



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on the 7th session of United Nations Forum on Forests - follow up

*2845th GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 28 January 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- A. "RECALLING its earlier conclusions on the international forest policy dialogue;
- B. REAFFIRMING its strong commitment to sustainable forest management (SFM) and recognising the important contribution it makes to sustainable development, poverty eradication and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the contribution to mitigating climate change, combating desertification and halting biodiversity loss;
- C. EMPHASISING the continued need to strengthen international cooperation and action at all levels to combat continuing global deforestation and forest degradation, in particular by taking advantage of synergies and facilitating active cooperation and coordination with other forest-related conventions, agreements and processes, and highlighting, in this regard, the important role of the CPF and its members;
- D. REITERATING its conviction that an international legal instrument would be the most suitable means of ensuring a coherent global approach to sustainable forest management;
- E. WELCOMING the outcome of the seventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests 2007 (UNFF7) as a significant step forward, in particular the non-legally binding instrument

P R E S S

on all types of forests (NLBI) and the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the United Nations Forum on Forests for 2007-2015;

- F. UNDERLINING that, for the first time in global forest negotiations, agreement has been reached on a comprehensive and concise instrument for forests, including an overall definition of SFM as “a dynamic and evolving concept” that “aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations”;
- G. RECALLING the decision to develop and consider, with a view for adoption, at UNFF8, a voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework for all types of forests, which is a crucial component of the outcome of UNFF7 and an important element for ensuring the implementation of the NLBI;

The COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. UNDERLINES the political commitment of the EU to contribute positively and actively to the implementation of the NLBI, using it as framework for national action and international cooperation, building upon potential synergies with the relevant forest-related conventions, agreements and processes in order to achieve sustainable management of all types of forests and the shared global objectives on forests;
2. AFFIRMS its will to contribute to the future UNFF sessions focused on: Forests in a Changing Environment and Means of Implementation for SFM (2009); Forests for People, Livelihoods and Poverty Eradication (2011); Forests and Economic Development (2013); and Forests: Progress, Challenges and the Way Forward for the International Arrangement on Forests (2015);
3. INVITES the Member States and the Commission, in collaboration with other partners, to promote the adoption of the NLBI by the UN General Assembly, thus contributing to strengthening political commitment and action at all levels, and to promote it through a public event during its adoption with a view to increasing public awareness;
4. URGES the Member States and the Commission to cross-check national and international actions foreseen in the NLBI with the equivalent measures, actions and instruments in place at EU and Member State level to identify the clusters/action-domains and areas of cooperation and coordination still needing to be reinforced within the EU and in international cooperation in order effectively to contribute to the implementation of the NLBI;
5. EMPHASISES that the EU should actively participate in the discussions on the adaptation and further development of existing financing sources in support of SFM, leading to the effective use of available resources, and should also contribute to the development of

P R E S S

innovative approaches to financing in support of SFM, *inter alia* through the 2008 open-ended *ad hoc* expert group to develop proposals for the voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework for all types of forests; in this regard, ENCOURAGES the CPF and its members to participate actively in the preparatory work, and welcomes the positive feedback from the World Bank and FAO to the EU in this regard;

6. UNDERLINES the increased need for consistent and focused national, regional and international input on forest issues to UNFF and other international forest-related conventions, agreements and processes with a view to promoting institutional synergies and collaboration at all levels;
7. CALLS, for the further strengthening of cooperation among forest-related regional processes and bodies in Europe, such as the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations European Forestry Commission (FAO EFC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Timber Committee (UNECE TC), the Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (ENA/FLEG) and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS), taking advantage of synergies amongst them with a view to provide a coordinated regional contribution to the issues and agenda items planned for each UNFF session;
8. UNDERLINES, in this regard, the potential added value of organising a Pan-European Forest Week 2008, as an initiative jointly promoted by the MCPFE, FAO EFC and UNECE TC, providing an umbrella and framework for a series of events and for different European actors, including governments, national and regional bodies and processes, as well as the private sector and civil society, with the aim both to increase the visibility of the forest based sector and to raise awareness about its important contribution to the protection of the environment and the development of the economy and society in Europe, so as to help prepare the ground for consistent regional contribution to UNFF8, and INVITES the Member States and the European Commission to join in this initiative."

P R E S S
