-Solimán, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, emphasised the critical interdependences between SDGs: for example, while Goal 15 refers explicitly to sustainable forest management, forests will also play an important role in helping achieve other SDGs, such as Goal 1 on poverty, Goal 13 on tackling climate change, Goal 6 on water management, and Goal 2 on food security. He also noted the importance of means of implementation, including economic, social and political incentives, for achieving the SDGs.

10. Mr. Mike Wingfield, President, International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), described actions that IUFRO had taken in the framework of the CPF to promote more effective science - policy linkages, including the work of the Global Forest Expert Panels, which had recently published a scientific assessment of the contribution of forests and trees to food security and nutrition, the Global Forest Information System, and the Policy Learning Initiative. He stressed the need to identify more systematically the key policy questions to be address by science and especially also to assess the policy implications of completed scientific assessments.

11. Ms. Paula Caballero, Senior Director, Environment and Natural Resources, World Bank, highlighted the importance of promoting the sustainable and inclusive use of forests and the need to establish sustainable long-term forest-friendly development pathways, with forests, including agro-forestry, firmly embedded in national development strategies that also recognise the vital role of small holders and indigenous peoples. Stressing the importance of translating high-level commitments into effective action on the ground, she also said that the Bank's new Forest Action Plan would reflect a programmatic approach that blended different funding streams, at scale, in a sustainable way.

12. Ms. Mette Wilkie, Director, Division of Environment Policy Implementation, UNEP, suggested that, in order to reconcile future needs for economic development with maintaining a healthy environment, there should be a new economic model which took full account of the value of environmental services. In this way decisions relating, for example, to the transfer of forests to other land uses would be influenced by payments for the environmental services, as well as the value of the goods produced by forests. She also highlighted need for coherent fiscal policies, noting that subsidies for agricultural commodities and biofuels can be orders of magnitude greater than support for forests.

13. Mr. Luther Bois Anukur, Regional Director, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), highlighted the important role that protected areas play in safeguarding terrestrial biodiversity, adding that protected area categories V and VI exist as proven and inclusive mechanisms that bring significant benefits to local communities through sustainable natural resource use; however, this opportunity is often underutilised. He also emphasised the benefits of effective cross-sectoral engagement and the value of locally-derived institutional arrangements. In addition, he stressed the need to work towards achieving the Bonn Challenge and the New York declaration on forests through the restoration of degraded and deforested land, and the importance of creating the right enabling conditions to achieve effective implementation forest landscape restoration on the ground.

14. Summing-up this first round of dialogue, Ms Patta noted that there appeared to be considerable consensus among CPF member organizations about a number of key elements

of the future vision, including the importance of integrating forests with other aspects of sustainable development, as well as the need to involve local communities and focus on translating high level policy commitments into effective action on the ground.

Second round of questions: key contributions to making the future vision a reality

15. During the second round, participants were asked to give examples of what the CPF, collectively, and their own organizations, individually, could do make the vision a reality. In their responses, a number of participants highlighted the value of the CPF, which had been created as part of the International Arrangement on Forests in 2000, as a collaborative mechanism. They also recognised the importance of reinvigorating the CPF in the light of its fresh mandate from UNFF and the challenges presented by the post-2015 development agenda, noting that the CPF benefits from the wide range of expertise and capacity available from within its member organisations. However, it was also pointed out that, given the different mandates of the members, there are limitations to what CPF can do and it may not, for example, be possible to agree joint positions on particular issues.

16. During discussion, the following ideas for collective action were suggested:

- Focussing on the implementation needed to enhance support to sustainable development planning and integrating sustainable forest management into national plans to achieve forest-related aspects of the SDGs as well as the UN Forest Instrument, including by offering technical support and using “early wins” to demonstrate success and publicise opportunities for scaling-up solutions.
- Strengthening collaboration to take full advantage of the different “competitive advantages” offered by CPF members, recognising the range of policy areas that they cover, as well as the differences in focus, which include science/research, financing and implementation, as well as policy development.
- Using the scientific and analytical capabilities of members to provide stronger and “sharper” evidence of the quantifiable benefits that forests can bring towards achieving the SDGs, and of the different types of policy measures that are effective in particular circumstances.
- Reaching beyond the forest sector, for example by using the existing networks of CPF organisations to improve engagement with the private sector and to strengthen linkages with those engaged in other aspects of delivering the SDGs.

- Improving communications, both within the Partnership, in order to strengthen cooperation, and externally, so that wider audiences understand the importance and urgency of achieving sustainable forest management.

17. The examples that participants gave of contributions that their own organisations could make to achieving the vision included:

- Providing support for countries to develop national REDD+ strategies, enhancing support for sustainable forests management and better public advocacy for forests (UNDP, in partnership with other CPF members).
- Sequencing investments to de-risk the sector, for example by investing in land tenure, land use policies and financial intermediaries to provide low-interest rate credits to smallholders (World Bank).
- Developing links between trade and conservation, for example through certification schemes (ITTO).
- Highlighting emerging issues, such as bio-security threats resulting from the anthropogenic global transfer of pests and pathogens (IUFRO).
- Developing and implementing the new Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in partnership with other CPF members (UNFF).
- Promoting the Global Partnership of Forest Landscape Restoration for CPF members to contribute to the Bonn Challenge of restoring more degraded forests globally (IUCN).
- Working with private sector partners to demonstrate the financial advantages of investment in agro-forestry (ICRAF).
- Analysing private sector commodity chains to improve understanding of their impact on forests (UNEP).
- Improving scientific and policy-level understanding of links between ecosystem biodiversity and human health (CBD).
- Continued inter-sectoral and evidence-based engagement through the Global Landscapes Forum (CIFOR).

Closing remarks



18. Thanking the facilitator and the participants in the Dialogue, Mr. Graziano da Silva summarised the discussion by noting that the post-2015 development agenda presents a unique opportunity, as forests have a key role in achieving the SDGs. While the CPF cannot do everything, it can support a focus on action, and he added that FAO is firmly committed to play its part in delivering the SDGs. Participants had also recognised the need to work with other sectors, stressing the importance of integration and welcoming the impetus that the SDGs would give to cross-sectoral working. In this context, Mr. Graziano da Silva explained that there is strong evidence to show that sustainable forest management can be integrated with sustainable food production, and suggested that conflicts between the agricultural and forest sectors should become a thing of the past. He also reiterated the importance of maintaining biodiversity for the benefit of future generations, and the role of sustainable forest management in this regard. Finally, he emphasised the need to focus on a few key messages, such as the contribution of forests to the SDGs and the need for an integrated approach.