

## ECOSOC Decision 2003/299

### Intersessional work by ad hoc expert groups

At its 49th plenary meeting, on 25 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council, bearing in mind paragraph 4 (k) of its resolution 2000/35, and recalling the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests, adopted by the Forum in its resolution 1/1,<sup>1</sup> in particular its paragraphs 23 and 24:

(a) *Decided* to establish three ad hoc expert groups to support the work of the Forum, as set out in the annex to the present decision;

(b) *Decided* that the meetings of the ad hoc expert groups on approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting and on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies shall be convened in Geneva from 8 to 19 December 2003. The Council also decided that the date of the meeting of the ad hoc expert group on “consideration, with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests” shall be decided at the resumed session of the Council of 2003;

(c) *Invited* each of the five United Nations regional groups to nominate to the Secretariat six country experts for the ad hoc expert group on approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting, and six country experts for the ad hoc expert group on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, by 15 September 2003;

(d) *Invited* member States of the United Nations Forum on Forests to nominate to the Secretariat a country expert for the ad hoc expert group on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests by 31 March 2004;

(e) *Decided* that, to ensure efficiency, transparency and balanced reflection of the range of views, the following preparations should be performed for the meeting of the ad hoc expert group meeting on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests:

(i) Presentation of factual and technical information, including updated information on existing regional and international binding and non-binding instruments and processes relevant to forests and that of other relevant organizations and agreements, including multilateral environmental agreements and regional conventions and processes;

(ii) Compilation of the progress made and catalysts and obstacles encountered by member States and member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in implementing the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and the decisions and resolutions of sessions of the United Nations Forum on Forests;

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<sup>1</sup> See *ibid.*, 2001, *Supplement No. 22* (E/2001/42/Rev.1), Part Two, chap. I.B.

(iii) Presentation and detailed description of a range of options, including their legal, financial and institutional modalities;

(f) *Invited* the member States of the United Nations Forum on Forests to submit their views on (i), (ii) and (iii) above. The member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests are invited to provide information on (i) and (ii) above. These views and information should be provided to the Forum secretariat by 31 January 2004;

(g) *Invited* the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat to compile the views submitted by the member States and the information provided by the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in preparation for the ad hoc expert group meeting;

(h) *Decided* that, for its fourth session, the Bureau of the United Nations Forum on Forests shall keep member States apprised of the progress made in the preparation of documentation for the ad hoc expert group. The Bureau will undertake consultations with the member States by convening a one-day informal meeting in New York immediately after a meeting of the Bureau prior to the fourth session of the Forum;

(i) *Decided* that the United Nations Forum on Forests shall receive an information note at its fourth session on progress in the preparation of documentation for the ad hoc expert group meeting. This note is neither subject to discussion nor negotiation in the Forum;

(j) *Decided* that the official documentation for the consideration of the ad hoc expert group shall be made available to countries 60 days in advance of the meeting of the ad hoc expert group.

## **Annex**

### **A**

#### **Ad hoc expert group on approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting**

##### **Scope and work programme**

1. The ad hoc expert group shall provide scientific and technical advice to the United Nations Forum on Forests on approaches and mechanisms for the work of the Forum on monitoring, assessment and reporting. Its work should be undertaken within the context of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 and relevant resolutions adopted by the Forum at its sessions and should also consider, inter alia, related proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) and the outcomes of Forum sessions, including its reports.

##### **Tasks**

2. For monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in implementing IPF/IFF proposals for action and progress towards sustainable forest management, the ad hoc expert group will:

(a) Assess existing reporting requirements under relevant international conventions, processes, instruments and organizations in order to identify strengths, weaknesses and duplication in reporting

processes, taking into account the relevant work undertaken by member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;

(b) Assess existing monitoring and assessment procedures in international conventions, processes, instruments and organizations related to forests in order to identify strengths, weaknesses and duplications, taking into account the relevant work undertaken by member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;

(c) Propose ways for the Forum to monitor and assess progress, based on:

(i) Voluntary reporting by countries on implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action;

(ii) Voluntary reporting by member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations and international and regional processes on implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action;

(iii) Ongoing work on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management being undertaken at the national, regional and international levels;

(iv) Existing data and information, as well as reporting systems and structures;

(d) Propose an outline for voluntary reporting to the Forum;

(e) Recommend options for drawing upon the reports provided to Forum sessions to identify trends and lessons learned;

(f) Develop recommendations on how to build capacity in countries, including the increase of resources for that goal, for monitoring, assessment and reporting, taking into account the special needs of developing countries.

3. In carrying out these tasks, the ad hoc expert group should take into account the results of intersessional activities related to monitoring, assessment and reporting led by countries, organizations and international and regional processes. Its reports should be made available as a contribution to the discussions at country- and organization-led initiatives of the Forum that are related to the present terms of reference. As relevant, the ad hoc expert group should also take into account the results of the work undertaken by member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests on forest-related concepts, terminology and definitions.

#### **Composition and participation**

4. The ad hoc expert group shall be composed of 30 experts in accordance with decision 2003/299, to which the present annex is attached, six from each of the five United Nations regional groups.

5. The experts shall have well-recognized scientific and technical expertise in monitoring, assessment and reporting, and knowledge of the intergovernmental forest policy deliberations of IPF, IFF and the Forum.

6. Representatives of the member States of the United Nations Forum on Forests shall be allowed to participate in the first two days of the meeting of the ad hoc expert group and remain as observers for the last three days of the meeting.

7. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests shall be invited to make scientific and technical contributions to the work of the ad hoc expert group to support the work of the ad hoc expert group in a resource capacity.

8. Intergovernmental organizations and representatives of major groups with relevant expertise may participate in the meeting, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, as well as practices established by the Commission on Sustainable Development, IPF and IFF. They may be invited to make scientific and technical contributions.

#### **Travel assistance**

9. Travel support and a daily subsistence allowance at established United Nations rates will be provided to each of the experts, if the budget allows, with priority to developing countries, particularly least developed countries, as well as countries with economies in transition.

#### **Officers**

10. The chairman of the ad hoc expert group shall be elected from among the experts at its meeting.

#### **Duration of work**

11. The ad hoc expert group shall initiate its work after the third session of the Forum and complete its work at least three months in advance of the fourth session of the Forum.

#### **Meeting**

12. The ad hoc expert group will hold one meeting for up to five days before the end of 2003. It will also use electronic means of communication to the greatest extent possible. The ad hoc expert group meeting will be organized at a United Nations venue where meeting facilities are available, preferably in New York, taking into account cost-effectiveness. To the extent possible, the ad hoc expert group will hold its meeting back to back with the meeting of the ad hoc expert group on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

#### **Proposals and recommendations for consideration by the Forum**

13. The proposals and recommendations of the ad hoc expert group should be provided by consensus. In the absence of consensus, the report of the ad hoc expert group shall fully reflect the diversity of views expressed.

#### **Reports**

14. The ad hoc expert group shall prepare its report, taking into consideration the views of all participants and contributions received, and shall submit its report to the Forum at its fourth session for

consideration. The report shall specify the major outcomes of the ad hoc expert group's work, including proposals and recommendations for further consideration by the Forum.

### **Secretariat**

15. The Forum secretariat shall serve as the secretariat for the ad hoc expert group, supported by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

### **B**

#### **Ad hoc expert group on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies**

##### **Scope and work programme**

16. The ad hoc expert group shall provide scientific and technical advice to the Forum for its work on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies. The work of the ad hoc expert group should be undertaken within the context of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 and relevant resolutions adopted by the Forum at its sessions, and should also consider, inter alia, related IPF/IFF proposals for action and outcomes of Forum sessions, including its reports.

##### **Tasks**

17. The ad hoc expert group will undertake the following specific tasks on finance:

##### *Finance*

(a) Consider previous initiatives on finance, including recommendations from the Croydon, Oslo and Pretoria workshops, as well as the relevant IPF/IFF proposals for action, background papers and strategy documents of member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;

(b) Assess the role and status of official development assistance directed towards sustainable forest management and consider ways for enhancing its availability and effectiveness; in this regard, identify possible means to enhance the efforts of developed countries to fulfil their commitments on official development assistance;

(c) Review the effectiveness of existing international financing for sustainable forest management, including methods and mechanisms; analyse opportunities, country-level gaps, limitations and donor and recipient priorities, as well as the contribution of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests towards financing sustainable forest management; propose measures to improve the effectiveness of that financing for enhancing the enabling environment at both the national and international levels and to attract increased financing from all sources;

(d) Explore the potential of new and innovative approaches to attract increased financing for sustainable forest management; discuss and make suggestions for expanded use of those approaches to address the need for financial resources for financing sustainable forest

management, including through national forest programmes or equivalent processes;

(e) Assess country experiences in the mobilization of financial resources to support sustainable forest management; in this regard, identify gaps in, and the potential and limitations of, current financing sources and financial mechanisms in implementing sustainable forest management; propose approaches to enhance and more effectively use and mobilize national and international financial resources;

(f) Assess and consider the role of the private sector in financing sustainable forest management; in this regard, recommend measures to improve the enabling environment for private investment in sustainable forest management, at both the national and international levels; and encourage increased private resource flows to the forest sector, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

18. The ad hoc expert group will undertake the following specific tasks on the transfer of environmentally sound technologies:

*Transfer of environmentally sound technologies*

(a) Review and assess existing initiatives on the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and knowledge diffusion for the promotion of sustainable forest management among countries and sectors and stakeholders, including through North-South, North-North and South-South cooperation and programmes of member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. This should include an analysis of incentives that promote, and obstacles that inhibit, the transfer of forest-related environmentally sound technologies between and/or within countries, in particular to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in both the private and public sectors;

(b) Recommend approaches to improve transfer of forest-related environmentally sound technologies. The recommendation may include the role of various policy instruments, such as concessional and preferential terms, public/private partnerships and research cooperation, as well as capacity-building in the use and application of current and emerging environmentally sound technologies, including remote sensing.

**Composition and participation**

19. The ad hoc expert group shall consist of 30 experts, six from each of the five regional groups.

20. The experts shall have well-recognized scientific and technical expertise in finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and knowledge of the intergovernmental forest policy deliberations of IPF, IFF and the Forum.

21. Representatives of the member States of the United Nations Forum on Forests shall be allowed to participate in the first two days of the meetings of the ad hoc expert group and remain as observers for the last three days of the meeting.

22. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests shall be invited to make scientific and technical contributions to the work of the ad hoc expert group to support the work of the ad hoc expert group in a resource capacity.

23. Intergovernmental organizations and representatives of major groups with relevant expertise may participate in the meeting, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, as well as practices established by the Commission on Sustainable Development, IPF and IFF. They may be invited to make scientific and technical contributions.

#### **Travel assistance**

24. Travel support and a daily subsistence allowance at established United Nations rates will be provided to each of the experts, if the budget allows, with priority to developing countries, particularly least developed countries, as well as countries with economies in transition.

#### **Officers**

25. The chairman of the ad hoc expert group shall be elected from among the government-designated experts at its meeting.

#### **Duration of work**

26. The ad hoc expert group shall initiate its work after the third session of the Forum and complete its work at least three months in advance of the fourth session of the Forum.

#### **Meeting**

27. The ad hoc expert group will hold one meeting for up to five days before the end of 2003. It will also use electronic means of communication to the greatest extent possible. The ad hoc expert group meeting will be organized at a United Nations venue where meeting facilities are available, preferably in New York, taking into account cost-effectiveness. To the extent possible, the ad hoc expert group will hold its meeting back to back with the meeting of the ad hoc expert group on approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting.

#### **Proposals and recommendations for consideration by the Forum**

28. The proposals and recommendations of the ad hoc expert group should be provided by consensus. In the absence of consensus, the reports of the ad hoc expert group shall fully reflect the diversity of views expressed.

#### **Reports**

29. The ad hoc expert group shall prepare its report, taking into consideration the views of all participants and contributions received, and shall submit its report to the Forum at its fourth session for consideration. The report shall specify major outcomes of the ad hoc expert group's work, including proposals and recommendations for further consideration by the Forum.

## **Secretariat**

30. The Forum secretariat shall serve as the secretariat for the ad hoc expert group, supported by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

## **C**

Ad hoc expert group on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests

## **Scope and work programme**

31. The ad hoc expert group shall provide scientific and technical advice to the Forum for its work on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. The work of the ad hoc expert group should be undertaken within the context of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 and resolutions adopted by the Forum at its sessions, in particular those referring to the creation and scope of the ad hoc expert groups.

## **Tasks**

32. The reports of the ad hoc expert groups on approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting and on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies will serve as inputs to the work of this ad hoc expert group.

33. The ad hoc expert group will undertake the following specific tasks on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests:

- (a) Assess existing regional and international binding and non-binding instruments and processes relevant to forests; the assessment should include, inter alia, analysis of complementarities, gaps and duplications, and should take into account Forum resolution 2/3<sup>2</sup> on specific criteria for the review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests;

- (b) Consider reports prepared by countries, as referred to in decision 2003/299 to which this annex is attached, the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the Forum secretariat, as well as outcomes of Forum sessions;

- (c) Consider other outcomes of the international arrangement on forests, inter alia, the efforts of countries to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action, other expert groups, country- and organization-led initiatives of the Forum and previous relevant initiatives, and forest-related work undertaken by the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;

- (d) Review the relevant experiences of existing forest-related and other relevant organizations and agreements, including multilateral

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<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 22 (E/2002/42)*, chap. II.B.

environmental agreements and regional conventions and processes, focusing on complementarities, gaps and duplications;

(e) Provide for the consideration of the Forum at its fifth session, a balanced range of options with respect to “consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests”.

#### **Composition and participation**

34. The ad hoc expert group shall be composed of experts of the member States of the Forum.

35. The experts shall have well-recognized scientific and technical expertise on the forest regime and the Rio conventions and knowledge of the intergovernmental forest policy deliberations of IPF, IFF and the Forum.

36. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests shall be invited to make scientific and technical contributions to the work of the ad hoc expert group to support the work of the ad hoc expert group in a resource capacity.

37. Intergovernmental organizations and representatives of major groups with relevant expertise may participate in the meeting, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, as well as practices established by the Commission on Sustainable Development, IPF and IFF. They may be invited to make scientific and technical contributions.

#### **Travel assistance**

38. Travel support and a daily subsistence allowance at the established United Nations rates will be provided to one country expert from each developing country, as well as to one country expert from countries with economies in transition, to the maximum extent from the budget, supplemented by voluntary extrabudgetary contributions.

#### **Officers**

39. Two co-chairpersons of the ad hoc expert group shall be elected from among experts at its meeting, one from a developing country and one from a developed country.

#### **Duration of work**

40. The ad hoc expert group shall initiate its work immediately after the fourth session of the Forum and complete its work at least three months in advance of the fifth session of the Forum.

#### **Meeting**

41. The ad hoc expert group will hold one meeting for up to five days. It will also use electronic means of communication to the greatest extent possible. The ad hoc expert group meeting will be organized at a United Nations venue where meeting facilities are available, preferably in New York, taking into account cost-effectiveness.

### **Proposals and recommendations for consideration by the Forum**

42. The proposals and recommendations of the ad hoc expert group should be provided by consensus. In the absence of consensus, the reports of the ad hoc expert group shall fully reflect the diversity of views expressed.

### **Reports**

43. The ad hoc expert group shall adopt a report at its meeting, for submission to the Forum at its fifth session. The report shall specify major outcomes of the ad hoc expert group's work, including proposals and recommendations for further consideration by the Forum.

### **Secretariat**

44. The Forum secretariat shall serve as the secretariat for the ad hoc expert group, supported by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.