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

Bureau Meeting

25 September 2012, Rome, FAO HQ

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 25 September 2012 in Rome.
2. The Chair opened the meeting at 11.00 hrs (GMT+1).
3. Mr. Jan Heino (Chair), Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria), Ms. Catherine Rivoal (France), Mr. Knut Oistad (Norway), Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz (Poland), Mr. Abdurrahman Kök (Turkey) and Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain) were present. Ms. Alexandra Orekhovich (Russian Federation) participated in the meeting via telephone. Ms. Katerina Ventřubova (Czech Republic) and Ms. Lyubov Polyakova (Ukraine) could not attend.
4. The Secretariat was represented by Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs, Mr. Peter Csoka, Ms. Annick Van Houtte, Mr. Ewald Rametsteiner (FAO), Mr. Hubert Inhaizer (European Forest Institute) and Ms. Ana Belen Noriega (Liaison Unit Madrid). Mr. Ilpo Tikkanen and Mr. Doni Blagojevic (European Forest Institute) participated in the meeting via telephone.

2. Adoption of the agenda

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

3. Short general discussion and exchange of views by Bureau members on INC2 results

6. Bureau members exchanged views on the progress made during INC2. It was appreciated that the spirit of negotiations was constructive and that the Committee made good progress with the 1st and the 2nd reading of the Draft negotiating text.
7. It was generally agreed that the working groups were useful, but the nature of work was different from one another. Some Bureau members suggested considering setting up basic rules for working groups for the future INC sessions. Bureau members noted that the attendance at INC2 was good and that observers participated actively.

8. The Bureau appreciated donor countries for their financial support to eligible participants from countries with economies in transition, which made it possible for many to participate in the Second Session of the Committee.

4. Post INC2 documents and INC3 documents preparation

9. Ms. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (FAO) informed about the finalization of the INC2 Report and *the Draft negotiating text for a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe as of 7 September 2012 at the end of INC2 Plenary session*, which shall become available by 19 October 2012 in all official languages of the INC.
10. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to make the English version of the INC2 Report and *the Draft negotiating text for a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe as of 7 September 2012 at the end of INC2 Plenary session* available as soon as possible.
11. The Bureau discussed briefly a list of documents to be prepared for the Third Session of the Committee to be held on 28 January – 1 February 2013 in Antalya Turkey.
12. The Bureau exchanged views on and discussed challenges of preparing the Chair's analytical document on some of the key aspects related to the issue of bringing the LBA under the UN umbrella. The Bureau noted the complexity of the INC request in paragraph 19, which includes elements of inventory work (collecting existing available information), qualitative analysis (e.g. elaborating on advantages and possible implications of various options) as well as initiating a process to obtain specific information from various organizations.
13. The Chair noted that in order to keep the deadline for producing the official documents for INC3 to be made available in all official languages six weeks before the session, only seven weeks are available for the analytical study. The Chair suggested a two-fold approach in preparing the analytical document i). to write letters to organizations concerned in order to seek information on the procedures for the adoption of agreements within the United Nations, its programmes or specialized agencies and other relevant information ii). to use the expertise of independent consultants for as many elements of the analysis as possible.
14. The Bureau agreed with the Chair's proposal and recommended to contact and invite FAO, UNECE and UNEP for providing relevant information on the request of the Committee as specified in paragraph 19 of the INC2 Report. It was further agreed to invite the European Forest Institute to provide similar information as a non-UN option. It was also suggested that in the time available other aspects and options could be described in general terms on the basis of existing examples.

5. Inter-sessional activities: preparation of an expert meeting on terms and definitions to be held in Spain, November 2012

15. Mr. Jose Maria Solano (Spain) informed about preparations for the country-led initiative by Spain, an expert meeting on terms and definitions to be held on 26-27 November 2012 in Madrid, Spain. He further informed about the preparation of a background document by Spanish experts with an input from FAO, EFI and LUM, to be requested by Spain.
16. The Bureau noted that the Secretariat should provide the list of terms and definitions as recorded during INC2 discussions, to be considered, amongst other definitions, by an expert group. The Bureau also recommended making the best possible use of existing and agreed terms and definitions, such as FAO definitions.
17. The Bureau welcomed the efforts of the government of Spain and expressed its appreciation, noting that the report of this meeting could provide useful background information and be submitted to the Secretariat by Spain in good time to be made available six weeks in advance of INC3, as agreed by INC2.

7. Date and venue of the next Bureau meeting

18. The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting in November 2012.

8. Other matters

19. Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria) informed about the second contribution to the multidonor Trust Fund later this year, in the amount of EUR 30 000.
20. The Chair and the Bureau expressed appreciation for the generous contribution from Austria.

8. Closure of the meeting

21. The Chair closed the meeting at 13.00 hrs (GMT+1) on 25 September 2012 expressing his gratitude to the participants.
