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**International arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (programme element III)**

### **Elements and functions for a future international arrangement and mechanism**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### *Summary*

The present note identifies and elaborates on possible elements to be addressed and functions to be performed by a future international arrangement and mechanism on forests, based on the Co-Chairs' compilation text as contained in the report of the third session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (see E/CN.17/IFF/1999/25).

The possible elements identified in the present note broadly reflect the emerging consensus in the areas of priority concern, as identified at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests processes. It is proposed that the set of possible elements would remain the same regardless of the form of a future international arrangement and mechanism.

The note suggests that an international arrangement and mechanism on forests should perform four principal functions: policy development, coordination, policy implementation and the provision of legislative authority. The note further suggests that although all the principal functions would be present in a future arrangement and mechanism on forests,

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\* E/CN.17/IFF/2000/1.

one would be the entry point and perform a dominant role. The relative importance of the principal functions in an international arrangement and mechanism on forests could change depending on its type or form, with shifting circumstances and needs, as well as over time.

The present note is intended to be read in conjunction with the note by the Secretariat on primary forest policy issues (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/2), and supports the analysis of options for an international arrangement and mechanism on forests contained in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/4). It is not intended for negotiations but to facilitate discussion of programme element III at the fourth session of the Forum.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. The present note has been prepared to facilitate the deliberations on programme element III of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) on elements and functions for an international arrangement and mechanism to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. It should be read in conjunction with the note by the Secretariat on priority forest policy issues (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/2) and the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/4). Programme element III is scheduled for substantive discussion at the fourth session of IFF, when the Forum will adopt its report for consideration by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eighth session.

2. During the past five years, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and IFF processes have produced a significant consensus on many complex and politically sensitive issues. The issue of an international arrangement and mechanism has been one of the most sensitive. However, based on the suggestions for elements, functions and options for an international arrangement and mechanism, as they appear in the report of IFF at its third session (E/CN.17/IFF/1999/25), the broad characteristics of a future international arrangement and mechanism appear to be emerging.

## **II. Outcome of the third session of the Forum**

3. The results of deliberations on programme element III at the third session of IFF are summarized below.

### **A. Concerns and problems**

4. There are many complex and interrelated factors that directly or indirectly affect forests, sustainable forest management and forest policy. The Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests<sup>1</sup> (Forest Principles), chapter 11 of Agenda 21,<sup>2</sup> the IPF proposals for action and the IFF process, as well as many other initiatives, have all recognized the need to address forest-related issues in an integrated manner at the national, regional and global levels. Developments in other sectors can greatly affect forests, thus there is also a need for cross-sectoral policy harmonization and action.

5. IFF recognized that global attention to forests has been precipitated, among others, by such concerns as deforestation, forest degradation, competition with alternative land use, and the lack of proper valuation of wood and non-wood products and services derived from forests.

6. The future challenge for countries lies in creating the institutional, policy and operational environments that can enable forests to sustainably meet economic, social, cultural and environmental demands for numerous products and services. This would require, among others things, the development of national forest programmes, the transfer of technologies and financial resources, and access to international markets for forest products.

### **B. Broad principles**

7. The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Forest Principles provide the overarching guidance to the intergovernmental deliberation on sustainable development in general and forests in particular. These include the fundamental recognition of the sovereign rights to utilize national resources; the right to economic development; the responsibility to ensure that activities of one country do not cause damage to other countries; the common but differentiated responsibilities concerning collective interests and concerns; and that international cooperation should focus on building human and institutional capacities.

8. IFF noted that an international arrangement and mechanism on forests should take into account progress and consensus already reached, and should promote international action that facilitates implementation of sustainable forest management at the national, global and regional levels. An international arrangement and mechanism on forests should also consider forest-related aspects embodied in other instruments, mechanisms and programmes that address issues of national, regional and global significance relevant to forests. It should address all aspects and types of forests and the interests and needs of all countries, consider the special situation and needs of developing countries to implement sustainable forest management, and be inclusive of the areas of priority concerns to both countries with rich and with low forest cover. Furthermore, it should seek strong political commitment and sustained international cooperation.

## C. Objectives

9. IFF suggested that the overarching objectives of an international arrangement and mechanism, which would promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, embrace some of the common aspects of the criteria that characterize sustainable forest management developed in the regional processes.

## D. Elements considered

10. The formulation of a set of possible elements, i.e., forest issues of priority concern, to be addressed by a future international arrangement and mechanism on forests, has undergone several analyses and considerations during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and IPF and IFF deliberations.

11. Discussion at the third session of IFF resulted in a compilation text presented by the Co-Chairmen, which reflected the comments made during the session by delegations. This compilation text, which included a set of elements, is contained in the report of IFF at its third session. The set of possible elements are discussed in section III of the present report and are further elaborated in annex I.

## E. Functions proposed

12. Based on discussions at the third session of IFF, the Co-Chairmen suggested a set of functions for international arrangements and mechanisms beyond the year 2000. IFF commented on and proposed additional functions, but these were not further negotiated. The compiled list, as it appears in the report of IFF on its third session, indicates a range of functions with different scope, which could be performed by a future international arrangement and mechanism on forests. Section IV of the present report includes a synthesis and elaboration of 16 functions suggested at the third session of IFF.

## F. Options for an international arrangement and mechanism

13. During the deliberations concerning guidance to the Secretariat for the preparation of documents for the fourth session, it was proposed that the following set of nine options for an international arrangement and mechanism

on forests, or a combination of them, could serve as a basis for further analysis:

- A mechanism for improved coordination of existing arrangements;
- Ongoing ad hoc intergovernmental dialogue;
- A new permanent forum for intergovernmental dialogue;
- Improvement of non-legally binding instruments;
- A lead body role for an existing organization;
- Use of existing legally binding instruments;
- Regional mechanisms;
- A framework convention allowing for regional mechanisms;
- A new global legal instrument.

14. IFF requested that the Secretariat, in its analysis of options, focus on their ability to effectively fulfil the functions and address the elements.

## III. Possible elements

15. A review of the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and the programme of work of IPF and IFF shows a remarkable consistency of elements — i.e., areas of priority concern — deliberated by countries during the past decade. The set of 16 possible elements listed below, which is elaborated in annex I, is based on those in the compilation text contained in the report of IFF on its third session. These elements are also set out in annex II together with a reference to paragraphs in the Forest Principles and Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF programme of work. Thus, this set of elements has taken into account consensus reached so far at UNCED and IPF as well as deliberations by IFF.

16. The following set of elements includes priority concerns for both developing and developed countries, and both countries with rich forest cover and countries with low forest cover. They also reflect national, regional and global concerns that could be facilitated by action at the international level:

*Set of elements identified at the third session of IFF*

1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes.
2. Promoting public participation.

3. Combating deforestation and forest degradation.
4. Traditional forest-related knowledge.
5. Forest-related scientific knowledge.
6. Forest health and productivity.
7. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.
8. Economic, social and cultural aspects of forests.
9. Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems.
10. Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions.
11. Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover.
12. Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural regeneration and planted forests.
13. Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.
14. Financial resources.
15. International trade and sustainable forest management.
16. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management.

17. During the IPF and IFF processes, general consensus was reached on the scope of most of the elements listed above. While studying the descriptions contained in annex I, it would be advisable to consult the Forest Principles, Agenda 21 and the IPF proposals for action, as well as the evolving consensus as reflected in the report of IFF on its third session, to understand the broader context of each particular element. It is worth noting that the set of elements elaborated in annex I can be seen as sufficiently general to cover the elements discussed in the regional and subregional meetings of the Costa Rica/Canada initiative.

18. Any future arrangement and mechanism on forests will need to have a programme of work that is holistic, comprehensive and inclusive of the areas of priority concern to forests, as defined by UNCED, the Forest Principles and IPF and IFF. Accordingly, it is suggested that the set of elements presented above and elaborated on in annex I, be considered as the basis for the programme

of work of a future international arrangement and mechanism, regardless of its form, without restricting such a future international arrangement and mechanism from including or excluding a particular element or assigning it a different level of priority than others in its programme of work.

## **IV. Functions of future international arrangements and mechanisms**

### **A. Principal functions**

19. The discussions at the third session of IFF resulted in a number of suggestions for possible functions or activities to be performed by a future international arrangement and mechanism to achieve its overarching objectives. The wide range of functions identified at the third session of IFF can be grouped under the following four types of principal functions.

- Policy development;
- Coordination;
- Policy implementation;
- Provision of legislative authority.

20. The nine options for an international arrangement and mechanism identified at the third session (see para. 13 above) could perform, in varying degrees, the four principal functions listed above.

21. Although a future international arrangement and mechanism would include all the above functions, only one of them would be the entry point and thus assume a dominant role. For example, an international coordination mechanism might also include, apart from coordination, policy development through the governing bodies of organizations and instruments involved. It might also provide legislative authority in the form of decisions of governing bodies and memoranda of understanding among the organizations and instruments. Such an option could also include policy implementation activities at the national level, such as through an agreed action programme. However, the main principal function in this example is coordination, and the other principal functions play subsidiary roles.

22. It should also be noted that an international arrangement and mechanism could change over time, either in a planned or in an evolutionary fashion. The relative importance of the principal functions may shift

depending on changing needs and circumstances. For example, referring again to the previous example, what might start out as a coordination mechanism, with most of its functions related to coordination, could develop into an action programme with policy implementation as its dominant function. The international arrangement and mechanism for chemical safety is an example of such an evolution: it started as a coordination mechanism, adding over time an implementation programme and a forum for policy deliberation in the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety. It has also recently resulted in negotiations towards two legally binding instruments on prior informed consent procedures and persistent organic pollutants.

23. There is no guarantee that the performance of one of the principal functions would automatically lead to fulfilling the others. All principal functions would have to be performed to varying degrees. An international arrangement and mechanism that has clearly spelled out the practical manner in which *all* four principal functions will be accomplished would have the best likelihood of overall success.

## **B. Supporting functions**

24. The 16 functions identified at the third session of the IFF perform supporting roles to the four principal functions. A review and synthesis of the principal and the supporting functions are set out below. The descriptions are provided to illustrate how these functions could work in practice to fulfil the overarching objectives of an international arrangement and mechanism. They also include examples of arrangements and mechanisms in which the principal function in question seems to play a dominant role.

### **1. Supporting functions related to policy development**

25. Functions related to policy development would in practice entail policy deliberations, consensus-building and activities related to reporting on progress in achieving sustainable forest management. The purpose would be to develop policies that are well founded in national level experiences, priorities and concerns. Current priority issues and emerging issues that are significant for sustainable forest management would be deliberated, and appropriate adjustments of policies would be made. In practice, it would also entail making use of information from several different sources to provide a coordinated

review of progress in implementation, as an important feedback mechanism to policy development. For assessments, it could also be practical to use criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, developed and implemented at the national, regional and global levels.

26. The principal function of policy development may include supporting such functions as:

- Elaborating objectives for the global forest policy framework;
- Identifying priority areas for action and addressing emerging issues;
- Exchanging information and experiences and discussing common concerns;
- Programming further global and regional actions;
- Developing of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

27. Examples of arrangements with policy development as their dominant function are the General Assembly, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Committee on Forestry of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and conferences of parties to legally binding instruments.

### **2. Supporting functions related to coordination**

28. An arrangement and mechanism with coordination as its dominant function would in practice have to involve a very active participation of different organizations and instruments, at different geographical levels. Effective coordination requires agreement and common understanding among organizations and instruments to undertake collaborative action on a common programme. The performance of functions dealing with a common understanding of key concepts, terms and definitions, and global principles of sustainable forest management, could be achieved through working groups on scientific and technical coordination. These could report back to the governing bodies of the organizations and instruments involved, which could consider these issues from their respective policy and strategic perspectives.

29. The principal function of coordination may include several supporting functions, such as:

- Contributing to synergies and identifying and securing coordination and collaboration;
- Enhancing international and regional cooperation;

- Promoting a common understanding of key concepts, terms and definitions;
- Agreeing on global principles of sustainable forest management.

30. Examples of mechanisms with coordination and collaboration among international organizations as their dominant function are the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests.

### **3. Supporting functions related to policy implementation**

31. The existing mechanisms concerned with policy implementation usually involve an action programme with associated support in the form of financing and transfer of technologies. Expectations to influence the form of support given to countries and to the type of activities would imply close linkages and interaction with a policy development mechanism.

32. Improvement of effectiveness, efficiency and coordination of forest-related bilateral and multilateral assistance in forests is currently usually performed through informal mechanisms. National-level collaboration among international organizations as well as among bilateral donors in implementing projects and programmes have been elusive in the past. However, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests and the International Forestry Advisors Group experiences show promise for the future.

33. In practice, the policy implementation function is performed through specific programmes of field-based activities backed up by committed sources of funding, identified early in a process.

34. Policy implementation may include such supporting functions as:

- Supporting forest policy reform processes;
- Supporting the efforts and responding to the needs of developing countries;
- Improving the effectiveness, efficiency and coordination of bilateral and multilateral assistance;
- Assessing, reviewing and reporting on progress.

35. Examples of international arrangements and mechanisms with policy implementation as their dominant function are the International Programme on Chemical Safety, the Global Environmental Facility, technical assistance programmes in many organizations, notably FAO, the United Nations Development Programme, the

International Tropical Timber Organization, the World Bank and regional development banks.

### **4. Supporting functions related to the provision of legislative authority**

36. The main objective of a legally binding instrument is to provide legislative authority and sustained political commitment through protocols, articles and/or rules to guide the development of legislation at the national level that complies with the instrument. For arrangements and mechanisms, other than a legally binding instrument, legislative authority can be provided by other means. In many cases, commitment is secured through contracts, project documents and memoranda of understanding among interested parties, such as organizations, Governments and private persons. Decisions, resolutions, declarations, recommendations and proposals for action by different United Nations bodies are all examples of means by which legislative authority could be provided.

37. The principal function of provision of legislative authority includes supporting such functions as:

- Strengthening the level of commitment to implementation;
- Securing political commitment;
- Providing effective governance.

38. Examples of arrangements and mechanisms that provide legislative authority include the conventions resulting from UNCED, with their associated protocols; decisions by the General Assembly; the declaration on forests of the Group of Eight Major Industrial Countries; the Rome declarations on forestry made at the second FAO ministerial meeting on sustainability issues in forestry, on the theme "National and international challenges", held in Rome on 8 and 9 March 1999, and resolutions passed by European ministers responsible for forests.

## **V. Other major considerations for a future arrangement and mechanism on forests**

### **A. Participation**

39. There are implications regarding participation by Governments in some of the options identified at the third session of IFF. For example, a coordinating mechanism among international instruments and multilateral organizations would not directly involve Governments. A



legally binding instrument would include only the signatory parties. In all of the options, it would be desirable to make provisions for the participation of major groups, such as the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

## **B. Technical and scientific advice**

40. It is essential to ensure that the functions of policy development, coordination, policy implementation and the provision of legal authority are based on sound scientific and technical knowledge of forests. A preparatory task force or working group, made up of independent experts dealing with scientific and technical issues, could seek consensus on the scientific and technical state of the art on a given issue. They could then present feasible courses of action to an international arrangement and mechanism to support its policy and strategic decisions. The advice of independent experts can lend substantial credibility to an arrangement and mechanism, and provide a sound scientific and technical basis for decisions on policy action.

## **C. Relationships with existing forest-related bodies**

41. There are many forest-related issues that are already treated in existing organizations and instruments. There are also some issues that have not yet reached a level of consensus or common understanding to be usefully treated at the same level as others within an international arrangement and mechanism on forests.

42. For a future international arrangement and mechanism to contribute to synergies among forest-related organizations and instruments, with their own independent mandates, it would have to be high-level, flexible and innovative enough to treat its issues of priority concerns in a manner that informs and contributes to the deliberation and implementation of the policies of other forest-related organizations and instruments, and vice versa. Furthermore, some areas of priority concern have not reached the same level of consensus as others, and deliberations on those issues would probably be more explorative in nature. Thus, while a future international arrangement and mechanism on forests needs to deal with all forest and forest-related issues in a cohesive, comprehensive and inclusive manner, it would not necessarily treat all issues in similar ways.

## **VI. Concluding observations**

43. The Forest Principles and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development serve as guiding principles for addressing concerns presently facing forests. The Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21, the IPF proposals for action and the IFF process have all recognized the need to address forest-related issues in an integrated, coherent and holistic manner at the national, regional and global levels. A future international arrangement and mechanism on forests should build upon the consensus and progress made at UNCED and in the IPF/IFF processes.

44. The overarching objectives of an arrangement and mechanism for future international cooperation on forests could embrace the common aspects of the criteria for sustainable forest management developed in regional processes, with the addition of a few more international aspects, in order to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

45. Collectively, all the elements included in the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF programmes of work constitute priority issues of global concern. A future international arrangement and mechanism on forests needs to engage the political community at a high level in order to address these elements in an integrated, coherent and holistic manner. It also needs to be flexible enough to allow for emerging issues of priority concern to be integrated into its programme of work.

46. An international arrangement and mechanism needs to be action oriented and perform the four principal functions of policy development, coordination, policy implementation and provision of legislative authority. The functions need to be formulated in a clear and practical manner so that the way in which they will support national, regional and international action is explicit.

47. The main characteristics of an international arrangement and mechanism will be determined by where the relative emphasis is placed among its four principal functions. At the same time, its effectiveness will depend on the existence of supporting functions associated with *all* the principal functions since the performance of one particular principal function will not guarantee the fulfilment of another. The international arrangement and mechanism on forests should also allow for an evolution over time in order to be able to assume modified or additional functions in response to changing needs or circumstances, either for its entire programme of work or for selected areas of its work.

48. A future arrangement and mechanism on forests would benefit from the participation, advice, views and inputs of independent scientific and technical experts, non-governmental organizations and other major groups.

49. There is a need to consider forest-related issues embodied in other instruments, mechanisms and organizations and to explore opportunities to forge synergies. An international arrangement and mechanism on forests would promote an integrated and holistic approach to forests by informing, benefiting and collaborating with existing forest-related instruments and institutions.

#### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.I.8), resolution 1, annex III.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., annex II.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., annex I.

## Annex I

### Elaboration of possible elements

The set of 16 elements set out below have been identified and synthesized from the report of the Forum on its third session (E/CN.17/IFF/1999/25), and are also based on the Forest Principles, Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF programme of work.

#### 1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes

National forest programmes, as defined by IPF, are viable frameworks for addressing forest sector issues, including implementation of the IPF proposals for action in a holistic, comprehensive and cross-sectoral manner. Countries are encouraged, in accordance with their national sovereignty, the specific social, economic and environmental conditions in the country and national legislation, to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate national forest programmes that include appropriate approaches towards sustainable forest management. National forest programmes provide the basis for action at the national level as well as for international cooperation.

#### 2. Promoting public participation

Public participation in decision-making on forests at various levels has been encouraged in the IPF proposals for action as well as during the IFF process, particularly for the development, implementation and planning of national forest programmes. Public participation is also very crucial for creating political awareness and commitment.

#### 3. Combating deforestation and forest degradation

There is worldwide concern for deforestation, which continues at an alarming rate, as well as the continued degradation of forests. The negative consequences of deforestation and forest degradation include the loss of environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits from forests. The underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation are recognized as complex and frequently associated with human activities outside the forest sector. International cooperation is essential to reverse current trends and to undertake corrective action at the national level.

#### 4. Traditional forest-related knowledge

Indigenous people and local communities in many parts of the world depend on local forests for their subsistence and economic and social well-being. These forest-dependent people have centuries of experience and traditional knowledge on the utilization of the forests around them. IPF recognized the potential contribution of such knowledge to meet the objectives of sustainable forest management. This rich source of knowledge, considered valuable in terms of numerous wood and non-wood products as well as management approaches, is associated with concerns of protection, benefit-sharing and intellectual property rights.

#### 5. Forest-related scientific research

The management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, if it is to meet a wide range of demands, must be based on a sound understanding of the structure and function of forest ecosystems and the impact of human activities on forests. The strengthening of human and institutional capacity to develop and apply science and technology, through research and development, is a crucial component of the international priority agenda for action on forests. Other priority areas for scientific research under consideration by IFF include an international priority-setting mechanism for research, support to regional and eco-regional networks of institutions engaged in forest research, and increased funding to enhance the effectiveness of existing research capacity.

#### 6. Forest health and productivity

Sustainable forest management recognizes that forests simultaneously provide a wide range of socio-economic, environmental and cultural benefits, values and services at the local, national, regional and global levels. Forests are no longer viewed primarily as a source of industrial or fuel wood but as complex ecosystems that need to be maintained in a healthy state in order to provide the full range of benefits for present and future generations. A shift from a sustained yield of wood to sustainable forestry requires a corresponding shift from forest management to forest ecosystem management. Forest health can also have significant impact on access to markets and international trade in forest products.

## **7. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management**

Criteria and indicators provide a conceptual framework for policy formulation and evaluation, and should be considered as useful tools for assessing trends in forest conditions, for reporting on the state of forests and for achieving sustainable forest management. Criteria characterize the broad objectives of sustainable forest management, while indicators provide a basis for assessing actual forest conditions. When combined with specific national goals, criteria and indicators also provide a basis for assessing progress towards sustainable forest management. Criteria and indicators can therefore play an important role in defining the goals of national forest programmes and policies and evaluating the effectiveness with which they are implemented.

## **8. Economic, social, ecological and cultural aspects of forests**

The objectives of sustainable forest management should be to meet the economic, social, environmental and cultural needs of present and future generations. Economic and social development and environmental protection involving forests and forest lands should be comprehensive and integrated into national forest programmes. These activities need to also take into account the needs and culture of communities that live in and around forests.

## **9. Forest conservation and protection, unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems**

Protected areas today serve a much broader array of social and ecological functions than they did in the past, and as such their role is likely to remain important, particularly in the conservation of forest biological diversity and related goods and services. Moreover, protected areas of representative and unique forests can provide valuable baselines to assess the impact of human interventions on forest ecosystems. National, regional and global networks of protected forest areas have been recognized as an integral part of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. All regional processes engaged in developing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management include the protection of representative and unique forests as a criterion. A national strategy to establish a network of protected forest areas needs to be addressed in national forest policies and programmes.

## **10. Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions**

There is a need to encourage access to and generate timely and reliable information for the formulation, implementation and assessment of forest policy. National forest inventories are an important basis for effective formulation of national forest programmes, and assessment of the actual and potential conditions of all types of forests is central to sustainable forest management. Periodic reporting on the state of forests and exchange of information and experiences on progress in achieving sustainable forest management is an extremely important activity for promoting sustainable forest management. Streamlining existing reporting requirements and coordination among organizations and international instruments that request information on forests could considerably ease some of the reporting burdens on national institutions. Ensuring coordination and comparability of concepts, terminology and definitions would greatly enhance the synergy between various instruments that contain forest-related elements, and would also enhance the effective use of limited resources for activities involving forest assessment and monitoring.

## **11. Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover**

Forests in developing countries with low forest cover provide subsistence to the local population and are deeply integrated into the fabric of rural society. However, informal, subsistence-type economies, which are common in environmentally degraded areas with low forest cover, are not generally reflected adequately in national economic and development statistics. Only an analysis of the importance of increasingly scarce forest and other wooded lands for poor rural people will allow the assessment of the true value of these ecosystems and provide the basis for compelling arguments for increasing investment in regions with low forest cover.

## **12. Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural regeneration and planted forests**

It has been recognized that planted forests can play an important role in rehabilitating degraded lands and in alleviating some of the pressures on natural forests for supplying forest products and services. Forests in environmentally critical areas are especially susceptible to degradation and destruction resulting from human activities and natural disturbances. There is a need to take

action and organize international cooperation to restore the productive capacity and biological diversity of degraded lands, as well as to expand forest cover to meet diverse needs now and in the future. This is particularly critical in order to meet the subsistence needs of rural populations and alleviate poverty in developing countries with low forest cover. IFF expanded the scope of its initial focus on forest cover in environmentally critical areas to also include sub-humid, arid and semi-arid areas in tropical and temperate regions, mountain ecosystems, wetlands and coastal systems, in particular mangroves and small islands, as well as trees outside forests.

### **13. Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs**

This element has not been adequately discussed during the IPF and IFF processes. It underlies some of the basic understanding of sustainable forest management and emphasizes the need to reserve a certain proportion of forest cover to maintain the potential to provide goods and services for a country as a whole. The policy decision by a country to set aside a certain percentage of its total land area under forest cover will depend on social, economic, environmental and political priorities and considerations.

### **14. Financial resources**

The financing of forest-related activities involves complex arrangements. In countries with commercially attractive forests and/or a forest industry, well-targeted capacity-building may be enough to achieve progress towards sustainable forest management. Other countries, unable to attract private financing, such as countries with low forest cover, will need financial assistance that goes beyond mere building of capacity, such as for rehabilitation, afforestation and reforestation. Discussions in IPF and IFF have focused on the possibilities for better coordination among multilateral and bilateral donors, as well as within the recipient country, for a more effective utilization of resources. The mobilization of national resources, raising new and additional funds and the identification of an appropriate mix of financing mechanisms to support sustainable forest management have received substantial attention in IPF/IFF. Discussions on financial resources in IPF and IFF have also included such issues as effective private sector involvement; integration with national policies and priorities and effective coordination; the application of economic instruments and tax policies; the mobilization of national financial resources; and the possibility of finding a mechanism to raise funds to establish a forest fund

dedicated to support activities aimed at sustainable forest management.

### **15. International trade and sustainable forest management**

IPF and IFF deliberations have emphasized the mutually supportive roles of international trade and sustainable forest management. Trade measures intended to promote sustainable forest management should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised barrier and restriction on international trade. Voluntary certification of forest management and labelling of forest products are among the potential tools in promoting sustainable forest management and differentiating forest products and services in the market. Forest products and services and their substitutes need to be adequately valued through full-cost internalization. The nature and extent of illegal trade in wood and non-wood forest products is a serious concern due to damage to ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, lost revenue by Governments, forest owners and local and/or indigenous communities, and distortion of markets for forest products and services. There is a need to develop strategies for sustainable forest management with a long-term perspective so that the negative effects of short-term gains and market changes can be minimized.

### **16. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management**

International cooperation for capacity-building is considered to be a critical mechanism to assist developing countries in the implementation of sustainable forest management, and includes such activities as education and training and institutional capacity, including management training. Key constraints include inadequate availability of financial resources, compensation and retention of trained staff, and lack of access to technologies and equipment. IPF and IFF deliberations on technology transfer have focused on the economic, social and environmental appropriateness of transferred technologies, and how to enhance North-South and South-South cooperation. Improved access to and the use and dissemination of technologies can greatly enhance progress towards sustainable forest management through more efficient resource use in harvesting, forest product manufacturing and the use of wood for energy.

## Annex II

### Relationship between elements, IPF and IFF programmes of work, the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21

<i>Forest principles</i>	<i>Chapter 11 of Agenda 21</i>	<i>IPF work programme</i>	<i>IFF work programme</i>	<i>Elements for consideration</i>
2 (a), 2 (b), 3 (a), 5 (a), 6 (b), 8 (d), 8 (f), 8 (g), 8 (h), 9 (c)	1, 2 (b), 4 (a), 10, 11, 12 (b), 13, 14 (a), 14 (b), 31 (a), 1, 7 (a), 12 (b), 12 (e), 18, 19, 21, 22, 29, 30, 31, 33	I.1	I (a)	1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes
2 (d), 5 (b), 12 (b), 12 (d)	3, 4 (a), 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (b), 14 (a), 14 (b), 27, 28, 38, 31 (a), 39	I.1	I (a) I (b)	2. Promoting public participation
Preamble (c), 2 (b), 3(c), 8 (b), 7 (a), 8 (h), 9 (a), 9 (c), 13 (d), 13 (e)	1, 10, 13 (j), 21 (a)	I.2	II.d (1)	3. Combating deforestation and forest degradation
5 (a), 12 (d)	3(g), 4(a), 13(b), 13 (i), 14 (d)	I.3	II.d (2)	4. Traditional forest-related knowledge
12 (a), 12 (c)	3 (a), 4 (c), 5, 7, 8, 13 (a), 14 (d), 26, 33 (b), 36	III.1 (b)	II.d (4)	5. Forest-related scientific knowledge
2 (b), 6 (c), 6 (e), 8 (b), 8 (e), 15	13 (a), 22 (e), 22 (l)	III.1 (c)	II.d (5)	6. Forest health and productivity
8 (d)	3 (d), 22 (b), 22 (d), 23, 26, 29, 31 (b), 33 (a)	III.2	I (b)	7. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management
2 (b), 6 (c), 8 (c), 9 (b)	11, 21, 31 (a)	I.1	II.d (6)	8. Economic, social and cultural aspects of forests
2 (b), 4, 6 (a), 6 (d), 8 (a), 8(b), 8(e), 9(c), 15	3 (e), 3 (g), 8 (b), 10, 12 13 (a), 13 (d), 13 (e), 13 (f), 14, 15 (b), 15 (d), 21, 22 (c), 22 (d)	I.5	II.d (3)	9. Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems
2 (c), 8 (d), 12 (a), 12 (c)	2, 3, 4 (a), 4 (b), 13, 14, 17, 20, 21, 31	III.1 (a)	I (b)	10. Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions
2 (b), 4, 6 (a), 6 (d), 8 (a), 8 (b), 8 (e), 9 (c), 15	3 (e), 3 (g), 8 (b), 10, 12, 13 (a), 13 (d), 13 (e), 13 (f), 14, 15 (b), 15 (d), 21, 22 (c), 22 (d)	I.5	II.d (8) et al.	11. Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover
2 (b), 4, 6 (a), 6 (d), 8 (a), 8 (b), 8 (e), 9 (c), 15	3 (e), 3 (g), 8 (b), 10, 12, 13 (a), 13 (d), 13 (e), 13 (f), 14, 15 (b), 15 (d), 21, 22 (c), 22 (d)	I.4	II.d (8) et al.	12. Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural regeneration and planted forests
2 (c), 8 (d), 12 (a), 12 (c)	2, 3, 4 (a), 4 (b), 13, 14, 17, 20, 21, 31	III.1 (a)	I (b)	13. Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs
1 (b), 7 (a), 7 (b), 8 (c), 8 (g), 9 (a), 10, 11, 12 (d)	4, 5, 6, 12 (b), 12 (e), 14 (c), 16, 17, 18 (a), 19, 22 (g), 24, 25, 26, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36 (e), 38, 39, 40	II	II (a)	14. Financial resources

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<i>Forest principles</i>	<i>Chapter 11 of Agenda 21</i>	<i>IPF work programme</i>	<i>IFF work programme</i>	<i>Elements for consideration</i>
13, 14	39 (g), 10, 13 (e), 20, 21 (b), 22 (g), 22 (k), 23 (c), 23 (d), 24	IV	II (b)	15. International trade and sustainable forest management
3 (b), 8 (a), 8 (c), 9 (b), 9 (d), 11, 12 (a), 12 (b), 14	1, 3, 5, 12 (e), 15 (d), 24, 26, 31, 33 (c), 37, 35, 39	V.1	II (e)	16. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management

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