

REPORT

**San José,
Costa Rica,
18 - 22
October
2004**

Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission

Twenty-third session



**Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations**

PREVIOUS SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| First session | Rio de Janeiro, Brazil | 23 May 1949 |
| Second session | Lima, Peru | 14 November 1949 |
| Third session | Santiago, Chile | 11 December 1950 |
| Fourth session | Buenos Aires, Argentina | 16-23 June 1952 |
| Fifth session | Caracas, Venezuela | 4-15 October 1955 |
| Sixth session | Antigua, Guatemala | 4-15 November 1958 |
| Seventh session | Mexico City, Mexico | 3-6 August 1960 |
| Eighth session | Santiago, Chile | 13-19 November 1962 |
| Ninth session | Curitiba, Brazil | 5-12 November 1964 |
| Tenth session | Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago | 4-9 December 1967 |
| Eleventh session | Quito, Ecuador | 11-21 November 1970 |
| Twelfth session | Havana, Cuba | 2-7 February 1976 |
| Thirteenth session | Patzcuaro, Michoacan, Mexico | 18-22 February 1980 |
| Fourteenth session | Lima, Peru | 15-18 November 1982 |
| Fifteenth session | San Jose, Costa Rica | 6-10 October 1986 |
| Sixteenth session | Kingston, Jamaica | 18-22 April 1988 |
| Seventeenth session | Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela | 18-22 February 1991 |
| Eighteenth session | Maldonado, Uruguay | 6-10 December 1993 |
| Nineteenth session | Panama City, Panama | 17-21 June 1996 |
| Twentieth session | Havana, Cuba | 10-14 September 1998 |
| Twenty first session | Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia | 4-8 September 2000 |
| Twenty second session | Buenos Aires, Argentina | 7-11 October 2002 |

REPORT

of the

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

of the

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

San José, Costa Rica
18-22 October 2004

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Santiago, Chile
2004

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS

In-Session Seminar: Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Latin America and the Caribbean

1. The Secretariat drew attention to the progress that had been made in the study, which provided an indication of the possible development of the forestry sector until the year 2020, and requested guidance from the Commission on the completion of the study and on its utilization for planning, development of national forest programmes, preparation of strategies and coordination of regional actions. (para. 17).
2. The Commission recommended that FAO should continue to provide support to countries' efforts to improve their forestry information systems, including national forest inventories and contributions of the forestry sector (wood and non-wood products) to national economies, to support policy decisions in countries. (para. 18).
3. The Commission recommended that FAO should broaden the focus of outlook studies to include: non-wood forest products; the multi-functions of forests; payment for forest-generated environmental services; small- and medium-sized enterprises; forest health; and markets for wood products. (para.19).
4. The 23rd Session of the LACFC witnessed the unprecedented participation of civil society representatives, which was an example of the consultative processes undertaken by the national forest programmes and of the increasing importance given by the countries to community forest management. In view of this, the Commission recommended that the issue be subject to further discussion at the next meeting of COFLAC and at COFO, with the objective of identifying mechanisms to strengthen such participation. (para. 21).

Forestry Activities of other International/ Intergovernmental/Non-Governmental Organizations in the Region

5. The Commission noted that there was a shortage of information on technical cooperation activities carried out both by FAO and by other agencies or institutions in the Region. It therefore recommended that FAO establish a working group at Headquarters, with the objective of improving information sharing among countries and international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on forestry activities in the Region. (para. 24).

In-session Seminar: National Forest Programmes and International Dialogue on Forests – Strengthening Regional Action

6. The Commission observed that national forestry authorities received insufficient information on the progress and results of the intergovernmental dialogue on forests. It therefore requested more effort from all parties and that FAO undertake the compilation and dissemination of the results of the dialogue to improve this situation. (para. 29).
7. The Commission noted that many countries lacked the experience or capacity to effectively develop a national consensus, involving representatives of all forest stakeholders, for the intergovernmental dialogue on forests. It therefore sought support from the National Forest Programme Facility to deal with these matters within the framework of such programmes (para. 30).

Activities of the Subregional Groups of the Commission: Reports on Accomplishments in 2002-2004 and Preparation and Presentation of Workplans for 2004-2006

8. The Commission requested COFO to seek new and additional resources to finance the implementation of the activities prepared by the Subregional Groups. (para. 33).

Presentation by the North American Forest Commission on Working Group Modalities

9. The Commission therefore recommended that greater efforts be made to forge a closer and more permanent relationship of coordination and exchange of information between the two Commissions. (para. 53).

Other Business

10. The Commission, aware of FAO's initiative to develop a regional code of practice for reduced impact forest harvesting in tropical moist forest in Latin America and the Caribbean, recommended that the norms be extended to all the forests of the Region, given that some countries have large areas of forests which are not tropical. Moreover, the Commission underlined the need to take into account existing codes and those that are being formulated by other bodies and initiatives. (para. 55).

11. Various delegates of the Central American and Mexican Subregional group requested that the designation of their group be changed to "Meso-America Subregional group". (para. 58).

12. The Commission requested FAO to organize a meeting of the heads of forestry services of the countries in the Region to be held before the UNFF in May 2005 in order to build consensus concerning the agenda. (para. 59).

REGIONAL ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

13. The Commission recommended that FAO should continue to provide support to countries' efforts to improve their forestry information systems, including national forest inventories and contributions of the forestry sector (wood and non-wood products) to national economies, to support policy decisions in countries. (para. 18).

14. The Commission recommended that FAO should broaden the focus of outlook studies to include: non-wood forest products; the multi-functions of forests; payment for forest-generated environmental services; small- and medium-sized enterprises; forest health; and markets for wood products (para.19).

15. The 23rd Session of the LACFC witnessed the unprecedented participation of civil society representatives, which was an example of the consultative processes undertaken by the national forest programmes and of the increasing importance given by the countries to community forest management. In view of this, the Commission recommended that the issue be subject to further discussion at the next meeting of COFLAC and at COFO, with the objective of identifying mechanisms to strengthen such participation. (para. 21).

16. The Commission recommended that FAO establish a working group at headquarters, with the objective of improving information sharing among countries and international,

intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on forestry activities in the Region (para. 24).

17. The Commission noted that many countries lacked the experience or capacity to effectively develop a national consensus, involving representatives of all forest stakeholders, for the intergovernmental dialogue on forests. It therefore sought support from the National Forest Programme Facility to deal with these matters within the framework of such programmes. (para. 30).

18. The Commission noted the importance of trade and trade agreements relating to wood and non-wood forest products in the Region and recommended that FAO follow up on this matter in order to assess the potential impact on the sector. (para. 44).

19. The Commission requested COFO to seek new and additional resources to finance the implementation of the activities prepared by the Subregional Groups (para. 33).

20. The Commission highlighted the close relationship between criteria and indicators, the certification and the trade of forest products and recommended that FAO follow up on this matter in order to determine possible consequences. (para. 46).

21. Noting the high incidence of forest fire that caused serious damage in the Region, the Commission agreed to draw to the attention of the 17th Session of COFO the outcome of the Pan-American Conference on Wildland Fire which would be held immediately following the 23rd Session of the LACFC. It also noted with satisfaction that the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting on Forests to be held at FAO Headquarters in March 2005 would address international agreement on the management and control of forest fire. (para. 47).

22. The Commission recommended that countries should integrate forests into their national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The Commission recommended that COFO should underscore the role of forests in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and that the members of the LACFC should coordinate efforts to this end, through the working plans of the Subregional groups. (para. 48).

23. In view of the importance of forests in the Region and of FAO's role in providing country support, the Commission recommended that the FAO Forestry Department should be strengthened. (para. 49).

INTRODUCTION

1. The Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held its 23rd Session from 18 to 22 October 2004 in San José, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica. The session was attended by delegates from 25 member countries and observers from 13 United Nations system, international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

2. Mr Jorge Luis Menéndez, serving Chair of the LACFC, presided over the opening session. Mr M. Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department, FAO, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Dr. Jacques Diouf. Mr. Alan Flores, Deputy Minister for Environment and Energy, also expressed words of welcome on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica, before declaring the session open and inviting participants to listen to a recorded message from His Excellency Abel Pacheco de la Espriella, President of the Republic of Costa Rica. H.E.Flavio Perri, Ambassador of Brazil to FAO, and Chair of the 16th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), was also present and addressed a few words to the participants.

3. Mr El-Lakany thanked the Government of Costa Rica for the excellent preparations for the session. He indicated that the Regional Forestry Commissions provided FAO and participating countries with an excellent platform to examine emerging forestry policy issues in the Region and to identify common problems, seek solutions and promote collaboration. He stated that the thrust of the session would be to reinforce the forestry sector's response to the Region's most pressing problems, which included the loss and degradation of natural forests, the conservation of watersheds and the generation of income from wood and non-wood forest products for poor rural communities. He drew special attention to the agenda item on the progress of the Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Latin America and the Caribbean, which would help steer forestry policy towards 2020. He finished by mentioning that FAO was stepping up its activities on forest fire, which was undoubtedly a subject of considerable interest to the countries of the Region.

4. Mr Alan Flores welcomed the meeting's delegates and observers. He stated that the following five days would provide the Ministry of Environment and Energy, as the government institution responsible for forest development in Costa Rica, with an opportunity to examine, discuss and develop actions needed for the sustainable management of forests at the regional level, which constituted a major challenge and was the objective towards which the governments should direct their efforts. He stressed that the meeting's discussions should look at the way forests can contribute to poverty reduction and stated that the session provided an opportunity to identify shortcomings and deficiencies in common understanding and to implement a sustainable form of forest management that reflected the needs of members' populations. This meant that local communities should be further involved and should participate in decisions on how forests were managed and how resulting costs and benefits were distributed. He warned that no effort to overcome poverty would be successful without the appropriate sustainable use of natural resources, as it was essential to have livelihoods that were sustainable. He called for a commitment to redouble efforts to manage forest harvesting through socially acceptable procedures that promoted the environmental and economic value of forests and that fostered cooperation among the different stakeholder groups.

5. In his recorded message to the Commission, His Excellency Abel Pacheco de la Espriella, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, thanked FAO and the member countries for having accepted his country's invitation to host the event. He highlighted the close link that existed between the deterioration of ecosystems through mistaken and improper use and the

increase in poverty in affected areas. He was referring essentially to the incidence of deforestation in the Region and to the threat that this represented for the continued existence of humanity on Earth. In his review of Costa Rica's efforts to reverse the process of destruction of its forest cover, he pointed out that progress could be enhanced through: a) an international policy agreement to address the issue of forests in an integrated manner, as well as their contribution to alleviating poverty; b) using some of the US\$956 billion that had been allocated to military expenditure in 2003; and c) greater recognition by users of the environmental goods and services that forests provide. He concluded by making a general call for a declaration of peace with nature.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Item 1)

6. The Provisional Agenda was adopted without change.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Item 2)

7. In accordance with Articles II-1 and II-5 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission elected a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur. The following members of the Commission were unanimously elected:

Chair: Raúl Solórzano (Costa Rica) Meso-America Subregional Group

Vice-Chairs: Juan Claudio Rodríguez (Chile), Southern Cone Subregional Group

Renzo Silva (Venezuela), Amazon Subregional Group

Héctor Miguel Abreu (Dominican Republic) Caribbean Subregional Group

Rapporteur: Atilio Ligrone (Uruguay)

Mr. Carlos Marx R. Carneiro, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, acted as Secretary.

STATE OF FORESTRY IN THE REGION (Item 3)

8. The Secretariat introduced document FO:LACFC/2004/2 "State of Forestry in the Region: 2002-2004".

9. The Secretariat indicated that, in contrast to previous sessions of the Commission, this Secretariat Note was very brief because one of the main items on the agenda was the Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Latin America and the Caribbean, which included a broad presentation of the state of forestry in the Region. To avoid repetition, instead of providing a broad description of the state of the forestry sector in the Region, the purpose of the Secretariat Note was to invite delegates to inform the Commission of main developments in their respective countries during the past two years.

10. Delegates from 21 countries reported on their main forest-related activities during this period.

11. These generally related to: review and formulation of forest policies; forest legislation; institutional changes; formulation, review or implementation of national forest development plans; forestry information systems; participatory forest development; payment for forest-generated environmental services; incentives for afforestation and forest management; strategic alliances among forestry sector actors; actions against illegal forest extraction; monitoring of forest utilization; code of good forestry practices; participation of civil society in forest-related decisions; forest fire and pests; and conversion of agricultural land into forest plantations.

REVIEW OF FAO REGULAR AND FIELD PROGRAMMES, INCLUDING FOLLOW-UP TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF THE 22nd SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (Item 4)

12. The Secretariat introduced document FO:LACFC/2004/3 "Review of FAO Regular and Field Programmes, including follow-up to the recommendations and requests of the 22nd Session of the Commission".

13. The Commission noted with satisfaction the progress that had been made in the implementation of the FAO Forestry Regular Programme.

14. The Commission was also informed of the FAO Field Programme during 2002-2003 and of the 23 percent reduction in projects involving the participatory management of forest resources because of the completion, during the period, of six corresponding projects of the FAO/Government Cooperative Programme (GCP) and the multi-donor Forests, Trees and People Programme (FTPP). While GCP-funded projects had declined, there had been a respective increase of 74 and 45 percent for projects financed from unilateral trust funds and funds supplied through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). While the number of FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects had remained unchanged at 10 national projects and 3 regional projects, this programme financed from FAO Regular Programme resources had received a fund allocation for the Region that was 50 percent higher than in the previous period.

15. The Commission was also informed of the measures that had been taken in follow-up to the recommendations and requests it had made at its 22nd Session.

IN-SESSION SEMINAR: FORESTRY SECTOR OUTLOOK STUDY FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (Item 5)

16. The Secretariat introduced document FO:LACFC/2004/4 "In-session seminar: Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Latin America and the Caribbean".

17. The Secretariat drew attention to the progress that had been made in the study, which provided an indication of the possible development of the forestry sector until the year 2020, and requested guidance from the Commission on the completion of the study and on its utilization for planning, development of national forest programmes, preparation of strategies and coordination of regional actions.

18. The Commission recommended that FAO should continue to provide support to countries' efforts to improve their forestry information systems, including national forest inventories and contributions of the forestry sector (wood and non-wood products) to national economies, to support policy decisions in countries.

19. The Commission recommended that FAO should broaden the focus of outlook studies to include: non-wood forest products; the multi-functions of forests; payment for forest-generated environmental services; small- and medium-sized enterprises; forest health; and markets for wood products.

20. The Commission stressed that the role played by indigenous groups and local authorities and communities would continue to grow in the lead-up to 2020.

21. The 23rd Session of the LACFC witnessed the unprecedented participation of civil society representatives, which was an example of the consultative processes undertaken by the national forest programmes and of the increasing importance given by the countries to community forest management. In view of this, the Commission recommended that the issue be subject to further discussion at the next meeting of COFLAC and at COFO, with the objective of identifying mechanisms to strengthen such participation.

FORESTRY ACTIVITIES OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL/ INTERGOVERNMENTAL/ NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE REGION (Item 6)

22. Thirteen international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations reported on their forestry activities in the Region.

23. The country delegates recognized the quality of the presentations and the excellent support of their reported activities to sustainable forest development in the Region.

24. The Commission noted that there was a shortage of information on technical cooperation activities carried out both by FAO and by other agencies or institutions in the Region. It therefore recommended that FAO establish a working group at Headquarters, with the objective of improving information sharing among countries and international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on forestry activities in the Region.

IN-SESSION SEMINAR: NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMMES AND INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON FORESTS – STRENGTHENING REGIONAL ACTION (Item 7)

25. The Secretariat introduced document FO:LACFC/2004/5 "In-session seminar: National forest programmes and international dialogue on forests – Strengthening regional action".

26. This document was supplemented with presentations by other organizations and programmes attending the Session and by the Secretariat itself, which provided further information on subregional support for the implementation of national forest programmes and national mechanisms for forest dialogue and consensus building.

27. The Commission took note of actions in the Region to promote and strengthen national forest programmes, of growing coordination between them and of the activities undertaken by FAO in support of these programmes.

28. With regard to the intergovernmental dialogue on forests, the Commission heard a brief summary of the process and of progress made since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) until the current process with the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). It also heard analyses made this year of the still unresolved difficulties in actually implementing the proposals for action for sustainable forest management that had been put forward by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). It was also informed of preparatory actions for the decisions to be taken regarding UNFF in 2005.

29. The Commission observed that national forestry authorities received insufficient information on the progress and results of the intergovernmental dialogue on forests. It therefore requested more effort from all parties and that FAO undertake the compilation and dissemination of the results of the dialogue to improve this situation.

30. The Commission noted that many countries lacked the experience or capacity to effectively develop a national consensus, involving representatives of all forest stakeholders, for the intergovernmental dialogue on forests. It therefore sought support from the National Forest Programme Facility to deal with these matters within the framework of such programmes.

31. The Commission considered the national forest programmes to be the ideal vehicle for integrating national and local activities with actions agreed by intergovernmental dialogue.

32. The Commission considered the LACFC to be an important platform for discussion of regional forest matters and for the provision of input into the global forest dialogue. It was also well placed to translate global commitments into national and regional actions.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBREGIONAL GROUPS OF THE COMMISSION: REPORTS ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2002-2004 AND PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION OF WORKPLANS FOR 2004-2006 (Items 8(a) and (b))

33. The Commission requested COFO to seek new and additional resources to finance the implementation of the activities prepared by the Subregional Groups.

34. The Commission noted that, under this agenda item, the Subregional Groups were expected to report on their previous workplans and to prepare new workplans with priorities and activities that could be realistically accomplished before the next LACFC session. Below is a brief summary of the respective workplans for 2004-2006, which are provided in full in *Appendix D*.

Meso-America Subregional Group

35. The Meso-America Subregional Group proposed the following activities:

- Define, disseminate and consolidate a shared perspective to facilitate a development process that reflects relevant international commitments and recommendations.
- Identify and develop regional support projects for national forest programmes that help address the priority forest issues of the countries of the Region.
- Facilitate the formulation or updating of national forest policies and plans in the countries of the Region, and put these into effect through dynamic processes that involve all relevant sectors.
- Strengthen the participation of the countries of the Region in the intergovernmental dialogue on forests and foster an effective use of associated international cooperation resources.
- Support actions for the control of illegal extraction and trade of wood and non-wood forest products, through the definition and implementation of a control strategy.
- Have national information systems include records of economic data that help identify the contribution of the forestry sector (wood and non-wood products) to a country's GDP.
- Recognize community forestry as a regional strategy for reducing environmental and social vulnerability and combating poverty.

Southern Cone Subregional Group

36. The Southern Cone Subregional Group proposed the following activities:

- Strengthen forestry information systems for the elaboration of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in the Subregion (Montreal Process).
- Design financial strategies and mechanisms for the conservation and sustainable use of forests.

Amazon Subregional Group

37. The Amazon Subregional Group proposed the following activities:

- Develop the primary elements of a subregional information system on forest cover and information on national accounts.
- Promote fora for discussion of the regional implementation of international agreements and reflect on regional agreements, experiences and needs.

- Promote an institutional forum, within countries, for discussion and coordination of the forestry sector and determine its operating principles.
- Identify the conditions required to secure/attract investment and funding for sustainable forest management.

Caribbean Subregional Group

38. The Caribbean Subregional Group proposed the following activities:

- Provide training in fighting forest fire.
- Develop a database system for monitoring forest fire.
- Organize a workshop on producing forest inventories and forest maps.
- Organize a workshop on participatory methods of community forest management.
- Prepare a study on mitigating the impact of hurricanes.
- Organize a technical meeting on criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of forests.
- Organize a technical meeting on the management and monitoring of forest utilization.

REGIONAL ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY (Item 9)

39. The Commission recommended that FAO should continue to provide support to countries' efforts to improve their forestry information systems, including national forest inventories and contributions of the forestry sector (wood and non-wood products) to national economies, to support policy decisions in countries.

40. The Commission recommended that FAO should broaden the focus of outlook studies to include: non-wood forest products; the multi-functions of forests; payment for forest-generated environmental services; small- and medium-sized enterprises; forest health; and markets for wood products.

41. The 23rd Session of the LACFC witnessed the unprecedented participation of civil society representatives, which was an example of the consultative processes undertaken by the national forest programmes and of the increasing importance given by the countries to community forest management. In view of this, the Commission recommended that the issue be subject to further discussion at the next meeting of COFLAC and at COFO, with the objective of identifying mechanisms to strengthen such participation.

42. The Commission recommended that FAO establish a working group at headquarters, with the objective of improving information sharing among countries and international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on forestry activities in the Region.

43. The Commission noted that many countries lacked the experience or capacity to effectively develop a national consensus, involving representatives of all forest stakeholders, for the intergovernmental dialogue on forests. It therefore sought support from the National

Forest Programme Facility to deal with these matters within the framework of such programmes.

44. The Commission noted the importance of trade and trade agreements relating to wood and non-wood forest products in the Region and recommended that FAO follow up on this matter in order to assess the potential impact on the sector.

45. The Commission requested COFO to seek new and additional resources to finance the implementation of the activities prepared by the Subregional Groups.

46. The Commission highlighted the close relationship between criteria and indicators, the certification and the trade of forest products and recommended that FAO follow up on this matter in order to determine possible consequences.

47. Noting the high incidence of forest fire that caused serious damage in the Region, the Commission agreed to draw to the attention of the 17th Session of COFO the outcome of the Pan-American Conference on Wildland Fire which would be held immediately following the 23rd Session of the LACFC. It also noted with satisfaction that the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting on Forests to be held at FAO Headquarters in March 2005 would address international agreement on the management and control of forest fire.

48. The Commission recommended that countries should integrate forests into their national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The Commission recommended that COFO should underscore the role of forests in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and that the members of the LACFC should coordinate efforts to this end, through the working plans of the Subregional Groups.

49. In view of the importance of forests in the Region and of FAO's role in providing country support, the Commission recommended that the FAO Forestry Department should be strengthened.

PRESENTATION BY THE NORTH AMERICAN FOREST COMMISSION ON WORKING GROUP MODALITIES (Item 10)

50. The Secretariat of the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) informed the Commission about its modality of work as well as its constitution and role.

51. The Commission learned that the NAFC operated through seven working groups on the following specific topics: fire management, forest insects and diseases, forest inventory and monitoring, forest genetic resources, atmospheric change and forests, forest products and silviculture.

52. The LACFC participants expressed their appreciation of the presentation and identified numerous similarities in the thematic areas addressed by both Commissions.

53. The Commission therefore recommended that greater efforts be made to forge a closer and more permanent relationship of coordination and exchange of information between the two Commissions.

OTHER BUSINESS (Item 11)

54. The Session also featured seven informal side meetings on topics of interest to the Region, which were attended by participants of some delegations. Appendix E provides a brief summary of the discussions at the meetings.

55. The Commission, aware of FAO's initiative to develop a regional code of practice for reduced impact forest harvesting in tropical moist forest in Latin America and the Caribbean, recommended that the norms be extended to all the forests of the Region, given that some countries have large areas of forests which are not tropical. Moreover, the Commission underlined the need to take into account existing codes and those that are being formulated by other bodies and initiatives.

56. The delegate of Argentina communicated that they were co-organizing with Chile the 22nd Meeting of the International Poplar Commission, that will be held in Chile from 28 November to 9 December 2004.

57. The delegate of Venezuela informed the Commission that the IV Venezuelan Forestry Congress would be held from 20 to 24 November 2004.

58. Various delegates of the Central American and Mexican Subregional group requested that the designation of their group be changed to "Meso-America Subregional group".

59. The Commission requested FAO to organize a meeting of the heads of forestry services of the countries in the Region to be held before the UNFF in May 2005 in order to build consensus concerning the agenda.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Item 12)

60. The Secretariat informed the Commission of the formal offer of the Government of the Dominican Republic to host the 24th Session of the LACFC in 2006. The Commission received with appreciation this offer. In addition, the delegation of the United States of America expressed its interest in hosting the 25th Session of the Commission in 2008 in Puerto Rico, in conjunction with the meeting of the North American Forest Commission.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Item 13)

61. The draft report was approved by the Commission with minor amendments and some clarifications.

CLOSURE

62. The meeting was closed by Mr. M. Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department, FAO, and by H.E. Carlos Manuel Rodríguez, Minister for the Environment and Energy, Costa Rica.

APPENDIX A**AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Session and adoption of the Agenda.
2. Election of Officers.
3. State of forestry in the Region.
4. Review of FAO Regular and Field Programmes, including follow-up to the recommendations and requests of the 22nd Session of the Commission.
5. In-session seminar: Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Latin America and the Caribbean.
6. Forestry activities of other international/intergovernmental/non-governmental organizations in the Region.
7. In-session seminar: National forest programmes and the international dialogue on forests – Strengthening regional action.
8. Activities of the Subregional Groups of the Commission:
 - a) Reports on accomplishments 2002-2004
 - b) Preparation and presentation of workplans for the 2004-2006 period
9. Regional issues identified by the Commission for the attention of the Committee on Forestry (COFO).
10. Presentation by the North American Forest Commission about working group modalities.
11. Other business.
12. Place and date of the next Session.
13. Adoption of the report and closing of the Session.

A summary of the informal discussion held in side meetings is included in Appendix E

- Land tenure and integrated rural development.
- Forest law compliance and sustainable forest management.
- Innovative financial mechanisms for the development of the forestry sector.
- Trade agreements (Free Trade Area of the Americas – FTAA) and the role of the forestry sector.
- Development of a regional code of practice for reduced impact forest harvesting in tropical moist forest in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Strengthening LACFC as a venue for dialogue on international forest policy issues.
- Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

APPENDIX B**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Chairman: | Raúl Solórzano (Costa Rica) |
| Vice-Chairmen: | Juan Claudio Rodríguez (Chile) Renzo Silva (Venezuela) Héctor Miguel Abreu (Dominican Republic) |
| Rapporteur: | Atilio Ligrone (Uruguay) |
| Secretary: | Carlos Marx R. Carneiro |

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APPENDIX C**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

| Agenda item | Code | Title |
|--------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1 | FO:LACFC/2004/1 | Provisional Agenda |
| 3 | FO:LACFC/2004/2 | State of Forestry in the Region: 2002-2004 |
| 4 | FO:LACFC/2004/3 | Review of FAO Regular and Field Programmes, including follow-up to the recommendations and requests of the 22 nd Session of the Commission |
| 5 | FO:LACFC/2004/4 | In-session Seminar: Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| 7 | FO:LACFC/2004/5 | In-session Seminar: National Forest Programmes and International Dialogue on Forests – Strengthening regional action |

Information documents

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| FO:LACFC/2004/INF.1 | Information Note |
| FO:LACFC/2004/INF.2 | Provisional timetable |
| FO:LACFC/2004/INF.3 | List of documents |
| FO:LACFC/2004/INF.4 | Report on the outcome of the XII World Forestry Congress |
| FO:LACFC/2004/INF.5 | Regional code of practice for reduced impact forest harvesting in tropical moist forest of Latin America and the Caribbean |

Country reports received from:

Argentina
Belize
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Guatemala
Guyana
Haiti
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Trinidad and Tobago
Uruguay
Venezuela

APPENDIX D**WORKPLANS OF THE SUBREGIONAL GROUPS OF THE COMMISSION:
CARIBBEAN, AMAZON, MESO-AMERICA, SOUTHERN CONE*****WORKPLAN OF THE CARIBBEAN SUBREGIONAL GROUP***

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, , Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States of America. The Dominican Republic holds the Vice-Chair of the Caribbean Subregional Group for the period 2004-2006.

The practice to carry out the work of the Caribbean Subregional Group in small working groups will continue. The main reason is that cooperation is focused, concentrating on countries with similar social and ecological conditions.

Up to now activities were undertaken in three main groups:

1. Small- and medium-sized English-speaking islands: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago,
2. French and Spanish-speaking islands: Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti.
3. Countries with large areas of forests: Belize, Guyana, French Guyana and Suriname.

The definition of these working groups is not exclusive. Participation in regional activities will also depend on the interest of the respective country. In past meetings countries from different working groups also participated.

PLAN OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2004-2006**Principal thematic areas of common interest**

- Development of programmes for forest fire management. A decision was taken that the Caribbean Subregional Group would be the appropriate mechanism for the undertaking of activities of a Caribbean network on forest fire. Within two years it will be decided if an independent Caribbean network will be established or if the Subregional Group will continue coordinating activities.
- Methodologies for the preparation of forest inventories, including the preparation of maps.
- Development of community and participatory forestry.
- Development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.
- Development of an appraisal methodology of environmental services and its inclusion in the national accounts.

Exchange and management of information

A rough draft of a format for a Web site of the Caribbean Subregional Group was discussed and the Group agreed and supported the institutionalization of a page presented within the framework of the LACFC Web site.

Activities proposed by the working groups

Small-and medium-sized English-speaking islands

- *Combating Forest fire*
 - ◊ Training in combating forest fire. A workshop for 25 foresters on adequate techniques will be carried out in Trinidad. Trinidad and Tobago will provide the local logistics. The NGO TNC has offered training personnel and FAO will facilitate the participation of some countries of the Region in 2005.
 - ◊ Develop a data base programme for the monitoring of forest fire based on the Trinidad and Tobago protocols on forest fire. Carry out a two-day regional workshop in Trinidad for gathering and evaluation of forest fire data. The activities for 2005-2006 will be carried out with contributions from Trinidad and Tobago, the USDA Forest Service, and FAO.
- *Forest inventory and mapping*
 - ◊ Workshop on methodology for preparation of forest inventories and forest mapping for the development of a Project on forest inventory and mapping, which will be offered by FAO in 2005.
- *Development of community and participatory forestry*
 - ◊ Regional workshop on the participatory method for community forest management. Planned for Guyana based on the experiences of an international project on participatory methods for forest management. Potential facilitators: FAO, Guyana and the Forest Project, for 2005.
- *Mitigation of cyclone effects for the forestry sector*
 - ◊ Preparation of a study for mitigation of cyclone effects, recommending methods for better use of wood products, including first steps for the rehabilitation of affected areas.

French and Spanish-speaking islands

- *Combating Forest fire*

Cuba and Dominican Republic have institutional and organizational arrangements for the prevention and control of forest fire. It was decided to carry out the following steps:

- ◊ Cuba offered to send to the Sub-secretary of Forest Resources a copy of its Strategy and Plan for the Prevention and Control of Forest Fires for 2004.
- ◊ The Dominican Republic will identify its needs and training areas for strengthening the national programme on control and prevention of fire for 2005.
- ◊ Expert consultation on forest fire in 2006 for the development of a monitoring methodology of forest fire with the contribution of Cuba, Dominican Republic, NGOs and FAO.

- *Forest inventory and mapping*
 - ◊ Workshop for the revision of the methodology for forest surveys in the Dominican Republic in 2005 with the participation of Cuba and Puerto Rico. A five-day workshop is proposed with the contribution of the Sub-secretary of Forest Resources, FAO, and the participating countries.
- *Criteria and indicators*
 - ◊ Cuba carried out the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management based on the *Lepaterique* Process. Criteria and indicators were identified to be applied in the 400 existing forest units. It was agreed to undertake the following steps:
 - i. The Forestry Division of Cuba will send to the Sub-secretariat of Forest Resources of the Dominican Republic its criteria and indicators as well as the documents of the evaluation of the application of those indicators.
 - ii. For the revision of the criteria and indicators contained in the technical standards, a regional workshop will be held in 2006 in the Dominican Republic with the participation of representatives from Cuba, Puerto Rico and Haiti with the support of the participating countries and FAO.

Countries with large areas of forest

The working group of the Caribbean countries with large areas of forests (Belize, Guyana, French Guyana and Suriname) will carry out a fifth technical meeting on management and monitoring of forest harvesting practices. Two possible themes were suggested: Chainsaw logging or approaches to forest certification.

WORKPLAN OF THE AMAZON SUBREGIONAL GROUP

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana and Venezuela. Venezuela holds the Vice-Chair of the Amazon Subregional Group for the period 2004-2006.

1. Information system

Title: Develop the first elements of a subregional information system for: (i) Forest cover; and (ii) Information on national accounts.

Activities

- i. Feasibility analysis for the application of the CYBER/DETEC system in the countries of the subregion.
- ii. Install and train local/national institutions for the adequate operation of the monitoring system of the forest cover, through a training workshop for 25 people in Brazil.
- iii. Study of the account mechanisms of the forestry sector in the national public accounts.
- iv. Workshop with the forestry and financial sectors to discuss criteria to include the forestry sector in a segregated way in the national public accounts.

- v. Include in the Web Site of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) the information generated in an aggregated form for the subregion and for the countries.

Inputs and possible sources of financing

- i. One month of consultancy (FAO).
- ii. Organization costs for two workshops (Brazil), fares and daily subsistence allowance (to be defined).

2. International agreements

Title: To promote areas for discussion of: (i) Implementation of international agreements at a regional level; and (ii) to reflect on the agreements, experiences and regional demands.

Activities

- i. Two video conferences (Dec. 2004 and Mar. 2005).
- ii. Establish a follow-up mechanism for the proposals of the Intergovernmental Panel and Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF).

Inputs and possible sources of financing

- i. One month of consultancy (FAO).
- ii. Include in the workshop of Criteria and Indicators of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

3. Mechanisms for consultation and dialogue

Title: Promote an institutionalized space, within the countries, for dialogue and consultation of the forestry sector, defining principles for its means of functioning.

Activities

- i. Complement and extend the study made within the framework of the national forest programmes.
- ii. Carry out a consultation workshop, involving the different civil society stakeholder groups to define those principles.

Inputs and possible sources of financing

- i. One month of consultancy (resources to be defined).
- ii. Organization of the workshop (resources to be defined).

4. Financing Mechanisms

Title: Define the necessary conditions to capture/attract investments and financing for sustainable forest management.

Activities

- i. Carry out a study of the variables/factors which restrict/stimulate/justify the investments and financing, in a specific and general way, for sustainable forest management.
- ii. Promote internal debate in the countries and in the Region on the issue.
- iii. Promote debate with investors in the sector.

Inputs and possible sources of financing

- i. One consultancy (FAO).
- ii. Two regional workshops (sources of resources to be defined).

Other items of interest

Other items were also considered important, however it was considered that they could overload the plan of work for the period 2004-2006. Nevertheless, the Group recommended to keep in mind as a high priority for the next period the following items:

- i. Cross-border control of illegal logging.
- ii. Training and forest education structure.

WORKPLAN OF THE MESO-AMERICA SUBREGIONAL GROUP

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. Costa Rica holds the Vice-Chair of the Meso-America Subregional Group for the period 2004-2006.

1. Activity Title

Define, disseminate and consolidate a common vision to facilitate a development process for the forest sector in Central America and Mexico, in harmony with the relevant international commitments and recommendations.

Main activity: Recognize the *Lepaterique* Process as the reference framework to orient the criteria and indicators.

Expected result: Criteria and indicators to be applied in at least four countries.

Period: 2 years

Participating countries: Meso-America

Possible financing: FAO

Main activity: CTB and CTAP of the CCAD propose meetings with coordinators of regional projects to identify activities of interest.

Expected result: Forestry and protected areas components of the different regional projects will integrate efforts.

Period: 2 years

Participating countries: Central America and Mexico

Possible financing: FAO

Main activity: Establish the Meso-American Network of Permanent Monitoring of Natural Forests.

Expected result: The Meso-American Network of Permanent Monitoring of Natural Forests created and in operation.

Period: 2 years

Participating countries: Central America and Mexico

Possible financing: FAO

Main activity: Inclusion of the concept of a “biological corridor” in the strategies of development of the forestry sector in the Subregion.

Expected result: Strengthening of the National Committees of Biological Corridors to include this concept in the workplans of forestry sector institutions.

Period: Two years

Participating countries: Meso-America

Possible financing: To be defined.

2. Activity Title

To facilitate the preparation or up-dating of policies, plans or national forest programmes in the countries of the Region, as well as their implementation through dynamic processes and with the participation of the relevant sectors.

Main activity: Belize has negotiated its project support with FAO.

Expected result: Plans or national forest programmes in the seven countries of the Region being implemented.

Period: Two years

Participating countries: Central America and Mexico

Possible financing: FAO, World Bank, The Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Guatemala has updated its forestry policy.

Expected result: Plans or national forest programmes in the seven countries of the region are being implemented.

Period: Two years

Participating countries: Central America and Mexico

Possible financing: FAO, World Bank, The Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Nicaragua reassuming its national forest programme supported by the World Bank

Resultado esperado: Plans or national forest programmes in the seven countries of the region being implemented.

Period: Two years

Participating countries: Central America and Mexico

Possible financing: FAO, World Bank, The Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Panama has negotiated its project of support to national forest programmes.

Expected result: Plans or national forest programmes in the seven countries of the Region are being implemented.

Period: Two years
Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: FAO, World Bank, The Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Identify and apply the necessary financial mechanisms to promote the forestry sector as a strategy for sustainable development.

Expected result: FAO/Netherlands Project for the development of financial mechanisms approved and in execution.

Period: Two years
Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: FAO, World Bank, The Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: To provide grassroots organizations with technical and administrative training so they can actively participate in the national forest programmes of their respective countries.

Expected result: grassroots organizations participating actively in national forest programmes.

Period: Two years
Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: FAO, World Bank, The Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Support to the Forestry Administration of El Salvador in the organization of the IV Central American Forestry Congress.

Expected result: organization of IV Central American Forestry Congress.

Period: Two years
Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: To be defined.

3. Activity Title

Identify and develop regional projects in support of the national forest programmes which would allow support to the countries to face high-priority forest problems in the Region.

Main activity: Preparation of project proposals and negotiation with possible donors.

Expected result: At least four projects in negotiation, two of them financed:

- Financial mechanisms
- Governability
- Adaptation to climate changes
- Forests and climate changes.

Period: Two years
Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: FAO/Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Identification of activities to be developed within the Central American Forestry Strategy (EFCA), with the support of the National Forest Programme Facility.

Expected result: EFCA Projects prioritized for financing of the Facility.

Period: Two years

Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: FAO/Government of The Netherlands

Main activity: Participation and support to meetings of the Regional Working Groups on Forest Fire, Pests and Forest Diseases.

Expected result: Regional group of coordination on fire and pests management operating and implementing the Regional Fire Plan and the Regional Strategy on Health and Forest Management.

Period: Two years
Participating countries: Central America and Mexico
Possible financing: FAO/Government of The Netherlands

WORKPLAN OF THE SOUTHERN CONE SUBREGIONAL GROUP

Countries participating in the meeting of the Group: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Chile holds the Vice-Chair of the Southern Cone Subregional Group for the period 2004-2006.

1. Activity Title

Strengthening of the forest information systems for the preparation and validation of criteria and indicators for the sustainable forest management in the Subregion (Montreal Process).

Main activities and period

- Reformulate the existing Project profile and others on the basis of the inputs generated during the period 2002-2004.
- Oversee its presentation to financing sources.
- Execution of the project with validation of the main selected indicators.

Expected results

Information systems operating with validated criteria and indicators.

Participating countries

Argentina, Chile Paraguay and Uruguay, and The Netherlands as observer.

Possible source of financing

- FAO Technical Cooperation Programme.
- Support from the Secretariat of the Montreal Process.

2. Activity Title

Strategies and financial mechanisms for the conservation and sustainable utilization of forests.

Main activities

- Identification and analysis of financial mechanisms.
- Financial strategy within the framework of the countries' forest programmes.

Expected results

Strengthening of the financial strategy of the forest programmes.

Participating countries

Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, and The Netherlands as observer.

Possible source of financing

The Government of The Netherlands.

AGREEMENT

We, the group of countries from the Southern Cone, decided to join the formulation process of the proposal which will follow the dialogue on forests in Latin America. To do so, the group will act through its Vice-president in coordination with the formulation group of project PUEMBO II.

APPENDIX E

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS IN SIDE MEETINGS

1. The participants at the meeting on **land tenure and integrated rural development** concluded that community forest development was conditional upon sound agrarian legislation and clear provisions on the assignment of land ownership.
2. The meeting on **forest law compliance and forest management** elucidated the nature of the problem of illegal forest extraction that affected countries in the Region and its associated activities, its causes and known extent, its consequences, and the manner in which it was being controlled. The presentation by Costa Rica and the ensuing discussions examined lessons learned in the design of control actions and identified the need to address the problem in its socio-economic dimension, actively involving civil society and local authorities in the exercise of control, and the need to carefully consider the implications of excessive regulation of forest management on the occurrence of the problem.
3. The participants at the meeting on **innovative financial mechanisms for the development of the forestry sector** analysed two financial mechanisms for sustainable forest management that had been successfully promoted by small producers in Costa Rica. The key to success had been the existence of an appropriate legal framework, institutional transparency and political will.
4. The participants at the meeting on **trade agreements (Free Trade Area of the Americas – FTAA) and the role of the forestry sector** focused on the problem of tariff and non-tariff barriers and other measures affecting the export and trade of forest products. They singled out the strong connection that existed between certification and trade of forest products and recommended that FAO follow this topic up in order to assess its potential impact. Trade in environmental goods and services was also discussed, leading to the suggestion that related national strategies be developed for the benefit of the developing countries. The participants also stated that stronger regional cooperation, reciprocal relations between countries and regional trade blocs and improved data and information were instrumental in the formulation and implementation of such strategies.
5. The participants at the meeting on **the development of a regional code of practice for reduced impact forest harvesting in tropical moist forests of Latin America and the Caribbean** received the information on work relating to the code with interest. Various countries announced their intention to collaborate. Venezuela expressed its willingness to provide opportunities for testing application of the forest harvesting rules once these were available. Guyana made reference to training facilities. Brazil and Colombia emphasized the need to review and consider the efforts and experiences that already existed in the Region. The participants recommended that the rules be extended to all forests in the Region as some countries had large areas of non-tropical forest. They also underlined the need to consider the codes that had already been formulated or were in the process of being formulated by other authorities and initiatives.
6. The participants at the meeting on **strengthening the LACFC as a venue for dialogue on international forest policy issues** drew attention to the unclear future of the international arrangement on forests when the UNFF concluded its life span in 2005; the low status on the international forest agenda of aspects that were of priority interest to forest development in the Region; the need for greater involvement of national forest authorities in

international negotiating processes; the need to reach regional agreements so that sustainable forest management proposals could be placed before the global bodies, and the possible role of the LACFC as a venue for reaching such agreements for the Region.

7. The participants at the meeting on **criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management** pointed out that criteria and indicators are an important mechanism to help define an ecosystem approach for sustainable forest management and constitute a useful tool to monitor, assess and report on progress towards sustainable forest management. Therefore, there must be continued efforts to improve the management and systematization of forestry information to support improved forest management.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

| | |
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| Barbados | Jamaica |
| Belize | Mexico |
| Bolivia | The Netherlands |
| Brazil | Nicaragua |
| Chile | Panama |
| Colombia | Paraguay |
| Costa Rica | Peru |
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