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

Bureau Meeting

22-24 May 2012, Rome

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 22-24 May 2012 in Rome.
2. The Chair opened the meeting at 15.05 hrs (GMT+1) on 22 May 2012.
3. Mr. Jan Heino (Chair), Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria), Ms. Katerina Ventřubova (Czech Republic), Mr. Jacques Andrieu (France), Mr. Arne Ivar Sletnes (Norway), Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland), Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (Russian Federation), Ms. Lyubov Polyakova (Ukraine), and Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain), were present. Mr. Tamer Otracier (Turkey) could not attend.
4. The Secretariat was represented by Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs, Mr. Peter Csoka, Ms. Manuela Cuvi, Ms. Annick Van Houtte, Mr. Ewald Rametsteiner and Mr. Patrice Talla (FAO), Mr. Ilpo Tikkanen (European Forest Institute), Ms. Ana Belen Noriega, Ms. Elena Estrada Wilke and Ms. Edurne Lacalle (FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit Madrid).

2. Adoption of the agenda

5. The agenda for the meeting, as presented in the Annex 1, was adopted without amendments.

3. Preparation of a draft negotiating text based on guidance from INC1

6. The Chair presented the revised draft of the negotiating text on a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe as a basis for the discussion.
7. The Bureau discussed the contents of the text in depth, including the following sections: preamble, terms and definitions, purpose, objectives, principles and general provisions. The Bureau agreed that more work is needed on terms and definitions once the content of the agreement is elaborated, and decided that a table of definitions prepared by EFI could be a useful information document during the second session of the INC.

8. The Bureau also reviewed the content of the section on rules, bodies and other procedures as well as the final clauses, and proposed concrete text formulations. Based on recommendation from the first session of the Committee on “compliance” the Bureau agreed to seek further guidance for the development of this section at the second session.
9. The Bureau agreed on a revised draft of the negotiating text and requested the Secretariat to arrange for an editorial review and circulate the English version as soon as possible and in accordance with the guidance from the first session of the INC.

4. Consideration of articles 24 f. and 24 g. of the Oslo Mandate

10. As requested, the Secretariat provided further information on possible options and associated procedures for bringing the agreement under the United Nations umbrella and how such options could have implications on addressing paragraph 24 f.
11. Ms. Manuela Cuvi and Ms. Annick Van Houtte (FAO) explained options for a depositary of the agreement and its functions, including the United Nations Secretary General, the executive head of a United Nations Specialised Agency (UNSA) or a national government. It was also noted that having the agreement deposited with the UN or any UNSA does not, in itself, mean that the agreement is under the UN umbrella.
12. The Secretariat provided general information on a range of options of bringing the agreement under the UN umbrella. These included options of making the agreement a UN treaty or concluding the negotiations outside the UN and bringing it for being serviced by the UN, a UNSA, a UN Programmes or any combination of these.
13. The Bureau considered the presented information useful and requested the Secretariat to prepare a general information note on addressing article 24 g. of the Oslo Mandate with the view to facilitate the discussion at the second session of the Committee.

5. Financial overview to be prepared for the second session of the INC and the INC secretarial arrangements

14. Mr. Peter Csoka (FAO) reported on progress in the implementation of the project and on the use of the associated multidonor Trust Fund in support of servicing the negotiations. He informed, that the final invoice for the first session of the INC has been received lately, reaching the total balance of \$86,000 for INC1. He further informed about expenses associated with the operations of the Bureau and those foreseen for preparations of the second session of the INC and noted that the contributions received so far may not cover all of the forecasted costs, depending on future travel supports requests from eligible countries as well as on translation costs.
15. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO) informed about the generous offer from the government of Germany in support of travel costs for

eligible countries as well as secretariat travel to the second session of the INC to be held in Bonn, Germany.

16. Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria) informed about the consideration of a second contribution to the multidonor Trust Fund later this year as well as the interest to support arranging the fourth session of the Committee at the UNOV premises in Vienna.
17. The Chair and the Bureau expressed appreciation for all generous contributions.

6. Update on preparations for INC2

18. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO) informed about the preparations for the second session of the INC, to be held 3 - 7 September 2012 in the "Deutsche Welle Building" Bonn, Germany. She provided information on the host country preparations, including the conference and technical facilities, as well as a road map for the secretariat work towards the 2nd session, including preparing necessary documentation and translation.
19. The Bureau welcomed the information and discussed the set of documents for the second session of the Committee. The Bureau also briefly discussed possible organization of work during the second session of the INC and requested the Secretariat to prepare recommendation for further consideration.

7. Date and venue of the next Bureau meeting

20. The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting on 2 September 2012 prior to the second session of the INC in Bonn.

8. Closure of the meeting

21. The Chair closed the meeting at 16:50 hrs (GMT+1) on 24 May 2012 expressing his gratitude to the participants.
