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

Bureau Meeting

24-25 April 2013, Brussels, Belgium

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 24-25 April 2013 in Brussels, Belgium.
2. The Chair opened the meeting at 16.00 hrs (GMT+1) on 24 April and thanked Ms. Ventřubova for hosting the meeting in the facilities of the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union.
3. Mr. Jan Heino (Chair), Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria), Mr. Knut Oistad (Norway), Ms. Katerina Ventřubova (the Czech Republic), Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (the Russian Federation), Ms. Lyubov Polyakova (Ukraine) and Mr. Tamer Otrakcier (Turkey) participated in the meeting. Messr. Jacques Andrieu (France), Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland) and Jose Maria Solano (Spain) sent their regrets.
4. The Secretariat was represented by Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs and Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) as well as Ms. Elena Estrada Wilke (Liaison Unit Madrid).

2. Adoption of the agenda

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

3. Preparations and Documents for INC4

6. The Chair presented the proposed documents for INC4 session, namely: Annotated provisional agenda for the Fourth Session (DOC1/INC4); Draft annex on conciliation (DOC3/INC4); draft of the Summary information about major cost elements likely to be associated with the legally binding agreement, possible sources of financial resources and options showing possible draft text proposals for any financial provisions in the agreement (DOC4/INC4) as well as Draft elements of a document by which the final draft agreement would be presented to Ministers at the Extraordinary FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference (DOC5/INC4).
7. The Bureau discussed the documents and suggested some amendments to the drafts. The secretariat was requested to finalize the documents as agreed.
8. The Bureau agreed to use attributions in the DNT during INC4 for easy reference to positions of the Parties.
9. The Bureau briefly discussed a possibility of preparing a note on options for interim arrangements after INC4 and decided to review this issue at its next meeting.

10. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO) informed about the status of preparations of INC4 regarding the venue, accommodation for delegates as well as other ongoing arrangements by the Government of Poland.

4. Participation of stakeholders and civil society

11. The Chair informed the Bureau about the opportunity arising from discussions with the Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), in cooperation with the FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit Madrid and the EU Economic and Social Committee, for a stakeholders discussion on key issues related to the legally binding agreement on forests in Europe as well as on possible stakeholders' participation in the future.
12. The Bureau reiterated its support to liaise with stakeholders and civil society and expressed its support for such an open meeting to discuss the importance of "securing the effective participation of stakeholders" in the future LBA, in accordance with paragraph 24 (d) of the Oslo Mandate.
13. The Chair informed that the stakeholders meeting may take place during the second half of May in Brussels.

5. 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.
15. The Bureau discussed, and in principle supported, media accreditation to INC4. The Bureau requested the secretariat to prepare a concept note on how such accreditation system would function at INC4.

6. Other business

Trust Fund and financial issues

16. Further to the previous discussions, Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) informed on the status of expenditures in the Trust Fund, noting that the current balance is close to zero. The Bureau discussed pending costs of the upcoming INC4 and decided that the Chair's informal note on the overview of the current resource requirements for covering costs of the upcoming session should be updated and distributed to Parties.

7. Date and venue of the next Bureau meeting

17. It was decided that the next Bureau meeting will be held on 24 May in Brussels for further preparatory work to the fourth session.

8. Closure of the meeting

18. The Chair closed the meeting at 15.00 hrs (GMT+1) on 25 April 2013 expressing his gratitude to the participants.
