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

Bureau Meeting

14-15 November 2012, Paris, France

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 14-15 November in Paris.
2. The Chair opened the meeting at 16.00 hrs (GMT+1) and thanked Mr. Andrieu for organizing it.
3. Mr. Jan Heino (Chair), Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria), Mr. Jacques Andrieu, Ms. Catherine Rivoal and Mr. Jonathan Saulnier (France), Mr. Arne Ivar Sletnes (Norway), Mr. Tamer Otrakcier (Turkey), Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (Russian Federation) Ms. Katerina Ventřubova (Czech Republic) and Ms. Lyubov Polyakova (Ukraine) were present. Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland) participated in the meeting via telephone. Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain) could not attend.
4. The Secretariat was represented by Mr. Ilpo Tikkanen (European Forest Institute), Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs and Mr. Peter Csoka, (FAO) as well as Ms. Ana Belen Noriega and Ms. Luisa Cabello (Liaison Unit Madrid).

2. Adoption of the agenda

5. Chair proposed and the Bureau agreed to amend the agenda by adding the following item: Exchange of views on preparations of and expectations on INC3. The agenda for the meeting, presented in Annex 1, was adopted as amended.

3. Exchange of views on preparations of and expectations on INC3

6. Bureau members exchanged information on recently held meetings where the LBA issue was presented and/or discussed, including at the high level forum held in Moscow in October 2012; the meeting of the EU Directors General for Forestry held recently in Cyprus; the IUFRO meeting on FLEGT, as well as in a capacity building workshop in Kirgizstan supported by the Government of the Czech Republic. Some Bureau members informed on the ongoing national preparations to INC3.
7. Bureau members noted that there is a growing interest in the negotiation process from stakeholders and media, and that more information on the LBA and the INC work should be made available. The issue was further discussed under item 8: Other matters.

4. Draft documents for INC3

8. The Bureau welcomed the draft documents prepared by the secretariat and provided comments on the draft list of documents for INC3, the annotated provisional agenda as well as on the revised roadmap for the negotiations process. The Bureau agreed on the amendments and tasked the secretariat to finalize the documents.
9. When discussing the revised roadmap for the negotiation process, some Bureau members pointed out the need for a thorough preparation of matters subsequent to INC4, in order to assist the INC in its task of presenting "*its results to an extraordinary FOREST EUROPE ministerial conference to be organized within six months after the conclusion of the negotiations*" (Oslo Mandate, paragraph 29).
10. The Bureau requested the secretariat to prepare a note on necessary technical work and other preparations required to finalize the INC results prior to the extraordinary FOREST EUROPE ministerial conference, including preparation of final documents, translation, distribution and on other procedures.
11. The Bureau noted the importance of early scheduling the tentative dates of the extraordinary FOREST EUROPE ministerial conference and considered the September-November period as most desirable for such meeting.
12. Ms. Ana Belen Noriega (Liaison Unit Madrid) informed that the next FOREST EUROPE General Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for 11-12 December 2012. She further informed that initial discussion will be held on the dates of the extraordinary ministerial conference. She also informed that the next Expert Level Meeting of FOREST EUROPE is planned to be held from 6 -7 March 2013.

5. Preparation of an analytical document on some of the key aspects involved in deciding on bringing the legally binding agreement under the United Nations umbrella, as contained in paragraph 19 of the Report of the Second Session of the Committee

13. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO) informed about the submissions received from the UNECE, FAO and EFI in response to the Chair's request, guided by paragraph 19 of the INC2 Report. UNEP has not provided a response till date.
14. The Chair informed the Bureau about his request for additional information from the Office of the Legal Affairs of the United Nations in New York.
15. Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) informed the Bureau on the consultants work being in progress. He informed that the analysis is guided by paragraph 19 of the INC2 Report as well as received information from the organizations concerned and other existing examples. He suggested that the chair's paper would be a short note transmitting the findings of the work in several annexes, including submissions from the organizations, legal analysis and other compilations. He further noted that the financial questions will most likely remain open as it seems to be very difficult to provide any provision on the basis of the existing parameters of the work to be conducted.
16. The Bureau expressed its gratitude for the information provided so far by UNECE, FAO and EFI. The Bureau noted that together with the consultant's analyses these materials would form a useful package of background information for the Committee. Some Bureau members noted that the question of costs implication would require further thorough clarification. The Bureau also noted the need to urge Parties to make a step forward at INC3 in recommending preferred options for the institutional arrangements for the LBA.

6. Organization of work at INC3

17. The Bureau thoroughly discussed options for the organization of work at INC3. In conclusion, the Bureau agreed that INC3 should finalize the 2nd reading and try to make progress as far as possible with the 3rd reading of the draft negotiating text, reaching the agreement on any paragraph possible.
18. The Bureau agreed that the time available for plenary sessions should be maximized. With this, the Bureau recommended to prepare for holding working groups on Wednesday or Thursday (in three official languages), subject to consent of the Committee. The Bureau also discussed possible topics for the group work and concluded to take a flexible approach allowing the decision to be taken on the basis of the developments at INC3. The Bureau also agreed that contact groups could be established during the week, should the need arise.

19. The Bureau requested the secretariat to prepare a detailed proposal in this regard for further consideration.
20. Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (Russian Federation) confirmed the readiness of the Russian Federation to host the INC-related meeting during the intersessional period. It was concluded that this meeting would provide an important opportunity for furthering the INC's work and the modalities would need to be concluded based on the Committee's decisions regarding the topic and a mandate for such a meeting.

7. An expert meeting on terms and definitions to be held in Spain, November 2012

21. The Chair transmitted to the Bureau members an email from Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain) regarding the CLI Expert meeting on terms and definitions that will take place from 27 - 28 November 2012 in the Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingenieros de Montes (Madrid Forest University). Further information is available at <http://cli.termsanddefinitions.es/>

8. Other matters

Communication

22. With regard to the possible IISD coverage of INC3 the Bureau advised on requesting a summary report and a limited digital coverage, with daily digital photos from the event and upload of 250 word updates at the end of each day of the meeting to the dedicated WWW site.
23. Subsequently, the Bureau discussed growing demand for information on the LBA negotiations and suggested to intensify the work in this regard.
24. The Bureau agreed that the professional advice from the UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators' Network (FCN) would benefit communication activities regarding the INC work, and welcomed possible advice from FCN members. Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria) informed about examples of the work of the UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators' Network (FCN).

Forestry Terminology

25. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs and Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) informed the Bureau on the ongoing FAO's work on forestry terminology, including in Russian. They expressed appreciation for the Bureau's support and noted the need for the draft negotiating text being consistent with other internationally agreed legal documents and the need for seeking official support from Member Nations in clarifying pending linguistic issues at the end of the process. The secretariat will inform the Bureau on progress made in that regard.

INC4

26. Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland) informed that 3 – 7 June 2013 or 17-21 June 2013 are the preferred dates for hosting INC4 in Poland, and that Poland is prepared to contribute to the costs of the session similar as the one held in Bonn. The Bureau expressed its preference for the latter and decided that it will further consider this proposal at its next meeting.

Trust Fund

27. Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) informed briefly on the status of expenditures in the Trust Fund.

9. Date and venue of the next Bureau meeting

28. The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting in the afternoon of 26 January, 2013 in Antalya, Turkey, prior to the Third Session of the Committee but continue working through electronic means.

10. Closure of the meeting

29. The Chair closed the meeting at 13.00 hrs (GMT+1) on 15 November 2012 expressing his gratitude to the participants.
