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

Bureau Meeting

18 March 2013, Rome, Italy

Report

1. Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe was held on 18 March 2013 in FAO HQ, Rome.
2. The Chair opened the meeting at 10.00 hrs (GMT+1).
3. Mr. Jan Heino (Chair), Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria), Mr. Jonathan Saulnier (France), Mr. Knut Oistad (Norway), Ms. Katerina Ventřubova (Czech Republic), Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland), Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (Russian Federation), Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain) and Ms. Lyubov Polyakova (Ukraine) participated in the meeting. Mr. Tamer Otracrier (Turkey) could not attend.
4. The Secretariat was represented by Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs, Mr. Peter Csoka, Ms. Manuela Cuvi, Mr. Ewald Rametsteiner and Ms. Dominique Rozas (FAO) as well as Ms. Luisa Cabello and Ms. Elena Estrada Wilke (Liaison Unit Madrid). Mr. Marc Palahi (European Forest Institute) was connected via Skype.

2. Adoption of the agenda

5. The agenda for the meeting, presented in Annex 1 was adopted.

3. Documents for the INC3 Resumed Session

6. The Chair presented the list of documents for the INC3 resumed session. The Bureau agreed on the documents as presented and suggested some amendments to Document 2/INC3add.2. The secretariat was requested to finalize the document with amendments as agreed.
7. The Bureau reviewed a draft non-paper in a format of a simple table, summarizing the existing extensive materials and information on the issues and options of bringing the agreement under the UN umbrella. The Bureau provided further input for finalizing the table.
8. Some Bureau members stressed the importance of considering possible provisions for enhancing participation by stakeholders and civil society in the various options of the LBA being under the UN umbrella. It was noted, that adequate representation of civil society in debates and discussions at the future LBA is an important issue and should be addressed by the INC. It was also noted that the UN organizations concerned could provide different examples of models on how civil society and stakeholders participate in the work of various agreements hosted by their organizations.

4. Draft organization of work of the resumed third session

9. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO) presented a detailed proposal of the organization of work at the resumed session. The Bureau welcomed the draft prepared by the secretariat and suggested some amendments. The Chair reiterated the importance of addressing finance of the LBA early during the discussions at the resumed session, as the INC had made little progress on this issue so far.
10. Some Bureau members noted that clarification and a common understanding of “presenting of the INC results to the extraordinary Ministerial Conference”, including formulation of recommendations and a role of ELM, is needed. The Bureau agreed to bring this issue to the attention of the Committee under item 5 at the resumed third session and to seek the Committee’s advice.
11. The Bureau agreed that a legal expert group established by the Committee could start working at the INC3 resumed session as early as possible, with the task of examining the Final Clauses. The Bureau also agreed that contact groups could be established during the session, should the need arise.

5. Trust Fund and financial issues

12. Further to the previous discussions, Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) informed on the status of expenditures in the Trust Fund, noting that the current positive balance is at the level of USD 30,000. The Bureau discussed pending costs of the interpretation at the INC3 resumed session as well as costs of the upcoming INC4.
13. The Bureau requested the Chair to produce an informal note on the overview of the current resource requirements for covering costs of the upcoming sessions. The Bureau agreed to assist in inviting Parties to give consideration to the support they may provide for the finalization of the INC process. Early declarations of financial or technical support would facilitate detailed planning of the activities which are requested by the Committee.

6. Communication issues

14. Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria) briefly reported on the ongoing work by the Forest Communicators' Network (FCN) ad-hoc Team on communication advice for the INC-Forests Bureau and informed that the meeting will be held on 8-9 April on the outskirts of UNFF10 to elaborate INC communication materials.

7. Other business

15. Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (Russian Federation) and Ms. Dominique Rozas (FAO) informed about the state of preparations to the INC3 resumed session to be held on 3-5 April 2013 in St. Petersburg.
16. The Chair informed the Bureau about the communication from colleagues in the UNECE Forestry and Timber Section and UNEP advising the Chair to invite the Office of Legal Affairs in New York to

participate in the ongoing INC discussions on the UN umbrella at INC3. The Bureau saw merit in the participation of the representatives of the Office of Legal Affairs and noted that UNECE and UNEP were in the best position to facilitate this and advised the Chair to encourage the organizations to do so.

8. Date and venue of the next Bureau meetings

17. In relation to the INC3 resumed session the Bureau decided to hold its next meeting on 2 April at 16.00hrs in St. Petersburg as well as on 5 April at 18.00hrs after the closure of the third session.
18. It was further decided that a Bureau meeting will be held on 24 and 25 April in Brussels for a follow-up work after the resumed third session.

9. Closure of the meeting

19. The Chair closed the meeting at 16.30 hrs (GMT+1) on 18 March 2013 expressing his gratitude to the participants.
