



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 February 2003

Original: English

United Nations Forum on Forests

Third session

Geneva, 26 May-6 June 2003

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Common items for each session

Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The present note has been prepared to facilitate the multi-stakeholder dialogue of the United Nations Forum on Forests to be held during its third session. It describes the approach taken and major groups invited to make the dialogue more effective.

1. In its resolution 1/1, the United Nations Forum on Forests decided that a multi-stakeholder dialogue would be held at each session of the Forum, and invited relevant stakeholders to contribute to those discussions, in accordance with paragraph 4 (c) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35. The Forum encouraged a balanced participation of stakeholders from developed and developing countries so as to give meaningful inputs, inter alia, to the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) proposals for action and the intergovernmental forest policy dialogue.

2. The multi-stakeholder dialogue is the main opportunity for major groups¹ to discuss the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests with Member States of the Forum. It presents a unique opportunity for major groups to highlight their contributions to the Forum's work, including efforts to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and to express their views on the international forest policy issues under deliberation by the Forum at each session. Such dialogue may also help to build consensus on possible future actions and generate new partnerships.

* E/CN.18/2003/1.

3. The first multi-stakeholder dialogue was held during the Forum's second session, in March 2002. Major groups relevant to the agenda of the first session were invited to participate. Two major groups prepared and presented discussion papers, which were followed by comments by Member States.

4. The second multi-stakeholder dialogue of the Forum will be held during the third session of the Forum. In order to make the dialogue at the third session more inclusive and effective, the secretariat of the Forum has invited all major groups to be involved in planning and to attend the session. It invited each group to identify focal points, who would facilitate communications between the secretariat and the major groups and within major groups themselves. The secretariat encouraged major group networks to consider the following criteria when nominating focal points: (a) attendance at past IPF, IFF or Forum sessions or familiarity with the global forest policy dialogue; (b) recent experience in forest issues, especially the elements being considered at the current session; (c) recognized leadership within the major group network; (d) capacity to maintain dialogue with a wide representative network; and (e) accreditation with the Council. Stakeholders' participation in the session is also expected to be balanced in terms of gender and geographical balance, ensuring the representation of stakeholders from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

5. The current multi-stakeholder dialogue has been prepared in cooperation with the focal points of the major groups,² with the valuable input of a Forum multi-stakeholder consultation that was held in Rome on 8 and 9 March 2003. In addition to contributing to the preparation of the multi-stakeholder dialogue, the focal points have been requested to (a) encourage major group participation in the international arrangement on forests, (b) serve as a liaison between the Forum secretariat and their major groups, (c) consult with their respective networks to identify their representatives and prepare them to participate in the dialogue, and (d) coordinate views/suggestions within their respective networks to provide input to the Forum process, including the preparation of a discussion paper for the multi-stakeholder dialogue session, if the major group is so inclined. The papers prepared by the major groups will be issued as addenda to the present note.

6. The papers of the major groups will cover, inter alia, the review of the progress of implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action under discussion at the third session of the Forum, in particular as relates to initiatives that they have taken. They will also highlight major groups' suggestions about how to move forward on implementation within the elements being considered at the current session. During the dialogue, major groups will make brief presentations on the implementation of the proposals for action and related key issues. Government delegations are also invited to comment and provide supplementary information on the progress of implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. The sessions will be moderated by the Chairman of the Forum, effectively engaging major groups and Governments in an open dialogue with regard to the implementation of the proposals for action on specific issues.

7. The outcome of the multi-stakeholder dialogue will be reflected in the report of the Forum on its third session.

Notes

¹ Agenda 21 identified the following nine major groups of stakeholders: (a) non-governmental organizations; (b) indigenous people; (c) the scientific and technological community; (d) business and industry; (e) farmers; (f) women; (g) workers and trade unions; (h) local authorities; and (i) children and youth. Forest-related organizations pertaining to those major groups are invited to be involved in the multi-stakeholder dialogue of the Forum.

² **Business and industry:** International Council of Forest Product Associations, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Inter-African Forest Industries; **Forest landowners:** Confédération européenne des propriétaires forestiers or the Confederation of European Forest Owners; **Indigenous peoples:** Asociación Kunas Unidos por Nabguana, forest-related **NGOs:** Friends of Siberian Forests, Institute of Cultural Affairs (Ghana); **Scientific and technological community:** International Union of Forest Research Organizations; **Workers and trade unions:** International Federation of Building and Wood Workers; **Women:** Uganda Women Tree Planting Movement, Green Earth Organization; **Children and youth:** Initiatives-jeunes, Global Youth Network. Full contact information for major group focal points is available at http://www.un.org/esa/forests/contacts-major_groups.html.
