
Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe

Bureau Audio Meeting

11 January 2012

Report

1. Opening of the meeting

1. The audio meeting of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe was held on the 11th of January 2012.
2. The Chair opened the meeting at 13.05 hrs (GMT+1).
3. Mr. Jan Heino (Chair), Ms. Katerina Ventřubova (Czech Republic), Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland), Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain), Mr. Arne Ivar and Mr Knut Oistad (Norway) were present. Mr Jacques Andrieu (France) could not connect to the audio-meeting. Ms. Lyuba Polyakova (Ukraine), Mr. İsmail Belen (Turkey) and Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria) could not attend but sent their comments by email.
4. The Secretariat was represented by Mr. Peter Csoka and Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO), Mr. Ilpo Tikkanen (European Forest Institute), Ms. Ivonne Higuero and Ms. Barbara Ruis (UNEP) and Ms. Ana Belén Noriega, Ms. Elena Estrada Wilke, Ms. Luisa Cabello and Ms. Edurne Lacalle (FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit Madrid).

2. Adoption of the agenda

5. The agenda for the meeting was adopted.
6. The Chair updated the Bureau members on the latest developments, including on distribution of invitations to the first session of the INC and on several positive responses received. He also informed about communication with some countries regarding the need for fund raising for support of the INC1.

3. Preparations for the first session of the INC

7. The Bureau discussed necessary amendments to be made in the session documents. The Bureau agreed to amend the Annotated Provisional Agenda, the Roadmap as well as the Introductory Notes to the Oslo Decisions and to the Non-paper on a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe, concerning the new dates and location of the sessions, and inserting an introductory paragraph to the Roadmap.

8. The secretariat informed the Bureau about progress in preparing for the session, including on arrangement with UNOV on the meeting venue and on other logistics.
9. The secretariat also informed the Bureau on the ongoing communication with organizations requesting observer status, including invitation distribution and the follow up procedures.

4. Financial issues

10. The Chair pointed out to the Bureau the necessity to secure funding for the whole INC process and informed about his recent communication with some countries in that regard.
11. Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) explained the financial arrangements with UNOV needed for INC1.
12. He also informed that in order to allow for extending contribution as and when needed FAO agreed to host an extra-budgetary project and set up a multidonor trust fund to support the work. The project is designed to have a life span specified by the Oslo Ministerial Mandate. FAO is expected to report on progress in implementing the project regularly to the Bureau of the INC and provide periodic progress reports at the time of the final report of every session of the INC. The trust fund should be the source for; in particular, hosting meetings and providing secretariat services, various analyses and documentation, supporting intersessional activities, supporting participation of countries with economies in transitions, should such request be made. Mr. Csoka further informed about support received from the government of Norway.
13. Ms. Ivonne Higuero (UNEP) stressed the willingness of UNEP to be involved in servicing the INC and stressed that UNEP would require extra budgetary resources, for this purpose. An estimate was presented to the Chair of the INC. She informed that even if resources would be secured the approval from the UNEP's Director General was still needed.
14. She stressed that in order to fulfil the tasks of servicing the INC UNEP would need extra budgetary resources, which estimates were presented to the Chair of the INC.
15. The Bureau members expressed their appreciation of having UNEP on board again and wished that necessary authorisations would be provided soon in order to allow UNEP fully join the secretariat.

5. Secretariat arrangements

16. The Chair informed the Bureau that the secretariat continue working according to the Annex of the RoP of the Oslo Mandate considering the temporary absence of two organizations.

6. Date and venue of the next bureau meeting

17. The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting on 26 February 2012 in Vienna and accepted the kind offer of Austria to host this meeting.

7. Other matters

18. The Bureau briefly discussed possible dates and locations of the second and third session of the INC. It was noted, that the INC2 could be held in July/August 2012 and the INC3 in late 2012/early 2013. The Bureau decided to further research options for dates/locations of the subsequent INC sessions.
19. The Chair informed about plans of holding the secretariat working meeting on 25 January 2012 in FAO, Rome and noted that communication issues, inter alia, will be presented by LUM and discussed.

8. Closure of the meeting

20. The Chair closed the meeting at 14:50 hrs (GMT+1) expressing his gratitude to the participants.

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