



FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

Conference Proceedings

**5–7 November 2007
Warsaw, Poland**

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Conference Proceedings, 5–7 November 2007, Warsaw, Poland

Published by:

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
Liaison Unit Warsaw
ul. Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. nr 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
tel.: +48 22 331 70 31 tel./fax: +48 22 331 70 32
e-mail: liaison.unit@lu-warsaw.pl
www.mcpfe.org

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Photographs:

Joanna Siedlar © MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Design, layout and production:
www.meander.net.pl

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ISBN 83-922396-9-5
ISBN 13 978-83-922396-9-7

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The statements of the European countries/European Community, intergovernmental organizations and observer countries are listed in alphabetical order.

The statements are presented in the respective Conference languages: English, French, Polish and Russian.

INTRODUCTION

For nearly 18 years, European countries have been successfully developing cooperation in the field of forest policy towards sustainable forest management (SFM). Four Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe held in Strasbourg (1990), Helsinki (1993), Lisbon (1998), Vienna (2003) resulted in agreed commitments at a political level with regard to sustainable management of forests. At the same time they have highly contributed to building up a range of joint activities of actors engaged, despite a variety of opinions and interests they represent.

The Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (5th MCPFE) took place on 5–7 November, 2007 in Warsaw, Poland. The Conference Sessions provided a forum for dynamic discussions and sharing views on political challenges concerning European forests among the ministers, delegates from the MCPFE observer organisations and countries as well as representatives of research community. The Warsaw Summit encompassed presentation of most recent information on the state of Europe's forests as well as illustration of achievements of European countries in progressing towards SFM. A set of actions to assure that Europe's forests continue to be managed sustainably and provide benefits to the best of their potential was endorsed.

The Warsaw Conference was ceremonially opened by the President of Poland and the participants were cordially welcomed to Warsaw. Linkages between forests and climate change as well as reconciliation of two important issues: economic development and protection of natural environment were emphasized in the opening address by the President.

The Conference Agenda consisted of five Sessions, starting with the Thematic Session: "Europe's Forests – state of art and challenges ahead." Two MCPFE Reports: "State of Europe's Forests 2007" and "Implementation of the MCPFE Commitments 2003–2007" were presented. The key statements by the European Community (EC), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) significantly enriched the Conference debates on SFM. The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) comprised presentation of the statements by six Major Groups followed by an open discussion with ministers and delegates. A number of issues for further political attention were identified during the dialogue. The statements by European countries and the European Community as well as by observer organisations and countries were included in the succeeding Conference Sessions.

The outcomes of the Conference are embraced the Ministerial Declaration and the two Warsaw Resolutions that relate to the most significant environmental problems, such as climate change, growing demand for energy from renewable sources and threats to availability and quality of water resources. The Conference Documents were signed by 40 MCPFE signatory countries at the Signing Ceremony. Additionally, two Ministerial Statements on forest fires in South Europe and the initiative on the Pan-European Forest Week in 2008 were adopted by acclamation.

As a final point, a change in the MCPFE General Co-ordinating Committee (GCC) was announced at the Conference forum. The Minister of Environment of Poland invited Germany and Slovak Republic to take the place of Austria in the GCC and passed the MCPFE presidency to Norway.

The Conference delegates participated in the Field Session in the Kozienicka Forest that offered a great opportunity to demonstrate and discuss protection of biological diversity, promotion of forest education, improvement in ecological forest management and the provision of regional development in a perspective of the Conference host country – Poland.



The Warsaw Summit, whose leitmotif was „Forests for quality of life” brought the forests back to public debates both in the social and economic dimensions, whilst keeping the commitments resulting from the need to protect European forests being regional common heritage.



**OPENING
STATEMENTS**



NORWAY

Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen

Minister of Agriculture and Food

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Representatives from Observer Countries, International Organisations and Non-governmental Organisations, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe are milestones in our work for sustainable forest management in our part of the world.

The outcome of the ministerial conference has made it possible for us (at least in Norway) to approach our challenges more effectively, and with additional knowledge, gained through our cooperative work in this process.

I am convinced that the current conference will provide similar solid basis for our joint efforts in the future. One reason being the significant preparatory work already done by Minister Jan Szyszko and his staff in the Ministry of Environment, and the long lasting good work done by the Liaison Unit here in Warsaw.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank Poland for hosting this conference and for supporting this process with excellent technical and organisational preparations. Poland has done more than we could expect to make this conference a success. It is now up to all of us to deliver the results.

We could hardly have chosen more relevant topics for this conference. Forest and energy, forest and water – both topics are at the core of the political debate related to climate change.

I was once told by an expert that climate change is “all about distribution of water”. I would like to add: and to manage the carbon cycle. Both statements are grave simplification of complex issues, but it pinpoints some of the major challenges for us in order to secure quality of life in Europe and elsewhere.

One message from this conference to the outside world should be that forests can make significant contributions to this end by providing renewable energy.

Another important message is that forest and sustainable forest management can positively influence our ability to secure sufficient quantity and quality of water.

Let this conference be an important step in our effort to improve policies and to secure sustainable forest management in Europe. This will enhance the contribution of forests to quality of life.

Thank you for your attention.

POLAND

Mr. Jan Szyszko

Minister of Environment

Ekscelencjo, Panie Prezydencie,
wielce szanowni Goście,
wielce szanowny Panie Ministrze – Współprzewodniczący,
Panie i Panowie!

Ja również chciałbym dołączyć do przedmówców i powitać Państwa w Warszawie, na 5 Konferencji Ministerialnej na temat Ochrony Lasów w Europie.

Przede wszystkim chciałbym wyrazić swoją wdzięczność i zaszczyt ze względu na Państwa chęć przybycia do naszego kraju i uczestnictwa w naszej dwudniowej debacie poświęconej lasom europejskim. Jest mi niezmiernie miło, że tak wielu ministrów i wysokich rangą przedstawicieli krajów europejskich zechciało przyjąć nasze zaproszenie. Dla nas jest to gest dobrej woli i zaangażowania rządów Państwa krajów w sprawę lasów. Chciałbym także podziękować wielce szanownym przedstawicielom instytucji międzynarodowych, organizacji pozarządowych, organizacji międzyrządowej, społeczności naukowej oraz innym organizacjom, za przyjęcie naszego zaproszenia.

Dla mnie, jako Ministra Środowiska i członka rządu RP, ta Konferencja ma szczególne znaczenie. Dotyczy to zwłaszcza zagadnień powiązania leśnictwa z kwestiami łagodzenia zmian klimatycznych.

Europejskie lasy mają do odegrania rolę w rozwoju społeczeństwa europejskiego – mogą poprawić jakość naszego życia poprzez wkład we wspomniane już powstrzymywanie zmian klimatycznych, ochronę zasobów wodnych jak i dostarczania biomasy na cele energetyczne.

Jak Państwo zapewne zauważyli, skierowałem Waszą uwagę na główne zagadnienia Dokumentów Ministerialnych: Deklarację Warszawską oraz dwie Rezolucje.

Polska, jako gospodarz tej Konferencji, zgadza się z najważniejszymi tezami tej debaty o polityce leśnej, a także z globalną dyskusją poświęconą zagadnieniom powiązania klimatu – energii – i środowiska naturalnego.

Panie i Panowie!

Pozwólcie, że przytoczę kilka faktów na temat naszych lasów.

Ponad 1 mld ha, co stanowi 25 procent światowych zasobów leśnych, znajduje się w Europie. W przeciągu ostatnich 15 lat, powierzchnia lasów na naszym kontynencie wzrosła o prawie 13 mln ha. I nadal rośnie.

Około 70 procent europejskich lasów ma charakter pół-naturalny i charakteryzuje się dużą różnorodnością biologiczną.

Ilość drewna w lasach osiągnęła rekordowy poziom: całkowite zasoby drzewne na pniu lasów w Europie wynoszą 112 mld m³. W przeciągu ostatnich 15 lat, co roku przybywało średnio 358 mln m³.

Rezerwy węgla w biomasie leśnej są ogromne i rosną: 53 gigatony węgla zmagazynowane są w biomasie leśnej – jest to wzrost o 2 mld ton od roku 1990.

Od połowy lat dziewięćdziesiątych, konsumpcja drewna w przeliczeniu na mieszkańca wzrastała, osiągając 1,1 m³ w roku 2005. Jednocześnie Europa stała się ważnym eksporterem netto wyrobów drewnianych do innych rejonów świata (100 mln m³ rocznie). Duże ilości drewna wykorzystywane są jako źródło energii, w tym względnie nastąpił w ostatnich latach znaczny wzrost.

Działalność związana z gospodarką leśną, przemysł drzewny oraz przemysł celulozowo-papierniczy stanowią łącznie około 1 procenta produktu krajowego brutto w Europie i znacznie więcej w kilku krajach.

Około 4,3 mln osób zatrudnionych jest w europejskim sektorze leśnym. Zatrudnienie w leśnictwie w Europie nadal spada, ale spada również tempo tego procesu. W roku 2005, zatrudnienie w działalności związanej z gospodarką leśną, przemysłem drzewnym oraz przemysłem celulozowo-papierniczym stanowiło 1,1 procenta całkowitej wielkości zatrudnienia w Europie.

Chciałbym również przypomnieć, że ponad 90 procent europejskich lasów jest udostępniona społeczeństwu. Lasy jako dobro publiczne pełnią wiele funkcji pozaprodukcyjnych i społecznych.

To tylko kilka przykładów znaczenia europejskich lasów. Jest oczywiste, że sytuacji lasów jest różna w poszczególnych krajach Europy. Jasne jednak jest, że społeczeństwa krajów europejskich potrzebują swoich lasów.

Konferencja Ministerialna na temat Ochrony Lasów w Europie określiła i opracowała najważniejsze koncepcje leżące u podstaw idei zrównoważonego zarządzania zasobami leśnymi. Z biegiem lat przyzwyczailiśmy się do tej koncepcji. Rozumiemy ją, wdrażamy, poprawiamy jej powiązania międzysektorowe, wiemy jednak, że ten całościowy obraz nie jest doskonały.

Nadal pozostaje wiele do zrobienia.

Bazując na 17 latach osiągnięć, doświadczeń i wysiłków Konferencji Ministerialnej na temat Ochrony Lasów w Europie, której celem jest wzmocnienie ekonomicznego, środowiskowego, społecznego i kulturowego aspektu lasów, kontekst oraz tematyka Konferencji Warszawskiej wydają się znaczące. Lasy zostały tu wpisane w kontekście międzysektorowym, między innymi w odniesieniu do strategii i polityk łagodzenia zmian klimatycznych, wkładu w zabezpieczanie zasobów wodnych oraz ich roli w powstrzymywaniu utraty różnorodności biologicznej i, wreszcie, roli, jaką odgrywają w wykorzystaniu energii odnawialnej.

Jestem przekonany, że Konferencja ta odegra decydującą rolę w dalszym rozwoju międzynarodowych programów dotyczących lasów i leśnictwa w Europie. Daje nam ona szansę wyrażenia jasnych wizji przyszłych działań mających zagwarantować, że lasy i zrównoważone zarządzanie nimi będą odgrywać aktywną rolę w zrównoważonym rozwoju społeczeństw.

Panie i Panowie!

Jednym z moich głównych celów jako Ministra Środowiska RP jest rozszerzenie sposobu postrzegania roli lasów w łagodzeniu zmian klimatu. Ja osobiście postrzegam Konferencję Ministerialną na temat Ochrony Lasów w Europie jako instrument mający zapewnić, że lasy i leśnictwo pozostaną na czołowej pozycji w europejskich programach.

Wielce szanowni Delegaci!

Oczy wszystkich skierowane są dziś na nas. Chciałbym wyrazić szczerą nadzieję, że nasza sesja stanowić będzie punkt zwrotny w dalszym rozwoju debaty poświęconej leśnictwu. W imieniu polskiego rządu, jeszcze raz życzę Państwu udanych obrad i zapewniam, że zrobimy co w naszej mocy, by Państwa pobyt w Polsce był satysfakcjonujący.

Dziękuję Państwu za uwagę.

English version

Your Excellency, Mr. President,
Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,
Honourable Minister, Co-Chair,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I join in welcoming you in Warsaw at the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude and honour for your willingness to come here to participate in our two-day deliberations devoted to European forests. I am pleased that so many Ministers and high representatives of European States, the European Community and Observer States have been able to accept our invitation. To us, this is a gesture of good will and the commitment which your Governments have to forests. I would also like to express our thanks to the distinguished representatives from international institutions, non-governmental organisations, inter-governmental organisations, scientific community and other organisations for following our invitation.

For me, as the Minister of Environment and as a member of the Polish Government, this Conference is of particular importance. It is mainly the linkages between forestry and climate change mitigation.

European forests have a vital role to play for European society – they can improve the quality of life by contributing to climate change mitigation, energy supply and water protection. As you probably noticed, I have drawn your attention to the main issues of the Ministerial Documents: the Warsaw Declaration and the two Resolutions.

Poland, as the host of this Conference, concurs with these top subjects of forest policy debates and, therefore, with the entire global climate – energy – environment debate.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me mention a few facts about our forests.

Over 1 billion ha, which is 25 percent of the world’s forests, are located in Europe. In the past 15 years, the area of forests on our continent has increased by almost 13 million ha. And it continues to increase.

About 70 percent of the European forests are semi-natural and contain rich biodiversity.

Wood volume in forests has reached record heights: the total growing stock of forests in Europe amounts to 112 billion cubic meters.

In the last 15 years, an average of 358 million cubic meters was added each year. Forest biomass carbon reserves are huge and growing: 53 gigatons of carbons are stored in forest biomass – which is an increase of 2 billion tons since 1990.

Since the mid-1990s, wood consumption per capita has been rising, reaching 1.1 m³ in 2005. At the same time, Europe has become a major net exporter of wood products to other regions (100 million m³ per year). Large volumes of wood are used for energy, with a significant increase in recent years.

Forestry activities, wood industries and the pulp and paper industry combined contribute about 1 percent to the gross domestic product in Europe and substantially more in a few other countries.

Around 4.3 million people work in the European forest sector. Employment in forestry continues to decrease in Europe, but the loss of jobs is slowing down. In 2005, employment in forestry activities, wood industries and pulp and paper industries accounted for 1.1 percent of the total employment in Europe.

Finally, I would like to recall that more than 90 percent of European forests are open to public access. Forests provide wide range of goods and services to our societies.

These are just few examples of the importance of European forests. It is evident that the situation of forests vary in individual European countries.

But it is obvious that European societies need their forests.

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe has defined and develop the main concepts underlying the idea of sustainable forest management. Over years, we got used to this concept. We understand it, we implement it, we improve its cross-sector links, but yet we know that the holistic picture is not perfect.

There is more to do.

Basing on 17 years of achievements, experiences and continuous efforts of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, aimed at strengthening the economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects of forests, the context and the substance of Warsaw Conference appears remarkable. Forests are placed in the cross-sector context, inter alia, in climate change mitigation, contribution to securing water resources, their role in halting the loss of biodiversity and, last but not least, playing a role in obtaining biomass for energy.

I am convinced that this Conference will play a decisive role in further development of international forest and forestry agenda in Europe. It gives us an opportunity to express clear visions of future actions to ensure that forests and their sustainable management will play an active role in the sustainable development of societies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of my primary objectives as a Minister of Environment in Poland is to expand the way in which the role of forests can be seen in climate change mitigation. I personally consider the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe as an instrument to secure that forest and forestry remain on top of the European agendas.

Distinguished Delegates,

The spotlight is on us. Let me express my sincere hope that our session will be a landmark in a future development of forestry debate. On behalf of the Polish government, I once more wish you a warm welcome and affirm that we will do our best to make your stay in Poland enjoyable.

Thank you for your attention.



**EUROPE’S FORESTS
– STATE OF ART AND
CHALLENGES AHEAD**



EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Ms. Mariann Fischer Boel

Member of the European Commission

Getting the best out of Europe's forests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a privilege to address this conference, and I would like to thank our Polish and Norwegian hosts for inviting me.

Forests are a big part of Europe's heritage and identity.

When satellites look down on Europe from the skies, they see large masses of green. Or, to be a little more scientific: forests and other wooded areas cover around 40 per cent of the European Union of 27 Member States.

Does this huge portion of Europe get the public attention that it deserves? Possibly not. But in any case, I'm glad to see that forestry policy is taken very seriously at the political level, as this conference demonstrates.

I like the theme of the conference: "Forests for quality of life". One could even take it a step further and simply say: "Forests for life". Because forests have been essential throughout the history of mankind – for fuel, for shelter, for the very air that we breathe.

Later today, you will hear a statement from the European Community about where the forest sector stands at the moment and where it is going. But I will take this opportunity to highlight a few particular points myself.

I welcome the report State of Europe's Forests 2007. Policies are only as good as the information on which they are based, so this report will shine valuable light on what we need to do in the future.

We have to balance two objectives in the forest sector. On the one hand, we need to encourage competitiveness. On the other hand, we need to support what forests do for us in terms of biodiversity, water, climate, and general quality of life.

Unfortunately, these two objectives are often seen as being in tension with each other. But we have to aim for both. In fact, I would like to underline that competitiveness is an important component of sustainability. It helps to underpin the other key components –the environmental and social aspects.

In the European Union, we are working on all these issues under our Forest Action Plan.

As part of the Action Plan, we recently carried out a study of the forest sector's competitiveness in the European Union. We found that it has handled globalisation quite well: it is still robustly competitive and looks set to remain so.

This makes me confident that the sector will also remain capable of delivering benefits for our quality of life.

One of the hot topics in European Union policy-making just now is the role of bio-energy in diversifying our sources of energy and in limiting climate change.

Of course, forestry is already a major player in the bio-energy sector. Biomass makes up about two-thirds of the energy from renewable sources used in the EU-25 – in other words, 6 percent of the total energy used. Forest biomass provides the lion's share of this.

As you know, the European Union now has ambitious new targets for renewable energy. It should make up 20 per cent of our total energy usage by 2020.

A big contribution from forestry will be absolutely essential if we want to hit this target.

Can we draw that contribution out of our forests without overexploiting their resources and without causing problems for other users of forest materials?

The evidence seems to say that we can. We are currently harvesting only about 60 per cent of our annual wood growth. So there's extra wood out there which we could put to good use – without compromising sustainable forest management.

How do we bring this wood into use?

Certainly, there are various obstacles to be overcome. And at the end of the day, within the European Union, forestry policy is up to Member States. The Commission's role is one of guidance and co-ordination.

Nevertheless, the Union as a body is doing what it can. Many tools are available through rural development policy to help forestry fulfil its potential. And within the Standing Committee on Forestry, a group is working specifically on how to increase our usage of potentially available wood.

On my side, I ask for real ambition from governments and stakeholders to find a way past the obstacles in question.

I look forward to seeing progress in this area and all the other areas in which we're working. Because I look forward to seeing the forests of Europe make an even greater contribution to our quality of life – sustainably, for the sake of present and future generations.

Thank you for your attention.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

Mr. Jan Heino

Assistant Director-General
Forestry Department

Progress towards SFM – global outlook

Honourable Minister Szyszko,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

On behalf of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and my colleagues in the Forestry Department, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to address the Fifth Ministerial Conference. Decisions taken here have a significant impact on the future of the European forests. FAO has been privileged to be closely involved with all four past conferences, both in the preparations and the follow-up process. FAO is very much aware of the political leadership of the MCPFE in the region.

Having listened to the presentation of the report on the State of Europe's Forests 2007, it is tempting to conclude that Europe has achieved sustainable forest management. The negative trends are largely offset by positive ones. Nevertheless, much remains to be done especially in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Also, we have to face the demands for renewable energy and freshwater supply, in addition to urgent collective action needed for preventing forest fires.

Like in Europe, forestry makes a valuable contribution to sustainable development in all parts of the world. The latest Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2005) and the State of the World's Forests (SOFO 2007) both showed many positive trends. Most countries manage forests for multiple uses, and social and environmental benefits are increasingly recognized.

There is indeed evidence that progress is being made. For example, forest area dedicated for conservation of biological diversity increased close to 100 million hectares between 1990 and 2005 and now accounts 11 percent of all forests. Management of forests for protection of soil and water and for recreation has increased. Planted forests provide more than half of the industrial wood produced in the world and this proportion is increasing.

Significant progress has been made in strengthening the national policy and legal frameworks. In addition, there are encouraging signs of improving the forest sector's contribution to poverty reduction.

Regional cooperation has been gaining strength around the world, encouraged by the example of MCPFE in Europe and the revitalization of the FAO Regional Commissions, among others.

However, negative trends still continue in many regions. Forest degradation is occurring from forest fires, pests, invasive species, storms and overexploitation of forest resources and deforestation is driven by agricultural and urban expansion.

Forests are rapidly being lost to agriculture in Africa, Central America, South America and in Southeast Asia, accounting for almost 90 percent of the world's alarmingly high deforestation rate of 13 million hectares per year. Every year, the world is losing an area of forests that is roughly the size of Greece.

At the same time the establishment of new forests notably in Asia has reduced the net loss of forest area – especially within the last 5 years. The natural expansion of forests on abandoned agricultural land – for example in Southern Europe, has also contributed to the reduction of the net loss.

Climate change is one of the most serious challenges of our time. Forestry currently contributes 17 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation, decomposition of forest organic matter and forest fires. But forests also have the potential to absorb about one-tenth of global carbon emissions projected for the first half of this century. Developing countries are facing serious challenges in reducing emissions from deforestation. They need support for their efforts. The tools and partnerships developed for sustainable forest management are ready to be applied to climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is important that forestry sector representatives influence the decision-making in the climate change negotiations. Let us collectively raise the profile of forestry in the climate change debate. Otherwise we run a risk of reinventing the wheel.

It is evident that the demand for wood for energy is increasing. Consequently, the supply of wood available for other uses might decline, resulting in increased prices for all users of wood. In some developing regions, increasing production of agrofuel crops might generate land use conflicts and increase deforestation. The area of planted forests is also expected to expand to meet the increased demand for energy from wood.

In conclusion, progress towards sustainable forest management has been uneven globally. The world's forestry is faced with an increasingly complex challenge; is it possible to achieve sustainable forest management and to achieve equitable economic progress at the same time? Europe has certainly demonstrated positive steps forward. We need collective efforts to make this happen in all regions of the world.

Finally, I wish to express FAO's continued support to the implementation of the MCPFE Resolutions, including those to be passed at this Conference. It is a great pleasure to work together with MCPFE, and we look forward to highlighting the excellent collaboration in Europe later during this Conference and in the follow-up process.

Thank you!

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UNECE)

Mr. Marek Belka

Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of UNECE

Mr. Szyszko, Ms. Fischer Boel, Mr. Heino, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour for me to participate in a Conference which is the culmination of many years of work and cooperation all over the region. I express my thanks to Poland and Norway, who, with the countries of the MCPFE General Coordinating Committee, have led this work. The whole forest sector community has united to support the work, notably the international organisations, including, of course, the UN Economic Commission for Europe. I am proud that UNECE has made a significant contribution to this effort and look forward to further strengthening our cooperation with MCPFE and other organisations in the years to come.

In today's intense agenda, I only have five minutes, so I will move straight to the substance of what I have to say.

First, the report you have in front of you, jointly prepared by UNECE with the Liaison Unit Warsaw and FAO, shows that, with a few exceptions, Europe is moving towards sustainable forest management, through an acceptance of the need to balance different positions and interests to find a sustainable solution, rather than imposing a "winner" in a contest of political strength.

This approach is enabling the forest sector to move on from the sterile debates of the past to find practical and consensus based solutions. In this respect, I believe other sectors have much to learn from the forest sector. The next challenge will be to develop a rational and sustainable consensus on the role of wood in renewable energy supply, while respecting the other users of this unique material.

Second, the report shows that indicators of sustainable forest management work. The report is comprehensive in its scope and balanced in its approach because it is based on a framework agreed at the policy level, not merely by what is easy to measure. However, there are still a few countries in the region – and not just those with weak economies and institutions – which have not yet given sufficient policy priority to monitoring the forests. I hope the governments of these countries will take the necessary measures soon to reach the international minimum standard as defined through the MCPFE indicator system. Collecting reliable and comparable data on the forest resource is not a luxury, but a necessary investment in good governance.

Third, the report identifies a number of opportunities in the forest sector for European governments. In particular, thanks to the cautious utilisation of the resource over the last fifty years, a reserve of wood has been built up in Europe's forests: now we must decide how to use this accumulated capital.

However, the report shows that not everything is positive: a few countries have very weak forest sector institutions, while the forest are vulnerable to external threats such as pollution, fire or climate change. We need to increase our preparedness for the unexpected and develop adaptive strategies.

Finally, a word about public perceptions and communication: it is a sad fact that the public, indeed many decision makers, have many wrong perceptions of the status and trends of European forests. An authoritative and clear document like the Warsaw report can help dispel these misunderstandings.

I would like to say a few words about the mutually beneficial cooperation between my organisation, UNECE, and MCPFE. We are committed to continuing, indeed intensifying, this cooperation in the future, and expect to contribute to the next MCPFE Programme of Work, as we did to earlier work programmes. In particular, I welcome the fact that MCPFE will cooperate with ECE, FAO, and the EU in the Pan-European Forest Week next October. This event will present an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the cooperation and dynamism of the region's forest sector institutions.

MCPFE, since its foundation in Strasbourg seventeen years ago has moved Europe rapidly towards sustainable forest management and should be proud of its many achievements. UNECE for its part is firmly committed to work together with MCPFE in the future for the benefit of all countries in the region.



STATEMENTS OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Mr. Hosny EL-LAKANY

Adjunct Professor of Forestry, University of British Columbia, Canada

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It was with great pleasure that I accepted the invitation by the Secretariat of this 5th MCPFE to facilitate the MSD. Although MSD's are not new to me, I am glad that I am participating today in my personal capacity.

The history of participation of Civil Society in Inter-governmental Forestry discussions is well-known, but it may be worthwhile to recall some of the major events that have shaped such participation and to explore the future developments. Alarmed by the unacceptable high rates of global deforestation, several environmental NGO's managed to raise forestry to international agendas in the 1970's and 80's and many governments accorded reducing deforestation high priorities in their deliberations before and during UNCED in 1992. Despite being a contentious issue, Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the "Forest Principles" represented major achievements to forestry. The momentum created in Rio and the participation of additional stakeholders have come to bear in the post-Rio era including IPF- IFF and UNFF processes which have reached an agreement on a Non-Legally Binding Instrument on Forests early this year. Civil society actors have also been involved in other global forums such as the FAO Forestry Commissions, International Timber Trade Councils and the World Bank Forest Strategies as well as the numerous institutions, conventions and multi-lateral forums addressing sustainable development, including forestry.

The interaction between non-state actors and governments at both national and international levels has not always been a smooth sailing, to say the least. That was particularly clear when the interest evolved from deforestation to other issues such as trade and certification, illegal activities, governance, biodiversity, livelihood and more recently climate change and energy. Many governments and private industries created enabling mechanisms to carry the dialogue further and dissipate some of the ill feelings and mistrust. One of the best kept secrets of global forestry is the dissatisfaction of many civil society groups, particularly environmental NGO's, with the way the intergovernmental forest dialogue has been conducted and its outcome so far. Several stakeholders complain that the MSDs have become a standard item on the agendas of multi-lateral meetings, mostly for aesthetic reasons. It is gratifying to record however that the prevailing atmosphere is now one of co-existence and collaboration rather than one of confrontation.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have seven groups to make statements this session, each with a limited time. I trust that each statement will be concise, highlighting the position of each group vis-à-vis the two main issue on the table today. Discussing Forests and Water and Forests, Wood and Energy could not have been more timely from both global and European perspectives.

I respectfully ask each group that, while presenting its points of view and raising some issues in the European context, to briefly dwell on how it proposes to contribute to solving some of the problems and how its constituency intends to help governments achieve the goals of the Declaration. After all, we are all in this together.

Naturally, each group is welcome to raise questions to the participants of the conference. It is anticipated that participants will respond to questions and engage in a dialogue that follows the presentations.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us hope that the dialogue this morning will reflect a new spirit of collaboration. Let us have a lively, constructive dialogue and live up to the expectations of all concerned.

Thank you.

MAJOR GROUP “YOUTH” International Forestry Students’ Association (IFSA)

Ms. Olga Pentelkina

Student

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to explain the goals and expectations of the Major Group “Youth”, regarding the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. Youth is currently exclusively represented by the International Forestry Students’ Association

Our vision is to promote Sustainable Forest Management through education. Education in forestry is widely different to what it had been a few decades ago. Considerable changes have taken place in society and these have had a great influence on forestry and forestry education.

We are observing these important processes and providing information to forestry students around the world. We recognise that it can be difficult to communicate the policies of decision makers, who are often lawyers or economists, to local foresters who are primarily responsible for the management of forests. One major factor is that foresters are not aware of the objectives and functions of international or regional forest policy. We are convinced that for the successful implementation of Sustainable Forest Management it is essential to raise the interest and understanding of forestry students in forest policy besides national processes, and thus establish a link between agreements in the framework of the MCPFE and local forest management.

In light of these convictions, the Major Group “Youth” appreciates the commitments of the draft resolutions on Forests and Water as well as those on Forests, Wood and Energy. We are especially gratified to see that the Ministerial Conference acknowledges the significance of training and education in the implementation of these commitments through the framework of Sustainable Forest Management. In order to enhance the awareness, interest and expertise of young professionals in forestry on issues of water management and wood energy the future Warsaw resolutions should also highlight the relevance of higher education in forestry as a key element of a successful implementation of the resolutions.

We ask that the Ministerial Conference continue promoting the participation of young professionals in the framework of this process. Education organisations should be encouraged to motivate students to anticipate and support student initiatives such as conferences and seminars, taking into account issues of water management and wood energy production. Governments should support the maintenance and enlargement of funds for these activities and give easier access to students for activities related to forestry issues. Governments should also provide grant programs for education at national and Pan-European levels.

The Major Group “Youth” contributes to these objectives through our willingness to further explain our understandings. We will continue to strengthen the establishment of dialogue between young professionals in forestry and policy makers, as well as communication with stake holders in forestry and representatives of science. In the framework of our Forest Policy Education Network, we spread information on forest policy issues, facilitate student participation in forest policy processes like UNFE, UNFCCC, UNCBD and encourage the initiation of students’ projects and scientific events

that are related to forest policy at various levels. In Europe alone, students in forestry have successfully organized more than 10 events related to issues of forest policy within the last 3 years.

In closing, we would like to emphasize that education in forestry will be a significant investment in the future development of science and better business insight as well as aiding in the implementation of Sustainable Forest Management around the world.

MAJOR GROUP “FOREST OWNERS”

State Forest Owners European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR)

Mr. Pierre-Olivier Drege

Chief Executive Officer
EUSTAFOR

Ministers, Presidents and Directors of Observer Organisations,

I am very pleased to take the floor during this session as President of EUSTAFOR, the European State Forest Association. Our association gathers 26 members from 20 different European countries, managing 27% of EU forest area, harvesting annually 115 millions cubic meters and employing directly more than 100 000 people. We, as State forest organisations, we have a long tradition of sustainable forest management and we consider that it is our mission to propose original and operational solutions introducing in practice the principles and orientations given by Ministers during these “conferences on the protection of forests”.

EUSTAFOR fully supports the ministerial declaration, statements and resolutions of this conference. We are aware of our responsibilities, as major forest owners and managers, for mitigating and adapting to climate change, and in particular by protecting water resources and by enhancing the mobilisation of wood in order to provide society with an increased supply of renewable raw material and of renewable energy. Presently, we only use an average of 74% of the annual biologic increment of the forests we manage, and we believe that we can increase this figure in a sustainable manner that will also enhance the other functions of the forests: developing ecological services and providing rural areas with new opportunities for jobs and economic development.

As EUSTAFOR, we think one should not oppose the development of biomass and wood energy to the use of wood as raw material for timber or paper. We believe that both are possible at the same time and needed in order to tackle the challenge of mitigating climate change. As we operate within the European Union, we share the ambitious objective that the EU members states have given themselves concerning the increase of renewable energy production – reaching the 20% target by 2020 – and we believe that biomass, and wood in particular, has a crucial role to play in this regard.

EUSTAFOR members want therefore to develop solutions for a better and higher wood mobilisation both for timber, paper and for energy. This needs improving the data on wood resources and integrating wood energy as a part of our management objectives.

We also think that forest management options and the use of wood as a material may add a much higher contribution to mitigate climate change. We should therefore equally take into account the possibilities offered by carbon sequestration, as recognised by the Kyoto Protocol. EUSTAFOR's members will follow or take part in the development of operative projects that can demonstrate forest potential for carbon sequestration, both through afforestation and forest management. Such projects should not be exclusive of wood harvesting and carbon sequestration in final products. This action is related to the orientations decided by the European summit last March concerning the evolution of the EU regulations.

Ministers, I would like to reiterate that State forest organisations have the ability and the ambition to be a powerful tool to implement the objectives shared during this conference at a operational and large scale level.

Statement of the Director General of Polish State Forests National Forest Holding

Mr. Andrzej Matysiak

Director General of SFNFH

Panie Przewodniczący, Panie i Panowie Ministrowie, Szanowni Państwo,

Zgadzam się z moim przedmówcą – Panem Pierre-Olivier Drege – Prezydentem EUSTAFORu, że lasy będące własnością publiczną mają do spełnienia szczególną misję. Tak, to one przede wszystkim powinny być zagospodarowane według zasad i kierować się polityką Ministerialnego Procesu.

Tak właśnie gospodarujemy w Lasach Państwowych w Polsce realizując deklaracje i rezolucje ze Strasburga, Helsinek, Lizbony i Wiednia.

Ale misja lasów państwowych, tzn. własności publicznej skarbu państwa, jest czymś więcej. W każdym kawałku lasu, niezależnie od własności, tkwi część dobra publicznego: wszystkie funkcje ochronne, ekologiczne, społeczne, infrastrukturalne lasów są dobrem publicznym i w lasach państwowych są powszechnie dostępne.

Na państwie spoczywa obowiązek ich ochrony i realizacji. Państwo odpowiada za dobra publiczne tkwiące w lasach.

Wszyscy użytkują lasy: ci którzy w nich pracują i dają gospodarce drewno, jak i ci, którzy oddychają zdrowym powietrzem, piją zdrową wodę i produkują zdrową żywność, ci którzy w lesie wypoczywają i podziwiają jego piękno.

Misją lasów państwowych jest ochrona wartości, które należą do nas wszystkich.

W krajach z przewagą lasów prywatnych istnieją silne organizacje właścicieli lasów, w kraju z przewagą lasów publicznych potrzebne jest silne społeczne wsparcie. Bo las zarówno prywatny jak i państwowy powinien być zagospodarowany według tych samych zasad i potrzebuje być traktowany tak samo wobec prawa i pełnić podobną rolę w rozwoju kraju.

Lasy Państwowe w Polsce trwają w swym zasadniczym kształcie od 83 lat. Na przekór wojnom, reformom, zmianom ustroju. Taka jest tradycja trwałego i zrównoważonego zarządzania gospodarką leśną w Polsce.

I nie szukamy sposobu, żeby to zmienić.

Niech mi będzie wolno, Panie Przewodniczący, podzielić się chociaż w części polskimi doświadczeniami.

Po pierwsze: Od 1994 roku, tworzymy polskie lasy modelowe – Leśne Kompleksy Promocyjne. Są to specjalne obszary funkcjonalne, których zadaniem jest demonstrowanie i promocja trwałego i zrównoważonego leśnictwa, edukacja społeczeństwa, powiązanie gospodarki leśnej z jej społecznym i gospodarczym otoczeniem, oraz prowadzenie długookresowych badań i eksperymentów.

Po drugie: Od 1996 roku obowiązuje tworzenie Planów Ochrony Przyrody w nadleśnictwie. Jest to integralny element planu urządzenia lasu. Tak realizowana jest idea ochrony wszystkich lasów, nie tylko na obszarach chronionych, tak wreszcie modyfikuje się gospodarkę leśną w imię ochrony leśnej różnorodności biologicznej.

Po trzecie: Trwają prace nad ustawą o pochłanianiu i instrumentach wspomagania redukcji gazów szklarniowych i realizacji Protokołu z Kioto. Lasy Państwowe przygotowane są do ochrony klimatu i odegrania głównej roli w zwiększeniu pochłaniania CO₂ przez ekosystemy lądowe w Polsce.

Po czwarte: Lasy Państwowe prowadzą inwentaryzację przyrodniczą jako podstawę do weryfikacji i racjonalnej delimitacji obszarów sieci Natura 2000. Prace pozwolą uniknąć dublowania planów ochrony i wykorzystać technologie leśne do realizacji Dyrektyw UE w tym zakresie.

Po piąte: może najważniejsze – Lasy Państwowe są ekonomicznie efektywne, w przeciwieństwie do gospodarki leśnej w wielu krajach europejskich korzystających z dotacji. Jako samofinansująca się organizacja gospodarcza Lasy Państwowe nie obciążają swoją działalnością budżetu państwa.

Podjęliśmy ponadto ważne wyzwania: prawne usankcjonowanie i wdrożenie polskiego systemu certyfikacji gospodarki leśnej, restrukturyzację Krajowego Programu Wzrostu Lesistości i ukierunkowanie jego realizacji na tworzenie korzyści ekologicznych.

Panie Przewodniczący, Panie i Panowie,

Polskie Lasy Państwowe w pełni popierają dokumenty V Konferencji Ministerialnej Ochrony Lasów w Europie i deklarują ich realizację.

Reprezentując polskie leśnictwo pragnę zapewnić, że Deklaracja Warszawska oraz Rezolucja „Lasy – Drewno – Energia” uzyskuje w Polsce prawne podstawy realizacji; deklaruję możliwość wykorzystania ok. 3,5 mln m³ biomasy drzewnej rocznie jako źródła odnawialnej energii oraz zobowiązuję się do promocji drewna jako substytutu materiałów, których produkcja zwiększa zagrożenie klimatu (produkcja stali, betonu, materiałów syntetycznych).

Ochrona wody – co jest treścią Rezolucji „Las – Woda” – jest realizowana w Lasach Państwowych równoległe do planów urządzenia lasu poprzez programy tworzenia systemów małej retencji.

Będziecie mogli Państwo zobaczyć praktyczne efekty naszej pracy w czasie wycieczki terenowej do Kozienic w trzecim dniu Konferencji, na którą serdecznie wszystkich zapraszam.

Panie Przewodniczący, Panie i Panowie,

Nie ma ważniejszej sprawy do załatwienia dzisiaj niż chronić i stabilizować klimat oraz nie dopuścić do wysychania źródeł wody.

Polskie Lasy Państwowe są dumne, że choćby w skromnym wymiarze uczestniczą w regulacji tych żywotnych problemów współczesności.

Darz Bór!

English version

Mister Chairman, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I do agree with my preceding speaker, Mister Pierre-Olivier Drege, the President of EUSTAFOR, that a specific mission is incumbent on public forests. Indeed, it is these forests which first of all, should be managed in compliance with sound principles, and which should be governed by the Ministerial Process policy.

This is how we administer our State Forests in Poland by means of implementation of the declarations and resolutions adopted in Strasburg, Helsinki, Lisbon and Vienna.

Still, the management of the State Forests, which are a public property is something more than a simple administrative mission. Irrespective of the ownership structure, each part of the forest incorporates a part of our common good: all the protective, environmental, social and infrastructural functions belong to the public realm and are made publicly available in the territory of the State Forests.

The State is responsible for forest protection and performance of these functions. The State is responsible for public good which is intrinsic to the forests.

We all equally benefit from the forests – those who work in it and provide wood to national economy, those who breathe fresh air, drink high-quality water and manufacture healthy food as well as those who relax in the forest and admire its splendours.

The very mission of Polish State Forests is to protect the values which belong to all of us.

A country dominated by private forests generates mighty organisations of owners whereas a country with a national ownership majority needs a mighty social support. Both a private forest and a national one should be managed following the same rules, treated subject to the principle of equality before the law, and play similar roles in the development of the country.

In defiance of wars, economic reforms and changes in the political systems, the State Forests in Poland have maintained their primary characteristics for 83 years by now. This is how we traditionally put into action the idea of sustainable forestry in Poland.

And we are not looking for the way to change this approach.

Mister Chairman, let me share with you just a part of our national experience.

First of all, we have been creating Polish model forests since 1994. These are Forest Promotional Complexes: special functional areas whose target mission is to demonstrate and support sustainable forest management, social education, relationship between the forestry and its social and economic environment, as well as long-term investigations and experiments.

Second, development of Nature Protection Plans on forest inspectorate level has been a statutory duty since 1996. Such plans are integral elements of the forest management planning. It is this way we put into practice the idea of protection of all the forests and avoid focusing only on woodlands located in the protected areas; last but not least, it is this way we are modifying the forestry for the sake of forest biological diversity protection.

Third, the works on the Act on greenhouse gas absorption and instruments which support reduction in emissions as well as implementation of the Kyoto Protocol are in progress. National Forests Holding is prepared to protect the climate and to play the key role in increasing absorption of carbon dioxide by land-based eco-systems in Poland.

Fourth, National Forests apply nature stock-taking procedures as a basic tool for validation and reasonable delimitation of the areas eligible for NATURA 2000. These works will help to eliminate redundant protection plans and use forestry technologies in the implementation of applicable EU Directives.

Fifth, and perhaps the most important issue is the fact that, contrary to the forestry practice in many European countries which benefit from subsidies, our State Forests are truly cost-effective. As a self-financing business institution, National Forests Holding is not a budgetary unit and does not debit the national accounts.

Furthermore, we have taken up essential challenges: we must legitimate and implement the Polish forestry certification system; we must re-structure the National Program for Aforestation as well as guide the implementation of this program towards the production of ecological corridors.

Mister Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Polish State Forests gives its full support to the contents of the documents adopted during the 5th Ministerial Conference on Forest Protection in Europe and hereby publicly declares that applicable provisions will be given a due follow-up.

As a representative of the Polish forestry I would like to assure you that the Warsaw Declaration as well as the Resolution concerning "Forests – Wood – Energy" will be given legal bases for implementation in Poland; I hereby declare that some 3.5 mln m³ wood mass will be available as a source of renewable energy, and I hereby take the obligation to promote the wood as a substitute for materials (such as e.g.: steel, concrete, synthetic plastics, etc.) production of which, enhances climatic risks.

Water protection, a part of "Forest – Water" Resolution, is implemented in the State Forests parallel to forest management plans by means of the programs which generate small water retention systems.

You will have the opportunity to see actual results of our work at a field trip to Kozienice on the third day of the Conference, to which you all are warmly invited.

Mister Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Protection and stabilisation of the climate together with prevention of water sources from drying-up is of the utmost importance nowadays.

Polish National Forests Holding feels proud of the fact that it can take part in the regulation of these critical problems of the day, even if it was a minor contribution.

"Darz Bór!" – as we say in Poland, which means "Let the forest reward you!"

Private Forest Owners

Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF)

Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Union (COPA)

European Landowners’ Organisation (ELO)

Fédération Européenne Des Communes Forestières (FECOF)

Union of Foresters of Southern Europe (USSE)

Mr. Stefan Schenker

President of CEPF

Forest owners – local partners for global action

Dear Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and pleasure to address you on behalf of the Major Group “forest owners”, representing family forest owners, landowners and community forest owners. Taking a look at the core message of our statement at the 4th Ministerial Conference we can still repeat: forest owners are key partners in the implementation of sustainable forest management.

During the last 4 years renewable natural resources have moved into the political limelight. The challenges we are facing in securing the sustainable development of the Worlds’ society are clearly global – the solutions in addressing these challenges however are strongly linked to local and regional action. The core slogan of AGENDA 21: Think globally, act locally has more relevance than ever.

Climate change policy, energy policy, water policy are but a few examples where forests and forestry have a crucial role to play. We highly appreciate that the MCPFE with Warsaw Resolution 1 and 2 has taken the responsibility to guide the Pan-European discussion on the important inter-linkage between forests, wood and energy, as well as forestry and water.

Europe has a long standing experience with sustainable forest management – however the changing climate conditions and their consequences for the multifunctional management of forests pose a new set of challenges to forest owners and managers.

The conditions for forest management are affected by factors that are beyond the influence of forest owners and managers with severe consequences for the long and medium term planning security.

Forests, forestry and the goods and services they provide to Europe’s society are continuously being undervalued. It is about time for policy-makers to acknowledge the cross-disciplinary role of forests and forestry, its goods and services in achieving sustainable development.

Allow me to briefly reflect on some of the key issues in the ministerial declaration, the two resolutions and the ministerial statements of this conference.

Ministerial Declaration

We note with appreciation the acknowledgement of secure property and land tenure rights as a prerequisite for sustainable forest management. Our experience in particular in the CEE¹ and SEE² countries shows that without secure property and land tenure rights forest owners can not be motivated to invest in sustainable forest management. The private forest ownership with its intergenerational and family values guarantees long term sustainable forest management including the conservation of biodiversity.

The role, multiple benefits and potential of the forest and forestry sector and its contribution to sustainable development are not enough known and acknowledged by the decision-makers outside the sector. In order to open the eyes of society to the products and services offered by the forest and forestry sector inter-sectoral communication and information, e.g. by the establishment of platforms for cross-sectoral discussion and information exchange, need to be made a priority in future forest policy strategies. It is imperative to provide simple and trustworthy information to the consumer on the products and services from sustainable forest management, to communicate and further develop its sustainability credentials and thereby allow consumers to make a sustainable choice.

A continuous challenge is to ensure coherence and compatibility of different sectoral policies and international processes with relevance for forest and forestry and the use of natural resources. Forest owners and managers need a reliable, sound and consistent working environment to respond to the needs and challenges set by society and governments in a dynamic and economically sustainable way.

Forests, Wood and Energy

The focus on renewable energy sources has opened new market opportunities for forest owners and managers in many European countries. Various initiatives have been taken by forest owners and their partners to support and invest in decentralised energy supply systems to foster self-sufficiency on local and regional level. The cooperation and collaboration between forest owners and their cooperatives, forest entrepreneurs, industry, local authorities and other involved parties are cornerstones to mobilise wood resources and establish an added value chain from the forest to the market. Forest owner associations and cooperatives have a crucial role in developing these local and regional energy networks.

It is worth to point out that European forests, in the majority privately owned, annually grow 574 Mio m³ wood. Only 60% of the annual growth is harvested. At the same time, in the southern regions of Europe, more than 10 Mio m³ of forest biomass are generated each year from sustainable forest management, receiving hardly any valorisation.

The disastrous forest fires in the last years, and in particular in summer 2007, have shown that in southern Europe the support for energy from woody biomass has a wider importance than only providing an element to a sustainable energy mix. It is an efficient tool for the long-term conservation of the forest environment.

The political choice for the prevention of forest fires and therefore for the use of biomass is the most decisive factor to decrease the risk of forest fires and guarantee the production of renewable energy, in particular in southern Europe.

¹ CEE – Central and Eastern European Countries

² SEE – South Eastern European Countries

Forests and Water

The role of sustainable forest management for the quality and quantity of water resources has not yet been adequately recognised. Likewise, the role of forest owners in securing this service has yet to be acknowledged by policy makers. Giving economic incentives to forest owners will enable them to deliver this service to the benefit of society.

Tomorrow's society may have, in more general terms, even more diverging needs for the products and services provided by forestry and produced by forest owners and managers. Thus the full value of the variety of products has to be recognised. Forest owners need to be encouraged to develop new markets, meeting the various demands whilst being enabled to draw full economic value from the products and services they provide.

Ministerial Statement on the Pan-European Forest Week 2008

We welcome the decision to organise a Pan-European Forest Week. It is apparent that there is a need to increase the visibility of the forestry sector and raise the awareness about its contribution to mitigate global challenges such as climate change.

The work and achievements of forest owners and managers often remain invisible to the general public. Nevertheless they have a key role – they are the ones who in their daily decisions put sustainable forest management into practice, answering the call of society and at the same time sustaining their livelihood.

We offer our cooperation to make the forest week a visible success and we encourage governments to join their forces to raise the awareness on the forestry sector.

Ministerial Statement on Forest Fires

We would like to join the Ministers in expressing our sympathy and solidarity with all those that have suffered from the impacts of the disastrous forest fires this summer. Many lives have been lost and thousands of hectares of forests have been devoured by flames and turned into ashes.

Catastrophes like this are tempting governments to spend more money on ex-post measures such as fire fighting. Experiences in the past have shown that this is not the solution in the long term. It is far more sustainable and economical sensible to invest in the prevention of forest fires. Prevention is a silent ex-ante action not visible for the public but by all means more effective and efficient in the medium and long term.

Dear Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Family forest owners, landowners and community forest owners will continue to engage in the Pan-European Forest Dialogue for the benefits of our forests and the generations to come.

MAJOR GROUP “FOREST INDUSTRY”

European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)

Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)

Ms. Elisabet Salander Björklund

Executive Vice President of CEPI

Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues,

Let me first thank Poland and the organisers of this Conference for giving the forest-based industries the opportunity to express their views on the place, role and interaction of forests, forestry and the forest-based industries and the importance of sustainable forest management in Europe today.

Today I am speaking on behalf of the entire forest-based industries in Europe, from the sawmilling and panel sector to wood products and pulp and paper industries. Together, these industries represent 2,5 millions of jobs and a turnover of 340 Billions Euro, thus contributing significantly to well-being and growth in Europe.

The Warsaw Conference has rightly chosen to focus on two extremely topical and relevant issues for forests and the forest-based industries today: energy and water. Indeed, there is a real momentum to look into these issues at a time when climate change, land use and sustainable resource consumption are very high on the political agenda.

Our raw material, wood, is at the very core of the ongoing political discussions, since it can also be used as biomass for energy generation.

The current policy context is creating a favourable context for paying increased attention to wood and its usage as biomass:

- Climate change, as a result of a fossil-fuel-based economy, requires quick, strong and concerted efforts to keep global warming below 2° C and ideally stop it;
- Energy supply needs to be secured to sustain Europe's growth and wealth.

This is, no doubt, positive for Europe's forests and forest sector and must be recognised and encouraged.

But this has to be put in the right context and accompanied with adequate policies and instruments.

Otherwise, negative impacts for Europe might be significant, if not irreversible!

Let me list some of these impacts that we can already foresee today:

- Competition between raw materials and biomass will lead to severe price increases (both for agricultural commodities and wood, as we experienced over last summer), notably if renewable energy developments are supported with inadequate or disproportionate subsidies;
- The overall sustainability – of forests management, of agriculture, of resource use – may be at risk. No need to say that all the efforts of this process towards a more sustainable Europe would be destroyed within a few months or years;

- Europe might export its ecological footprint by importing massively the feedstocks needed to achieve its ambitions in the field of energy;
- The competitiveness of the industries creating jobs and value from the use of raw materials with a long-standing commitment towards sustainability would be threatened;
- Without strict resource efficiency requirements, available biomass stocks might be wasted in the least efficient technologies to convert biomass into energy.

In that context, adequate land allocation, improved sustainable wood mobilisation – in particular of forest and logging residues – proportionate support mechanisms and focus on a sustainable and efficient use of resources will play a critical role in the near future.

We, as industries contributing to Europe’s welfare, growth and wealth, are grateful to you, Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues, for giving our industries the consideration they deserve by undersigning these Declaration and Resolutions. Our industries are already climate-friendly since they deliver goods that store carbon as long as they are used, recovered and recycled. Moreover wood products are a natural substitute to non-renewable materials, like steel, aluminium or plastics, and have a much better carbon profile, whilst offering at least the same if not better technological performances. And still, at the end of their life, wood products can be turned into biomass.

We would also like to make an offer to you in the implementation of your policies in the field of renewable energy sources. Our industries are already today significant and efficient players in the generation of clean energy. They have a long history and well-established expertise in raw materials procurement and related logistics, and industries are increasingly using resources in a sustainable and efficient way, including recovery and recycling operations.

We therefore offer you all that expertise and ask you to consider us as a key enabler to the development of renewable energy in Europe. This is why we ask you, not to put our future at risk, but rather to see to it that the future of renewable energies in Europe strongly and positively connected and correlated to the sustainable future of our industry.

In the Declaration and Resolutions that have been undersigned today, we emphasise this need for balance and welcome it, so that forests, forest industries and sustainable forest management continue to develop harmoniously in Europe.

Thank you very much.

MAJOR GROUP “SOCIAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS”

European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs (ENFE)

Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI)

Union of European Foresters (UEF)

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC)

Mr. Edgar Kastenholz

Secretary General of ENFE

Responsibility for Forests

This grouping of forest practitioners, professionals, contractors, forest workers and specialists on forest management and certification who have been assigned under the Major Group “Social NGOs” are delighted to be invited to present our views to the deliberations of the 5th MCPFE.

We share the concerns of the signatories of the Warsaw declaration that the conditions of life on earth are threatened, and that today, and increasingly in the future, the sustainable use of natural resources is an ongoing and increasingly important necessity.

The contribution of forests to the quality of life has many aspects. One is the role forests play as a work place, providing employment and income. Thus, forests and the use of their resources and services are an important factor in rural economies and a mainstay in the fabric of rural society. This economic function was highlighted in the Vienna “Living Forest Summit”, where the mission statement “Sustainable Forest Management needs a Sustainable Workforce” was emphasised.

Creating “forests for quality of life” is a goal which can only be achieved through the responsible activities of those people engaged in management and forest operations. Therefore, whilst we wish to use this opportunity to draw attention to the social dimension of forestry which is to protect and ensure the multiple values and services forests offer to society, we wish equally to emphasise the role forestry plays as a source of employment and income, in particular the social role in contributing to maintaining and strengthening local communities and providing sustainable employment in rural areas.

Active Management of Renewable Resources by Public Procurement Policies

We firmly believe that there will be an increasing demand for wood both for industrial use and energy in the future. Therefore we welcome the signatories’ commitment to take effective measures to increase the use of woody biomass for energy generation, taking into account the importance of processing residues and recovered wood as renewable energy sources, and the signatories’ commitment to encourage partnerships aimed at the development of markets for bio-energy.

We will play our part in contributing to the mobilization of the wood needed to generate more value to forests and forest products by making use of our practical knowledge of forest management, harvesting techniques and logistics.

We welcome the signatories' intention to further strengthen efforts to promote good governance and forest law enforcement to combat illegal logging and related trade of forest products, inter alia by cooperating on and promoting public procurement policies that demand timber and timber products from legal and sustainable sources.

In order to support rural development and secure sustainable employment in fair markets, we urge the signatories to the MCPFE to make use of and support the use of the MCPFE Criteria and Indicators and the Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines (PEOLG) for Sustainable Forest Management as the basis for both public and private procurement of timber based products, to achieve a harmonized approach to procurement policies throughout Europe.

Human Resources Need Active Development

European foresters, forestry workers, contractors and their representative bodies, supported by forestry certification systems, have a firm understanding of their responsibilities for sustainable forest management and sustainable development. This relates to the protection of nature and environment in their forest operations, including the protection of water quality, and also their awareness of the importance of the use of renewable resources from forests. This however requires foresters, forestry workers and contractors themselves to have opportunities for secure jobs and a satisfactory income together with the opportunities to develop their careers and entrepreneurship.

However the reality of strong economic pressures in globalised markets, mean that these social values are not universally guaranteed.

Therefore, the commitment to strengthen good governance and law enforcement is very important because this will, together with the implementation of the MCPFE Criteria and Indicators supported by voluntary forest and service certification, help combat the undermining of social standards; improve health and safety and contribute to the development of human resources needed for sustainable forest management.

Strengthen Employment

The forestry sector is in a competitive situation. We are highly concerned that income opportunities in forestry are, in many cases, not competitive with other forms of employment. This can be seen as a severe restraint to achieving the goals laid out in the Warsaw Declaration and the Resolutions. Therefore, it is a crucial challenge for all actors in forestry, on both a political and a practical level, to agree means to strengthen forest and forest sector related human resources and employment to fulfil this commitment of the Warsaw declaration. For an optimisation of all aspects of modern, multi-functional forestry, qualified forest personnel in sufficient numbers is crucial.

Education and Communication

Education and communication of the goals of sustainable management, water protection and increased wood mobilisation are prerequisites to raise the qualification of foresters, workers and contractors, and to affirm their commitment to contribute to these goals. We are pleased to acknowledge that many commitments of the Warsaw Declaration and Resolutions aim at improving communication and raising awareness. However, it is imperative that this message reaches all actors in forest management and forest operations. To this end appropriate means need to be developed and implemented both at a political and a practical level.

Foresters, workers, contractors and certifiers are entrusted with the responsibility for creating Forests for Quality of Life so we will play our role as an essential bridge between the commitments and demands from society and industry for development.

The European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs, the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers, the Union of European Foresters and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes affirm that these umbrella organisations together with their members and representative bodies will make every effort to support putting the commitments of the Signatories of the Warsaw Declaration and Resolutions into reality towards Forests for Quality of Life.

MAJOR GROUP “ENVIRONMENTAL
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS”

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

International Greenpeace International

Mr. Martin Kaiser

Political Advisor on Forests Greenpeace International

Mr. Gerald Steindlegger

Manager Forest Programme WWF International

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Process – Achievements, Weaknesses and the Future

WWF and Greenpeace have been following the process as observers since it started in Strasbourg in 1990.

WWF and Greenpeace welcome the achievements of the MCPFE. The process led to a better understanding of the concept of Sustainable Forest Management, provided a platform for exchanging experiences and enhancing regional co-operation. The four previous ministerial conferences formulated meaningful commitments for the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe. We also acknowledge that some countries made significant efforts in implementing previous commitments.

However, WWF and Greenpeace observe that many countries are delaying an appropriate implementation on a national level on critical commitments such as on combating illegal harvesting and related trade (Vienna Declaration (VD 20), establishment of effectively managed protected areas (VR 4, HR 2) and the removal of incentives with a negative impact on forests and their biodiversity (VD 8)¹.

WWF and Greenpeace urges ministers of countries, participating in the MCPFE process to evaluate whether critical commitments have been implemented sufficiently and to take concrete actions to making these commitments meaningful reality.

The MCPFE process constantly moved away from the protection of forests expecting that sustainable forest management (SFM) is the overarching solution for all problems of forests. WWF and Greenpeace do not want to discredit the principle of SFM, but instead of bridging to other sectors such as agriculture, energy, watershed and tourism and looking for substantial dialogue and crosscutting solutions the pure concentration on SFM brought the process to a halt.

WWF and Greenpeace urge the MCPFE to better integrate conservation and environmentally and socially responsible use of forests in other major land use policies and ask ministers to base

¹ ... promote incentives for the protection and sustainable management of forests, and remove incentives with a negative impact on forests and their biodiversity, VD8.

... take effective measures to promote good governance and forest law enforcement, and to combat illegal harvesting of forest products and related trade, and contribute to international efforts to this end, VD20.

... analyse and further develop protected forest networks, taking into account existing networks, in terms of their comprehensiveness, representativeness and adequacy relative to forest types and the effectiveness of their management with regard to the conservation goal, VR4.

The Signatory States and the European Community will establish at national or regional levels a coherent ecological network of climax, primary and other special forests aimed at maintaining or re-establishing ecosystems that are representative or threatened, H2.6

decisions on meaningful participatory landscape planning processes for balancing economic values for society with the social and environmental benefits.

Forests, Climate Change and Energy – insufficiently addressed

European Forests are growing in terms of area and volume of timber. But many European forests are under severe pressure of degradation and it is expected that the pressure will further increase as a result of increasing industrial demand as well as climate change (IPCC 4th Assessment Report, 2007). Given the overall responsibility of governments² to mitigate climate change, the declaration and resolutions presented at this conference do not adequately address the issue.

European forests have the potential to serve many demands, however limitations exist. WWF and Greenpeace note that the MCPFE so far failed to develop a holistic approach which would balance the most efficient use of European forests for various traditional and emerging forest based industries and the maintenance of environmental and social services. Climate change adaptation strategies are addressed only marginally so far.

The Warsaw Resolution 1 “Forests, Wood and Energy” is not able to master the current debate sufficiently. WWF and Greenpeace will only accept the recent call from the European Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe regarding wood mobilisation, if a holistic approach, maintaining socio-environmental services and biodiversity values, is guaranteed. Making sure that European forests are diverse eco-systems is not a selfish interest of the “greens”, in fact there is growing scientific evidence which proves that diverse forests will be more resilient to climate change. Thus diverse European forests will not ensure just biodiversity conservation, but future wood supplies and livelihoods.

European forests can play an important role in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases through carbon storage and sequestration, as a source of climate beneficial raw material, replacing GHG and energy intensive products such as steel, concrete, plastic and glass and as source of renewable woody biomass used for energy production. However, the overall strategy should be holistic and not purely focussing on increased wood mobilisation.

From an environmental perspective, there can be no justification for bio-energy that does not provide positive gains in GHG and carbon life-cycle emissions over both conventional and unconventional fuels AND that are not produced sustainably.

In order to achieve a wise use of forests within the MCPFE area, but also in order to give consideration to all aspects of the debate – climate change, energy production, biodiversity, socio-environmental services, global relevant aspects.

WWF and Greenpeace are strongly asking to:

- Change the title of the Resolution into “Forests, Climate Change and Energy”
- Guarantee a holistic approach by balancing economic (wood production, bio-fuels, etc.), environmental (species and habitat protection, protected areas, etc.) and socio-environmental values and benefits (climate change mitigation, drinking water, NTFP, etc.) of forests by basing decisions on participatory landscape planning processes such as application of the High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) concept and as proposed by Greenpeace the Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) concept;

² 50% of the GHG Emissions have to be cut by 2050 in order to keep climate change under the critical level of 2°C

- Acknowledge the fact that forests can play an important role in GHG reduction primarily by maintaining carbon stocks; and secondly by producing wood as a nature friendly raw material and as a source for renewable energy;
- Support environmentally and socially produced wood and wood-derived products, credibly certified, as a fully renewable raw material and as an environmentally-friendly substitute for many non-renewable and energy-intensive products in buildings, infra-structural development and consumer products;
- Acknowledge that the danger of climate change and global warming can be faced only through a variety of ambitious measures and policies on a global scale, such as significant improvements in energy efficiency, reduced consumption of energy and a drastic reduction of fossil fuel use through substitution by low-carbon fuels and renewable energies;
- Acknowledge that the uncontrolled trade in bio-energy can lead to further deforestation and degradation of forests in Europe and in particular in other regions of the world and therefore to ensure that imports and domestic production of bio-energy are based on the principles and criteria of SFM and on other existing tools ensuring environmental and social responsibility;
- Promote the adoption of a mandatory GHG certification scheme for all bio-energy and all bio-fuels produced or consumed within the EU;
- Fully take into account the IPCC predictions regarding the impact of climate change on forests and initiate national, multi-stakeholder dialogues, processes and programmes regarding adaptive management.

The potential for increased bio-energy production includes also new forest areas and in particular short rotation coppice. We note, lamentably, that – due to the blocking positions of some countries – the MCPFE has not been able to adopt the well advanced Pan-European guidelines for afforestation and reforestation as drafted in Vienna in May this year.

Stop deforestation – WWF and Greenpeace invite the MCPFE to take more responsibility for the world's forests

Ladies and gentleman, the World is losing 13 million ha of forests annually (FAO 2005), 36 football fields a minute. This has dramatic consequences for nature, for people and societies directly depending on forests (it is estimated that some 1.6 billion people worldwide depend on forests for their livelihoods, with 60 million indigenous people depending on forests for their subsistence) and for the global threat of global warming.

Deforestation, including degradation is responsible for 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions. After burning of oil and coal which each contribute about 22–26% to global greenhouse emissions, this is the third largest global source of climate pollution (IPCC, 4AR, forthcoming).

Without stopping deforestation, in tropical regions particularly, the World and Europe will fail to stop worldwide threat number one: Global Warming.

WWF and Greenpeace ask European countries, as a major importer, consumer and processor of products based on wood or based on processes which lead to major deforestation in other regions of the world, to take effective action to reduce the alarming annual deforestation rates of the world's tropical forests.

Dear Mnisters,

in the spirit of the Vienna Declaration (6)³ and the Warsaw Declaration (in particular 28, 29, 31, 34, 36)⁴, WWF and Greenpeace welcome that you are committed to take more responsibility for the protection and sustainable management of the world's forests, hence we are asking you to be our partners in tackling deforestation by supporting and implementing the following 8 Action Points:

- Developing cross-sectoral national action plans. Acknowledge that forest policy and in particular SFM cannot tackle deforestation alone. Raise awareness within your governments and start dialogues in order to develop cross-sectoral national action plans addressing how to contribute to the global reduced deforestation objective;
- Inclusion of reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) in the post 2012 successor agreement to the Kyoto protocol. Support that your country is recognizing and supporting that reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation are recognized in a way that is transparent, credible, scientifically-sound and appropriately compensated within a post-2012 climate treaty. Engage in international political and financial climate-oriented fora, to promote inclusion of REDD as a recognized, credible and compensated form of emissions reductions. This includes tracking remote sensing capabilities, monitoring and measurement mechanisms, environmental and social safeguards and carbon accounting;
- Emission reduction. Promote and ensure that all your other policies contribute to an overall domestic emissions reduction of total greenhouse gas emissions by your country by at least 30% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050 based on 1990 emission levels (UNFCCC, Annex 1 countries);
- Developing and implementing environmentally and socially responsible purchasing and consumption policies for a) wood and paper products, b) bio-energy and c) food;
- Define responsible lending policies for key industry sectors and support financial institutions that implement them;
- Supporting and developing international funding mechanisms and programmes for sustainable financing of Protected Areas as committed within the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas;
- Promote credible certification schemes, based, as proposed by Greenpeace, in a responsible trading system for a) wood and paper products, b) bio-energy and c) other agricultural commodities such as palm-oil, soy and others;
- Combating illegal logging and related trade. Support the adoption of European legislation, preventing the placement of timber and timber products derived from illegal sources on the EU market, as a mechanism to complement and underpin Voluntary Partnership Agreements and Voluntary Private Sector Schemes. Support actions under the FLEGT Action Plan and

³ Vienna Declaration (6): "we also recognize our role in contributing to the development of forest related commitments at global scale"

⁴ Warsaw Declaration:

"28. further support and cooperate with countries undertaking forest sector reform, particularly those countries with economies in transition to fully incorporate the principles of sustainable forest management in their forest sectors,
29. contribute to the achievement of the Four Global Objectives on Forests as well as the implementation of the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests and the Multi-year Programme of Work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for 2007–2015,
31. support objectives and actions at the Pan-European level that enhance the regional contribution to the achievements of the Four Global Objectives on Forests agreed by the UNFF and other relevant global commitments,
34. contribute to the implementation of the relevant programmes of work of the CBD through effectively implementing the MCPFE commitments,
36. support Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) ministerial processes and enhance collaboration between the MCPFE and the Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (ENA FLEG)."

other initiatives including overseas development aid to producer countries to improve law enforcement and regulatory capacity, develop legal verification systems, reform unworkable laws and improve forest management practices.

Without a strong European will and meaningful actions the World and Europe will fail to stop the dramatic loss of natural forests.

Conclusion

WWF and Greenpeace believe that the MCPFE process has come to a critical stage. Therefore we ask all participating countries:

- What are the critical next steps you will take in order to implement previous commitments on a national level?
- What do you think are critical initiatives for enhancing the cross-sectoral integration of the MCPFE process with other relevant policy fora in order to face the increasing pressure on forests?
- Do you agree with the 8 actions points for stopping deforestation and are you going to implement them?

Excellencies, ladies and gentleman, WWF and Greenpeace will further work on the protection and sustainable use of forests in Europe and abroad, however, we will have to reconsider our future participation in the process. The future direction of the MCPFE will be decisive.

Thank you for your attention.

MAJOR GROUP “SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY”

European Forest Institute (EFI)

International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)

Bioversity International International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)

United Nations University (UNU)

Mr. Risto Päivinen

Director of EFI

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

The Warsaw Declaration states that “effective measures should be taken to improve understanding between policy makers, practitioners and the scientific community in order to better use scientific knowledge and research results relevant to forests and the forest sector as a sound basis for decision making”.

Furthermore, the need for science and specific research activities, namely in relation to bio-energy, existing and potential wood resources and in understanding the forest and water interactions is expressed in the two Warsaw Resolutions.

We, the scientific community of the MCPFE consisting of five institutions, the European Forest Institute (EFI), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), the Bioversity International, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) and the United Nations University (UNU), representing large networks of scientists and experts in Europe as well as on the global level, highly appreciate these clear commitments to research.

At the same time we are fully aware of the fact that the so called ‘science-policy interface’ is not a sharp line but rather a continuous and collaborative process between social values and scientific findings. Therefore, a continuous interaction between scientists and policy makers at all levels is elementary for informed and hence more effective decision making.

A study conducted by EFI in 2006 demonstrates the gap between the issues in policy-making and in research resources allocation. The study concludes that two thirds of MCPFE issues mentioned in the Resolutions of the previous Ministerial Conference in Vienna in 2003, would require socio-economic and policy scientific information, but only 10% of the ongoing research capacities address these issues.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the issues that currently receive most political attention globally is climate change – and scientists have played and still play a crucial role in bringing this topic on the political agenda. The changing climate will also change European forests and the whole forest sector. As stated by the IPCC in its Fourth Assessment Report, alterations in disturbance regimes of forests due to fires and pests can already be observed as an effect of temperature increases.

In the light of this global debate we also see an immediate demand for the MCPFE to act in formulating effective adaptation strategies that reduce current risks and keep future management options open.

In your report 'The State of European Forests', it becomes evident that our knowledge base is limited mainly due to the insufficient indicators addressing impacts of climate change, and more research and monitoring efforts are needed.

Furthermore, multidisciplinary analysis tools should be developed for assessing the impacts of the changing environment on forests, and how forests can adapt to the new situation. Studies on impacts of measures and policies mitigating climate change within the forest sector, but especially socio-economic impacts, and involved potential risks, will play an essential role in creating a scientific knowledge base for decision-makers.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are proud to say that our organisations have started to tackle all of the issues mentioned. To provide a few examples: the impacts of climate change are an important field of research for all five research partners of the MCPFE. Furthermore, Forests and Water Interactions are currently studied by a IUFRO Task Force and the relation of forests and bio-energy is investigated through an EFI-study. We look forward to sharing our findings with you and to strengthen our collaboration in implementing our joint commitments towards research in this Conference.

We would also like to emphasise that the commitments expressed in the Warsaw Declaration will further link the Pan-European work to global commitments. As you are aware, many of the organisations represented in this scientific community also work on the global level. For example, IUFRO as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests is leading an Initiative on Science and Technology that supports the UNFF and other forest-related intergovernmental processes by assessing available scientific information and by producing reports on forest-related issues of high political concern. The first assessment report of the Initiative will address adaptation of forests to climate change, an issue that is clearly emerging also in the Pan-European context.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Looking at the seventeen years of history of the MCPFE we believe that the MCPFE has always benefited from the involvement of the scientific community. However, we also believe that a more systematic integration of research input into this leading forest policy process in Europe would be an advantage for the future development of the MCPFE.

Therefore, we suggest that the MCPFE considers the development of a research agenda related to its future outlook and implementation needs which also leaves room for research on key emerging issues. We further suggest that the available knowledge on policy-relevant issues be periodically reviewed and that gaps between information needs and the allocation of the research efforts could be jointly identified. Such an approach would result in policy-oriented research and a more effective research agenda in support of the MCPFE and, therefore, would effectively implement the commitments made in the Warsaw Declaration.

Through our collaboration, we are ready to contribute to the MCPFE process and its Work Programme, e.g. in terms of facilitating platforms, organising task forces, targeted expert groups,

seminars and conferences aiming at improving informed political decision making and support policy implementation of the MCPFE commitments.

After all, we all share the same goal – the well-being of Europe's society in the future.



STATEMENTS OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

ALBANIA

Mr. Luftër Xhuvel

Minister of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration

Your Excellency Mr. President Kaczynski,
Your Excellency Mr. Riis-Johansen,
Your Excellency Mr. Szyszko,
Dear Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to thank the Ministry of Environment of Poland and Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Norway for organizing of such important event and at the same time I would like to thank the Poland Government for hosting this conference in Warsaw. It is a pleasure for me as the Minister of Environment, Forests and Water Administration of Albania to share with you our standpoint on Sustainable Forest Management and also I would like to express my believe on success and contribution of this conference.

Forests in Albania covers around 36% of the surface of the country and are considered as very important issue. Albanian Government is keen to realize the sustainable management of forests and multifunctional forest resources through a set of reforms and policies envisaging its political objectives. These policies are supported on the principles of international organization and conventions like United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS).

Some of the strategic objectives for the development of the Forest sector in Albania are:

- Sustainable management of the forests
- Continuous conservation
- Rational exploitation
- Evaluation of the Forest ecosystems in conformity with national benefit.

The Forest Sector Development Strategy in Albania is based on the sustainable management of forests and aims its integration with social economic development reforms and reduction of poverty in rural areas. The strategy considers also the significant changes occurred in recent years in Albania and echoes the need for a multifunctional evaluation of forests as source for renewable energies supply, quality of water, mitigation of climate change, wood and biomass production and key element of biodiversity and carbon cycle.

To achieve these objectives a special importance has been given to enhance the forest regulatory legislation and its harmonization with other laws. We are working also to complete the legal framework with laws and regulations for use of private and communal forests as well as moderation of the tax and custom policies for the importation of wood materials. An important part of the legislative reforms consists in approximating our existing legal framework on forests with EU legislation supporting the process country integration and honoring obligations derived from international conventions and agreements.

Albania is working to protect the forests and to achieve their sustainable management through diminishing the forest exploitation combined with rehabilitation and protection of forests and forest land, land protection from the erosion and improvement of the quality and quantity of water resources. The initiative “Pay for forest services” should apply tariffs on protection hydropower watersheds, water resources, erosion control and combating the desertification.

This year, Albania like most of the South European Eastern countries has suffered a difficult situation caused by ravaged fires. Around 5 500 ha has been destroyed and huge surface of forests and pasture land are affected by fires. This situation makes indispensable the increasing of investments for the improvement of the infrastructure that supports tackling with ravage fires as well as need for coordination of the national and regional addressing this destructive phenomena.

The Albanian Government is addressing illegal logging through poverty reduction in rural areas, law enforcement, and acknowledgment of property rights on the forests, their transfer from the state ownership to the communities and strengthening of the control to market of forest productions.

The rural and environmental degradation, poverty and damaging of the water resources is a serious threat for the sustainable development of the forests. The Albanian government is trying to realize its environmental objectives through initiatives that are based on an integrated set of synergies with those of different sectors policies aiming the implementation of the sustainable forest management as a an economic value that guarantee the economic development of the country.

The use of fire wood as the main source of energy for heating in rural areas has increased the pressure over forests affecting seriously the management of this sector. The Albanian Government is aware that the sustainable management of forests is connected with the use of forest biomass as renewable energy recourse. This objective is going to be realized through the process of transferring the forest to the local community and with implementation of other programs aiming this process.

Concluding, I would like to express our gratitude to all the countries that has supported us during the difficult situation created from the ravaged fires. On behalf of the Albanian Government I would like to express my approval for all the documents that are presented in this conference and our full commitment to implement the obligation deriving from them.

Thank you!

AUSTRIA

Mr. Gerhard Mannsberger

Director General of the Forestry Department
Head of the Policy Field Natural Hazards Protection in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management

Mr. Co-Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start out with conveying the best wishes of the Austrian Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Mr. Josef Pröll, who regrets not being able to participate personally in this important event. He asked me to address this conference on his behalf.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests is after the Conference we had the honour to host in Vienna in 2003 the next milestone in European forest policy cooperation. The issues taken up at the Warsaw conference, namely ‘Forests, Wood and Energy’ and ‘Forests and Water’, are well chosen, the documents prepared – the Warsaw Declaration and the 2 Warsaw Resolutions – are ready for signature by the Ministers and the EU Commissioner.

However, we will not be judged by what we say and what we sign up to. We will be judged by what we actually do and what we achieve.

At the first Pan-European Ministerial conference on forests in Strasbourg in 1990, alarming reports on forest damages were in the centre of political concern throughout Europe. The threat of losing forests and the benefits they provide at a rate not heard of before predominated people’s hearts and minds.

Now, seventeen years later the Report of the State of Europe’s Forests, presented to this conference, draws a way better picture:

- The amount of forests is constantly growing both in area and in quantity of wood produced and there is a huge potential of using more of this renewable resource;
- The condition of forests has improved significantly since 1990 and forest management practices promote greater biodiversity.

However, ‘Mission accomplished’ would be the wrong conclusion.

Severe storm damages and vast areas lost each year to wild fires prove that Europe’s forests remain vulnerable and need active protection and responsible management more then ever.

And, we have to do more to utilise our forests to the best of their rich potential, in order to respond to challenges posed by climate change and the increasing demand for bio-energy.

In Austria we have started our home work in this regard:

The Austrian Federal Forest Agency and Research Centre is working on a comprehensive study to analyse the full potential of wood that can be mobilised realistically on a sustainable bases in addition to the amount currently harvested in Austria's forests. We need to better understand the factors supporting or hindering wood mobilisation in order to develop effective strategies for resolving the increasing discrepancy between wood supply and demand.

The Austrian government has decided to establish an agency and inter-ministerial platform for prevention of natural hazards, an issue which is essential for the safety of the population in a country dominated by Alpine terrain on two thirds of its land area. The new agency and inter-ministerial platform will integrate a number of institutions and programs dealing mainly with forest and water issues, in order to provide for better policy coordination and more effective implementation.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The Pan-European forest policy process called MCPFE has been a success story, unmatched throughout the world. To keep it that way we need to look beyond Warsaw and should set strategic priorities for the follow up already now.

In my view the following three areas are of priority nature and should be taken up right after the conference:

- The Pan-European Guidelines for Afforestation and Reforestation in the Context of Climate Change, which we – despite all good efforts – unfortunately failed to get ready for the Warsaw Conference, should be finalised as soon as possible. And they should be strong, give a clear message and make an impact on climate change policies, which are now designed for the post 2012 period.
- The contribution of the Pan-European region to the United Nations Forum on Forests: Its preparation begins at this Ministerial Conference, where we set the priorities for forest policy in the region for the next coming years. It will be a task of the immediate follow up of the Warsaw conference to translate the political commitments into concrete actions and to establish a preparatory process that leads to substantial and coherent messages from this region to the global forum by working together with all relevant partners.

With a view to the developments within the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the upcoming COP9 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in May 2008 in Bonn it will be essential to address the role of forests in the context of climate change and biodiversity.

- The MCPFE review, which we call for in the Warsaw Declaration, is set out to look into all options on how to further strengthen forest policy in the Pan-European region. In my view it should also analyse the potential of a European Convention on Forests. The possible content for such a regional agreement is already there. The MCPFE outcomes of the last seventeen years helped to harmonise the understanding on forest management in Europe. However, the impact this rich source can make on policy and governance depends on the level of commitment. We should try to do more about this.

Mr. Co-Chair,
Dear Colleagues,

We should not forget that innovation rather than routine has been the key of the MCPFE's success – innovation in the sense of having the creativity to find new forms of cooperation and the courage to make changes.

This was the spirit behind the Strasbourg conference in 1990, the first political conference on forests at European scale ever.

This was the spirit behind creating and employing structures and modalities that allowed holding four further political conferences.

This was the spirit behind establishing new formats of political commitments on forests, such as declarations, resolutions, guidelines and ministerial statements.

We should therefore not restrict ourselves to what we have achieved already but push further for even better solutions.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Let me conclude by congratulating you and all the people behind the organisation of this great event.

Let me also stress our confidence in the future Liaison Unit Oslo and the new GCC after Warsaw. We are looking forward to working with you all.

BELARUS

Mr. Piotr Semashko

Minister of Forestry

Вклад Беларуси в Общеввропейский лесной процесс

Г-н Председатель, Ваши Превосходительства, дамы и господа!

От имени Правительства Республики Беларусь я хотел бы выразить нашу искреннюю благодарность организаторам этого высокого форума за приглашение принять в нем участие и щедрое гостеприимство. Во многом символично, что 5-я Министерская конференция по защите лесов Европы проходит в Польше – стране, где заботливо сохраняются и развиваются глубокие традиции рачительного лесопользования.

С каждым годом возрастает значение международного сотрудничества в области лесного хозяйства, роль и авторитет Общеввропейского лесного процесса. Беларусь также вносит свой вклад в реализацию принципов устойчивого управления лесами и лесопользования на континенте.

С учетом резолюций Венской конференции в нашей стране актуализирован Лесной кодекс, реализуется новая Национальная лесная программа. За последние пять лет площадь лесов увеличилась на 40 тыс.га и составила 7,9 млн.га (38% территории страны), запас древесины в лесах возрос на 127,5 млн.куб.м, а ежегодный объем использования древесных ресурсов – почти на 20%. Динамично развивается межсекторальное сотрудничество, лесная сертификация, рекреационное лесопользование, лесной мониторинг. Большое внимание уделяется повышению экономической эффективности использования лесных ресурсов, усилению роли социально-культурных аспектов в лесопользовании, расширению связей с общественностью.

Возрождена традиция проведения общенационального Дня леса. В нынешнем году в нем добровольно участвовали 35 тысяч человек, в том числе свыше 10 тысяч учащихся из более, чем 700 школьных лесничеств. Высажено более 12 миллионов деревьев лесобразующих видов. Начиная с 2008 года, в стране будет ежегодно проводиться Неделя леса.

В целях содействия решению глобальных экологических проблем лесоводы Беларуси участвуют в осуществлении Национальной стратегии и плана действий по сохранению и устойчивому использованию биоразнообразия, выполнении мероприятий по борьбе с опустыниванием, реализации положений Киотского протокола; в охране наиболее ценных лесных и водно-болотных природных комплексов. Более половины лесов (52%) выполняют преимущественно природоохранные функции, площадь особо охраняемых территорий в лесном фонде составляет 1,4 млн.га (16%). Статус Рамсарских территорий получили восемь объектов общей площадью 280 тыс.га. Разрабатывается Программа и план действий по адаптации лесного хозяйства к изменениям климата на период до 2050 года.

После катастрофы на Чернобыльской АЭС наши леса аккумулировали значительную часть радиоактивных осадков, предотвратив их широкое распространение по континенту. Лесоводы решают важные для всей Европы задачи по предотвращению дальнейшей миграции радионуклидов, радиационному контролю за продукцией леса, охране, защите, воспроизводству и реабилитации лесов на загрязненных территориях.

Леса Беларуси находятся на водоразделе Балтийского и Черноморского бассейнов и имеют важное средообразующее и водоохранное значение в регионе. Они играют роль своеобразного естественно-исторического рубежа между восточноевропейскими бореальными лесами и неморальными лесами западноевропейского типа. Благодаря богатому видовому составу аборигенной флоры и фауны, широкому разнообразию лесных сообществ и экосистем они являются уникальной природной лабораторией для изучения эволюции лесного покрова Европы, биоразнообразия, продуктивности и устойчивости лесов, водного и углеродного балансов.

Имея высокий творческий потенциал науки, многолетний опыт организации фундаментальных и прикладных лесных исследований, мы заинтересованы в развитии контактов в этой сфере и приглашаем международные научные центры к сотрудничеству. К числу актуальных проблем, представляющих общий интерес, относится массовое усыхание ели, ясеня и дуба в лесах, борьба с лесными пожарами, болезнями и насекомыми-вредителями леса, минимизация последствий катастрофы на Чернобыльской АЭС. Перспективной представляется также реализация совместных проектов и программ в области подготовки кадров, лесного и экологического просвещения, экотуризма, охотничьего хозяйства, биоэнергетики, связей с общественностью.

Беларусь готова выступить в качестве организатора международной конференции по вопросам практического использования научных разработок в интересах устойчивого лесопользования и лесопользования.

Мы высоко оцениваем конструктивную роль Общеввропейского лесного процесса как одного из ключевых механизмов поддержки и координации осуществления принципов неистощительного ведения лесного хозяйства на национальном, региональном и глобальном уровнях. Содействие выработке на международном уровне согласованных подходов и решений, расширение возможностей обмена опытом, знаниями и технологиями – очень актуальная и благородная миссия.

Представленные проекты Варшавской декларации и двух резолюций служат важным вкладом в осуществление глобальных целей в отношении лесов. Мы разделяем их, так же как и главную задачу международного механизма по лесам – содействие сохранению и рациональному использованию всех видов лесов; отражение важнейшей роли лесов в достижении признанных на международном уровне целей в области развития и укрепление для этого необходимой долгосрочной политической воли.

Уважаемые дамы и господа!

В общественном сознании судьба нашей цивилизации все теснее связывается с судьбой лесного покрова Земли. Можно с уверенностью утверждать, что в нынешнем столетии роль лесов в жизни человечества неизмеримо возрастет. Девиз нашей Конференции «Леса – для качества жизни» очень точно отражает эту глубокую связь и призывает всех заинтересованных к конструктивной совместной деятельности. Выражаем уверенность в том, что решения, принятые в Варшаве, станут важной вехой в многогранной созидательной работе по сохранению и устойчивому управлению лесами, придадут динамику и направленность международному сотрудничеству в области лесного хозяйства.

Благодарю за внимание!

English version

The Contribution of the Republic of Belarus to the Pan-European Process

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Belarus let me first express our sincere gratitude to organizers for inviting to this high-level event and the generous hospitality. It is very symbolic, that the Conference on the Protection of Forest in Europe takes place here in Poland – in the country, where the deep-rooted traditions of rational forest exploitation are cherished and developed.

Every year there are growing in importance the international cooperation in forest sector, role and authority of MCPFE process. Belarus also contributes to the implementation of sustainable forest management on the continent.

On the basis of the Vienna Resolutions we have modified the Forest Code, the new National Forest Program is being realized. During the last five years forest area enlarged by 40 thousand hectares and is 7,9 million hectares (38% of the territory of the country), total timber stock in forests rose by 127,5 mln m³ and annual volume of processing of wood resources – almost by 20%. There are dynamically developing cross-sectoral cooperation, forest certification, recreational forest exploitation, forest monitoring. The attention is paid to cost-effectiveness increase of utilization of forest resources, social and cultural aspects of forest management, widening of public relations.

There was revived the tradition of the national Forest Day. This year 35 thousand volunteers took part in the action, including over 10 thousand pupils from more than 700 school forestries. There were planted over 12 million trees of forest formative species. Since 2008 the Forest Week will be conducted every year in Belarus.

In an effort to promote tackling the global environmental issues forestry specialists of Belarus take part in realization of the National Strategy and the Plan of Actions on preservation and sound use of biodiversity; in activities on combating desertification; in implementation of Kyoto Protocol; in protection of the most valuable forest and wetland ecosystems. More than a half of forests (52%) fulfill mainly environment protective functions, total area of specially protected territories is 1,4 million hectares (16%). Ten objects with total area of 280 thousand hectares have the status of Ramsar sites. The Program and the Plan of Actions on adaptation of forestry to climate change up to 2050 are being elaborated.

After the accident at Chernobyl nuclear power-station our forests accumulated considerable part of radioactive fallout preventing its wide spread on the continent. Forestry specialists solve important for the whole Europe problems such as prevention of further radionuclide migration, radiation control of forest products, forest protection, regeneration and rehabilitation on contaminated territories.

Forests of Belarus are situated at the watershed of the Baltic and the Black sea basins; they are of great environmental and water-regulating importance. They are a kind of natural and historical border between east-European boreal forests and nemoral forests of west-European type. Because of reach species composition of local flora and fauna, wide variety of forest communities and ecosystems they are unique nature laboratory for studying forest cover evolution, biodiversity, forest productivity and sustainability, water and carbonic balances, consequences of the accident at Chernobyl nuclear power-station.

We have constructive scientific potential, long experience in organization of basic and applied forest research, that is why we are interested in developing of contacts in this sphere and invite international research centres to collaboration on issues of joint interest. Among such issues there are the mass drying of spruce, ash, oak, forest fire fighting, forest pest and diseases control, minimization of the consequences of the accident at Chernobyl nuclear power-station. The joint realization of projects and programs on manpower training, on forest and ecological education, ecotourism, hunting management and public relations also seem very promising.

Belarus is ready to organize an international conference on practical use of R&D in the interests of sustainable forest management and exploitation.

We appreciate the constructive role of Pan-European forest process as one of key pillars of promoting and implementation of principles of sustainable forestry on national, regional and global level. Assistance in elaboration of coordinated approaches and decisions on international level, widening of possibilities to exchange experiences, provide knowledge and technologies is a very important and noble mission.

Submitted projects of Warsaw Declaration and 2 Resolutions contribute significantly to the achievement of the global objectives on forests. We welcome them, as well as the main task of the international arrangement on forests – promotion of preservation and sound use of all types of forests; stressing the vital role of forests for achievement of internationally agreed development goals and strengthening of necessary long-term policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Public awareness closely connects the fortune of our civilization with the faith of the Earth's forest cover. One can affirm with certainty, that in this century the role of forests in human being will considerably increase. The motto of our conference "Forest for quality of life" reflects this profound connection precisely and calls all stakeholders to constructive joint action. We express certainty that decisions made in Warsaw will be an important milestone in the many-sided constructive labour on preservation and sustainable forest management, give dynamics and direction to the international cooperation in forestry sector.

Thank you for your attention.

BELGIUM

Mr. Benoît Lutgen

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Affairs, the Environment and Tourism of the Walloon Region

Messieurs les coprésidents, Messieurs les Ministres, Chers collègues, Mesdames, Messieurs,

C'est au nom de la Belgique et de ses trois Régions, la Région wallonne, la Région flamande et la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, et des Ministres responsables des politiques forestières qui y sont menées, que j'ai l'honneur et le plaisir de prendre la parole aujourd'hui.

J'évoquerai ici quelques positions, réalisations ou projets de mon pays, parfois plus spécifiquement de la Région wallonne, dans les domaines liés aux grands thèmes de cette Conférence, et de manière plus globale en matière de gestion durable de nos forêts.

Le développement durable constitue la pierre angulaire de toutes les politiques que nous devons mener en la matière.

En Région wallonne, j'ai proposé une réforme de notre code forestier, lequel date de 1854.

Mon objectif est de renforcer la gestion durable de la forêt en assurant la reconnaissance de son caractère multifonctionnel: économique mais aussi environnemental et social. Le premier article de ce nouveau code forestier reprendra in extenso les critères de gestion durable adoptés lors des conférences d'Helsinki et de Lisbonne.

Des forêts ouvertes et publiques

Nos forêts doivent tout d'abord rester ouvertes au public. C'est une condition sine qua non pour sensibiliser la population à la sauvegarde de la biodiversité. Comment pourrions-nous apprendre à un enfant à protéger ce patrimoine s'il n'a pas l'occasion de goûter aux joies qu'il procure?

Pour qu'elle puisse conserver ce rôle social, encore faut-il préserver la forêt contre toutes les agressions qu'elle subit. Cela passe par une lutte sans merci contre les incivilités ou par une limitation drastique de la circulation d'engins motorisés. Nos forêts n'ont jamais eu et n'auront jamais pour vocation d'être des circuits dédiés aux sports moteurs.

A côté de cette fonction sociale, le rôle économique de nos forêts est indissociable de sa fonction environnementale. J'en viens donc tout naturellement à l'un des thèmes majeurs qui nous occupe, celui de la filière bois-énergie.

Forêts et besoins en bois

Une étude a été récemment menée au niveau européen par Mac Kinsey à la demande des opérateurs européens de pâte à papier. Cette étude évalue la demande européenne de bois à environ 750 millions de mètres cubes en 2020. Actuellement, nos ressources sont évaluées à 540 millions de mètres cubes. Une étude similaire a été menée au niveau de la Région wallonne.

Dans le même temps, nous nous sommes fixés comme objectif, au niveau européen, d'utiliser 20% d'énergie renouvelable à l'horizon 2020 en vue de lutter contre le réchauffement climatique.

Le rôle de la forêt dans le cycle du carbone est loin d'être négligeable. En Région wallonne, on a pu estimer que le stock de carbone dans notre biomasse forestière correspond à plus de 7 fois les émissions régionales annuelles de CO₂. Ce stock s'accroît annuellement, par différence entre l'accroissement de notre forêt et son exploitation. Cela représente environ 3% de nos émissions annuelles.

Plus de la moitié du bois prélevé est transformée en produits ou sous-produits à longue durée de vie, comme la construction ou l'ameublement. Ceci contribue à accroître le stock de carbone immobilisé à long terme. En outre, la transformation de ces produits est moins coûteuse en énergie que celle des matériaux concurrents, ce qui a un effet démultiplicateur sur la diminution des émissions de gaz à effet de serre. Par ailleurs, l'impact socio-économique de ce secteur est intense en emplois et en valeur ajoutée. La promotion d'une utilisation accrue du bois dans la construction s'inscrit dans cette philosophie.

Bois et énergie

La question qui nous occupe peut se résumer à la mesure de l'impact global de telle ou de telle filière en termes de lutte contre le réchauffement climatique, au regard également du développement d'autres sources d'énergie renouvelables comme l'éolien, l'hydraulique ou le photovoltaïque.

A l'échelle d'une région, l'utilisation énergétique du bois doit être encouragée dans la mesure où elle est développée localement, sans transport sur de longues distances, et où elle mobilise des matières qui offrent un meilleur bilan environnemental global.

Au niveau européen, nous devons développer des outils prospectifs qui nous permettent d'identifier les ressources disponibles et de définir clairement nos besoins, tant en ce qui concerne l'utilisation du bois en vue de sa transformation qu'en matière de valorisation énergétique. C'est sur cette base qu'il nous appartiendra de définir collectivement les efforts à accomplir pour atteindre nos objectifs.

En Flandre, le Parlement a récemment adopté une modification de la définition juridique du terme «forêt». Les plantations qui sont réservées à la production de bois, sur base de l'article 3, §2 point 4 du Décret forestier, sont considérées comme des forêts.

Si toutefois il s'agit de plantations, par exemple de peuplier ou de saule, à très courte rotation, de 2 à 5 ans, et réservées à la production d'énergie, ou encore de plantations destinées à la production de fibres pour le papier ou de biomasse, avec une révolution jusqu'à 8 ans, il n'est pas souhaitable de les considérer comme des forêts. Ces plantations sont considérées comme relevant du secteur agricole, où d'ailleurs les méthodes de culture telles que l'arrosage ou la fumure sont courantes.

De cette façon, un signal clair est donné au secteur agricole et aux investisseurs potentiels dans ce type de cultures.

En Région wallonne, une étude relative au développement des taillis à courte rotation vient d'être lancée.

Dès à présent, je plaide pour que nous nous engagions dans des objectifs ambitieux en termes d'accroissement de notre capital «forêts». D'ici 2020, nous devons accroître d'au moins 10% nos ressources nettes en bois.

Forêts et eau

La relation entre forêts et eau est évidente. Ainsi, les directives applicables aux forêts publiques wallonnes ont intégré des mesures de protection des sols et de l'eau.

Plus de 20% des surfaces de nos forêts publiques, dites à vocation prioritaire de protection de l’eau, se voient appliquer des contraintes sylvicoles particulières: limitation ou suppression du drainage ou des coupes à blanc, préférence pour la futaie jardinée et mélangée, choix d’essences et de densité des peuplements adaptés.

Ces mesures ont pour objectifs à la fois de préserver voire d’améliorer la qualité des eaux, et de mieux réguler le cycle de l’eau en écrétant les épisodes de crues ou d’étiage.

En Flandre, dans le cadre de projets de restauration à grande échelle de rivières, on travaille d’une manière intégrée, pour favoriser de façon sûre à la fois les fonctions économiques et écologiques de ces cours d’eau.

Dans certaines zones déterminées, des bassins d’inondation contrôlée sont aménagés, qui offrent des possibilités de développement futur de la nature et de rétablissement des forêts rivulaires naturelles.

Pour ce qui est de la région bruxelloise, la forêt joue un rôle important dans la protection des eaux de surface et souterraines. En ce sens, son maintien et les techniques sylvicoles certifiées sont les meilleures garanties pour assurer cette protection.

Forêts et climat

Durant les prochaines décennies, la forêt sera au centre de nos préoccupations au regard des changements climatiques. Tout d’abord, il importe de préparer nos forêts à s’adapter aux différentes perturbations engendrées par l’augmentation globale des températures, l’alternance de périodes de sécheresse et de pluviosités excessives et la diminution de la pluviosité en période de végétation.

Ensuite, il est largement établi qu’il faut utiliser au maximum la capacité des forêts à stocker du carbone à long terme. Enfin, nos forêts sont susceptibles d’atténuer certains effets des changements climatiques tels l’érosion et la perte de la biodiversité. Par conséquent, je viens de constituer un groupe d’experts scientifiques multidisciplinaire chargé d’une part de faire le point sur ce dossier et d’autre part de proposer un éventail de mesures opérationnelles adaptées à notre situation régionale.

Dans ce cadre, la conservation des forêts et l’accroissement de leurs surfaces constituent des objectifs primordiaux, principalement pour atteindre l’objectif de stopper l’érosion de la biodiversité d’ici 2010.

Forêts et services à la société

Par ailleurs, force est de constater que plus de 50% des services rendus par les forêts le sont gratuitement, grâce à des personnes privées. Ces dernières doivent néanmoins s’acquitter de certaines charges, comme le précompte immobilier ou les droits de succession en Région wallonne. D’où la plantation d’essences dont la rentabilité est assurée à court terme au détriment d’espèces, comme le chêne par exemple, qui arrivent à maturité après 200 ans. D’où la pratique de coupes à blanc qui permettent d’assumer le paiement de droits de succession.

Pour faire face à ces effets pervers, nous devons faire preuve d’un maximum d’inventivité afin de valoriser financièrement ces services qui profitent à l’ensemble de la collectivité. En Région wallonne comme en Flandre, nous nous orientons par exemple vers une exonération des droits de succession.

Messieurs les coprésidents, Messieurs les Ministres, chers collègues, Mesdames, Messieurs,

Les quelques réalisations présentées ici, loin d’être exhaustives, illustrent les efforts accomplis et à accomplir en Région wallonne et en Belgique en termes de développement durable.

L’apport du processus paneuropéen nous semble essentiel.

Il a constamment nourri la réflexion en matière de politique, permis des échanges d’expériences dans de nombreux domaines et a largement contribué à l’élaboration de méthodes d’évaluation et d’outils de gestion. C’est pourquoi le processus paneuropéen doit être amplifié, ce qui justifie pleinement la raison d’être de cette conférence.

English version

Distinguished Co-Chairs, Ministers, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour and pleasure of taking the floor here today on behalf of Belgium and its three regions – the Walloon Region, Flemish Region, and Brussels-Capital Region – and the ministers who are in charge of their forest policies.

I shall thus take this opportunity to run through some of the positions, achievements, and plans of my country as a whole, sometimes more specifically in the Walloon Region, in the areas that are linked to the major topics of this conference and, more generally speaking, to the sustainable management of our forests.

Sustainable development is the cornerstone of all the policies that we must carry out with regard to our forests.

For the Walloon Region, I have proposed a reform of our Forest Code, which dates back to 1854.

My objective is to reinforce the sustainable management of our forests by guaranteeing the recognition of their multiple functions, which are environmental and social as well as economic. The first article of this new Forest Code will include, in full, the sustainable forest management criteria that were adopted at the Helsinki and Lisbon conferences.

Forests that are open to the public

Our forests must above all remain open to the public. This is *a sine qua non* for raising public awareness of the need to safeguard biodiversity. How can we teach children to protect this patrimony if they have no opportunity to taste the pleasures that it procures?

If the forest is to conserve this social role, it must be protected from all the attacks to which it is exposed. This means fighting mercilessly against incivilities and drastically limiting the circulation of motor vehicles. Our forests’ calling has never been and will never be that of racetracks devoted to motor sports.

Besides this social function, our forests’ economic role is indissociable from their environmental functions. This naturally brings me to one of the major topics at hand, that of the energy wood industry.

Forests and need for Timber

Europe's paper pulpmill operators recently commissioned a Europe-wide study of the wood sector by MacKinsey. This study set Europe's demand for timber at some 750 million cubic metres in 2020. Today, our resources total some 540 million cubic metres. A similar study has been conducted for the Walloon Region.

At the same time, Europe has set itself the target of generating 20 percent of its power from renewables by 2020 in order to combat global warming.

The forest's role in the carbon cycle is far from insignificant. In the Walloon Region, for example, the carbon stores in our forest biomass are estimated to total more than seven times the region's annual carbon dioxide emissions. This stock is rising annually due to the difference between the increment in our forest and the rate at which it is logged. This difference is currently equivalent to about 3 percent of our annual carbon emissions.

More than half of the timber that is logged is turned into products or by-products with long life cycle, such as buildings and furniture. This helps to increase the carbon stocks that are immobilised for a long time. What is more, processing these products requires less energy than competing materials, thereby further decreasing our greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, this sector has major socio-economic impacts on employment and value added. Promoting the use of wood in construction is thus in line with this philosophy.

Wood and Energy

The issue that concerns us can be summed up as measuring the overall impact of a given sector of activity on combating global warming, in conjunction as well with the development of other renewable energy sources such as wind power, waterpower, and photovoltaic cells.

The use of timber as an energy source must be encouraged on the regional scale, to the extent that it is developed locally, without long-distance transport, and uses materials that offer a better overall environmental balance sheet.

For Europe as a whole we must develop forecasting tools that enable us to identify available resources and determine our needs clearly. This concerns both the use of wood for processing as well as for energy. We must work together to determine the efforts that we must make to achieve our objectives on the basis of such givens.

The Flemish Regional Parliament recently adopted a modification of the legal definition of the term "forest". According to Article 3.2.4 in the Flemish Forest Decree, plantations that are reserved for timber production are considered to be forests.

If, however, they are plantations of, say, poplars or willows with very short rotations of from two to five years and reserved for energy production or plantations intended for the production of wood fibres for paper or biomass with a cycle of up to 8 years, they should not be considered as forests. Such plantations are considered to belong to the agricultural sector where, moreover, cropping methods such as watering and fertilising are common.

In this way, Flanders's lawmakers have given the agricultural sector and potential investors in this type of crop a clear signal.

A study of the development of short-rotation coppices has just been launched in the Walloon Region.

Let me plead here and now for us to commit ourselves to ambitious objectives in increasing our forest capital. Between now and 2020 we must increase our net timber resources by at least 10 percent.

Forests and Water

The relationship between forests and water is obvious. So, the directives that apply to Wallonia's public forests have incorporated soil and water protection measures.

Special silvicultural constraints apply to more than 20 percent of our public forestland as "priority water protection areas". These constraints include limiting or eliminating drainage or clear cutting, preferring mixed selection high forests, and choosing appropriate species and tree stand densities. The aims of these measures are both to preserve, even improve, water quality, and to better regulate the water cycle by mitigating episodes of high and low water.

In Flanders, integrated work is being done within large-scale river restoration projects to guarantee that these watercourses' economic and ecological functions are promoted.

In some specific areas, controlled flood basins are being set up so as to offer possibilities for the future development of wildlife and re-establishment of their natural riparian forests.

Concerning the Brussels Region, the forest plays an important role in surface and groundwater protection. That being so, maintaining the forest and using certified forestry practices are the best guarantees of such protection.

Forests and Climate

The forest will be at the centre of our concerns regarding climate change for the next decades. First of all, it is important to prepare our forests to adapt to the various stresses that will be spawned by the rise in the mean temperatures, alternation of excessive periods of drought and rain, and decreased rainfall during the vegetative growing season.

Next, it is widely established that our forests' abilities to serve as long-term carbon sinks must be exploited maximally. Finally, our forests are likely to be able to attenuate some effects of climate change, such as erosion and the loss of biodiversity. Consequently, I have just set up a multidisciplinary group of scientific experts tasked with first taking stock of the situation and then proposing a range of operational measures adapted to our regional situation.

Conserving our forests and increasing their areas are the main objectives of such a work, chiefly in order to achieve the target of stopping the erosion of biodiversity by 2010.

Forests and Services for Society

On another front, we are forced to acknowledge that more than 50 percent of the services that our forests provide are provided free of charge, through the actions of private individuals. The latter must nevertheless pay certain fees and costs, such as property and inheritance taxes in the Walloon Region. Hence the planting of species that yield short-term profits to the detriment of species such as the oak, for example, that reach maturity after 200 years, and the practice of clear cutting to pay inheritance taxes.

To cope with these perverse effects of fiscal policies, we must be highly inventive in order to attach a financial value to these services, which benefit the population as a whole. In Wallonia as well as in Flanders we are heading towards waiving inheritance taxes, for example.

Co-Chairs, Ministers, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The few achievements that I have just outlined, although far from an exhaustive list, illustrate the efforts that the Walloon Region in particular and Belgium as a whole have made and have yet to make concerning sustainable development.

In our view, the inputs of the Pan-European process in this area are essential.

They have provided a steady stream of thought for policy development, allowed exchanges of experiences in many areas, and contributed greatly to the development of evaluation methods and management tools. That is why the Pan-European process must be stepped up. This fully justifies this conference's reason for being.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Statement on behalf of Mr. Slobodan Puhalc

Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I appreciate this opportunity to submit a written statement and I greatly regret that I could not be with you in person. I congratulate the governments of Poland and Norway on their great effort and outstanding organization of this Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

I would briefly like to state several facts about forests and forestry in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

Forests cover 2.5 million ha or approximately 50% of total BiH territory, with Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republic of Srpska (RS) having approximately the same share in the total forest area. It was estimated to contribute some 4% to GDP in 2004 and 2005, with gross output valued at 315 million € in 2004 and 339 million € in 2005. Per capita 0.74 ha of forest are available putting BiH on the sixth place in Europe in terms of forest availability.

The geology, wide range of altitudes and BiH's position between European and Mediterranean climate systems together with the existing microclimates and soil types has created a rich mosaic of biodiversity. Large areas of the otherwise in Europe almost eradicated virgin forest are situated in BiH. Such beautiful, rich forest can be the basis for the development of different types of rural, educational and alternative tourism.

Forestry is a very important sector of BiH's economy not only with view to the future potential of the forests as a tourist destination but more importantly in the field of wood and wood products production. The highest increase rate of production (2005/04) is recorded by other wood products and carpentry which indicates that product assortments are changing towards the production of value added products. The production of semi-processed wood products decreased on the other hand in 2006. The total growing stock volume of wood was 307 million m³ (more than 50% of it is broad leaf forest) in 2006. The annual gross increment was 7.9 million m³ and the actual volume harvested 7.2 million m³.

Eighty percent of forest lands in BiH are state-owned, covering 2.1 million hectares. FBiH reports an additional 0.3 million hectares of forest land under private ownership, half of which is classified as low (coppiced) forest. There are no readily available figures for private forest land in RS.

Statistics about growth, standing biomass/volume, annual allowable cut estimates and the like are very suspect due to the lack of an updated, reliable forest inventory. The first national-level inventory was conducted over 35 years ago. An implementation of the second state inventory of forests in BiH is under way and it is expected to be finished by the first half of the year 2010. This will be a basis for creating a forest policy.

In broad terms the standing volume of timber is estimated at more than 300 million m³, with annual growth probably in the neighborhood of 10 million m³. The rate of annual tree volume removals from BiH forest lands range from 4 to 7 million m³; the officially reported figure for harvested materials from state-owned lands in 2003 was 4.5 million m³. Illegal removal of forest biomass is

a problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of this is probably in the form of logs that move across the borders to Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia where higher prices for the raw materials are paid. One recent estimate places the illegal volume of removals as between 0.3 and 2.2 percent of the legal timber supply with an estimated value of € 8.3 to 16.6 million.

Overall responsibility for forestry in the FBiH is with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry (MAWF), and in the RS with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources (MAFW). Within each of the two ministries a forestry department is headed by an Assistant Minister. The owner of the forestry and forest lands is the FBiH and users of rights are the 10 cantonal forest companies; in the RS, the owner is Republic Srpska and the public company Srpske Šume has the right on usage.

The Sector for Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Rural Development in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations is responsible, at the state level, for coordination and harmonization of activities in the area of forestry.

The Warsaw declaration, two resolutions and the ministerial statements from this conference are the first documents within the MCPFE that BiH will sign. We are aware of the importance and significance of this political initiative and it is our great pleasure to become involved in this process which is active for full seventeen years.

I strongly believe that the cooperation between the Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe will strengthen in the years to come.

BULGARIA

Mr. Stefan Yurukov

Chairman of the State Forestry Agency

Dear Co-Chairmen, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to express gratitude to the Governments of Poland and Norway for the excellent organization of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

For us it is a great honor to be part of the Pan-European society that has prioritized the role of forests and their sustainable management, oriented towards improvement of the quality of human life.

This long-lived process of partnership for the benefit of forest protection gave its input for the development of other international processes too. Number of workshops, studies and meetings were held in its framework, and all of them contributed to the development of the co-operation in different aspects of the forestry, not only on a regional, but on a global scale. Even with indirect participation in these, Bulgaria followed very carefully all recommendations and guidelines. For Bulgaria it is important the work in this direction to continue. We are proud with our accession to the European Union, which brings us even closer and makes us to better understand the forest management problems on a European level. We consider that although different, all countries members of the MCPFE have the same goals and objectives related to sustainable forest management, that has its economical, social and ecological features, and mostly, balance of these.

Balance for the benefit of the society and of the forests that play a vital role for the water conditions. In this regard, Bulgaria welcomes the Ministerial Declaration and Resolution 2 “Forests and Water”, considering very important this aspect of the forest management to be addressed. The water is a basic condition for the existence of life in the water basins and on the land. And we, as responsible persons on a national level have to protect together the blue and green wealth of this planet.

At this Conference and in the spirit of Resolution 1 “Forests, wood and energy”, during the following years there will be also joint efforts for promotion the wood as a renewable energy resource, and for searching of innovative methods and technologies to satisfy the demand of energy, which use and production not to affect negatively the environment.

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe is an excellent model for transborder regional co-operation and a tool for understanding, linkage and development of international, regional and national forest policy processes.

We believe that the future work within the process will be as successful as ever, and will continue to attract the attention of the society, as well as to support the protection and sustainable management of our forests.

Last but not least, I would like to express gratitude to the team of the Liason Unit Warsaw, who did their best for the process through the last four years.

Thank you for your attention!

CROATIA

Mr. Herman Susnik

State Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Mister Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentleman,

First of all, I would like to thank the Ministry of Environment of Poland and to congratulate Warsaw MCFPE Liaison Unit on a very appropriate hosting and managing this Pan-European Forest protection process. Our Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry was participating in the process from its very beginning; from first conference held in Strasbourg in 1990., till Vienna, at 2003. Now, on this important Warsaw Summit, we believe that the process will continue to help the better future of our European Forestry.

Dear Colleagues,

Right here, we have a historical chance, once again, point to our European society that European forests and European forestry are not just a producer of raw wood and raw non-wood material, but they are much more the environment service producer and significant contributor to our society's quality of life.

Mister Chairman,

Being a state secretary of a ministry of a country which has a long standing forestry tradition of nearly 250 years, let me share with you our national standpoint. Thanks to its specific history, climate and geomorphology, Croatia has a great biological diversity concentrated on a relatively small territory. On only 2.7 million hectares, that makes 48% of the total surface area of Croatia, there are 260 indigenous wood species. Croatia has more than 95% of forests of natural structure, regenerated by natural seed spreading. Taking no regard of numerous difficulties caused by harmful emissions and global climate change, we are trying to insist on natural regeneration and natural structure of our forests. Because of intensive urbanization and decrease in cultivation of agricultural lands, we have noticed a widespread process of natural succession of vegetation occurring on that land. We favor such process to artificial plantation establishment, wherever it is possible. We learnt that such process is a very slow one, but also we learnt that it is a very sustainable and very natural process. But what happened now? We became aware of rapid climate change and Croatia ratified Kyoto protocol in this year. Croatian Foresters are not satisfied how Kyoto protocol treats permanent increase of forest growing stock because, only 5% of it is allowed to be calculated for CO₂ sequestration. In case that on another side, new afforested, non-natural tree plantations are allowed to be fully calculated, we are forced to change our land use policy and start thinking of the new innovative forest afforestation programme.

Distinguished Delegates,

We have managed to apply the principles of sustainable forest management, and at the same time incorporating tradition into our forestry. Croatia has confirmed its commitment to sustainable management of all our forests, time and time again, by signing and ratifying number of international agreements related to forests. Because my country, on 5th UNFF session, has initiated 2011th year to be the International Year on Forests, my delegation firmly support, suggested on this summit, the "Pan-European Forest Week 2008". We are looking forward yes indeed, but we believe that, for the full success of the Pan-European 2008 forest campaign we need to integrate in it the UN agreed 2011th Year of Forests, also.

Thank you Mister Chairman.

CYPRUS

Mr. Alexandros Christodoulou

Chief Conservator of Forests Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources

on behalf of

Mr. Photis Photiou

Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment

Thank you Mr. Chairman once again and I would like to congratulate you for the excellent organization of this Conference and for your hospitality.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to address this Conference on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture Natural Resources and Environment, of the Republic of Cyprus, who regrets very much for not being here himself, due to reasons beyond his will.

The Vienna Declaration begins with the statement that “The forests are a basis of life on Earth” and that “By sustaining forests we sustain life. In this Conference, we shall go a step further because we shall give emphasis to the role of forest in sustaining, improving and benefiting the Quality of Life.

The Warsaw Conference will stress all major contemporary global issues relating to forests, issues which influence the life of people in Europe and all over the world. Forests can contribute in multiple and significant ways to the very important issues of climate change mitigation, sustainable energy supply and the protection of water resources, for the general benefit of humanity.

During the 4th Ministerial Conference in Vienna, Cyprus endorsed all Resolutions of MCPFE Conferences and declared its dedication to the promotion of Sustainable Forest Management in the island.

To fulfill this objective, the Department of Forests of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment of the Republic of Cyprus has prepared and is currently implementing a National Forest Programme. In addition, a set of Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management has been formulated and adopted, based on the Pan-European Guidelines for Criteria and Indicators.

Furthermore, on behalf of the Cyprus Government, which recognizes the negative consequences of changing climatic conditions, the energy problem in general and the scarcity and quality of water, I wish to assure you that we will do our utmost for the sustainability of forest resources, which play a crucial role in the mitigation of these problems and the improvement of the quality of life.

As you know forest fires are creating several and difficult environmental, economical and social problems in the whole Mediterranean area, including Cyprus and other European countries. Therefore I am very grateful for the endorsement of the Ministerial Statement regarding forest fires. We believe that these problems can only be faced successfully, if our countries cooperate closely, and proceed, if possible, with a regional or international agreement for the suppression of forest fires.

In this direction, my government is ready to endorse the content of the Ministerial Declaration of the Warsaw Conference, the Resolution on “Forest, Wood and Energy”, the Resolution on “Forests and Water”, the Ministerial Statement on the Pan-European Forest Week 2008 and the Ministerial Statement on Forest Fires.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Mr. Karel Tureček

Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture

Ladies and Gentleman,

First I would like to express my thanks to the organizers of this conference for the invitation to this important meeting and for all the effort devoted to its preparation.

As for the topic of first resolution of our conference, I would like to stress that we consider using the biomass as a renewable energy source to be of great importance, even though this represents only a small proportion in the total energy balance or on in renewable resources the Czech Republic. The Czech Ministry of Agriculture is about to finish the Biomass Action Plan that comprises also the status assessment and proposals for supporting the use of forest biomass as a renewable energy source for the period from 2008 to 2010. The support of use of forest biomass is also stipulated by the National Forest Program for the period from 2007 to 2013.

The following three aspects are considered to be important for the use of forest biomass:

- implementing an other commodity originating from production in course of the forest land management that has not yet been officially traded; this will result in higher diversification of forest owners' income and in strengthening their economic level,
- meeting relevant obligations toward the EU and the targets of programs of the National Energy Concept considering the use of renewable energy sources,
- contribution to the worldwide carbon balance.

The annual potential volume of forest biomass for energetic purposes is estimated to amount to 2 million m³. We would like to stress that our qualified estimates of the annual potential volume of forest biomass available for energetic purposes calculate only with the biomass produced by the category of commercial forests, and even though this category is further reduced by the area of nutrient poor sites, i.e. the estimates relate only to approx. 63% of the forest land in the Czech Republic. At the same time we require that after the harvesting activities minimum of 20% of the forest biomass remain on the stands. We consider this to be a reasonable compromise concerning the use of the forest biomass, a compromise that respects ecological, economic and social demands of the society.

In the future – on contrary to the present situation – we would like the comprehensive program of use of forest biomass to be more oriented towards the forest owners and we would like to enforce an equal support within the electricity and heat production. The adopted measures should result in a decrease of the exports of this commodity and in an increase in the domestic use.

As for the second main topic of our meeting, it can be concluded that water, the most common substance on the Earth, is absolutely essential for the life, and therefore also for the forests. And vice versa, the sustainable forest management plays a key role in the water resources management. Albeit the Czech Republic is not a country with numerous mountains, they still play an essential role in its hydrological cycle. Generally, multiple functions of forests situated in the mountains

comprise such functions as conservation of biodiversity, protection against natural risks such as avalanches, land slides, erosion, and last but not least the influence on the climate. Our mountains form a barrier for the moving air mass, and they are the sites with higher precipitation. Declaring more mountain regions as Protected Areas of Natural Water Accumulation will underline their importance in water management in our country.

We consider the integrated approach to the issue of forests and water to be extremely significant, an approach that emphasizes the fact that the care for forests and water and controlling their reasonable management cannot be left only with foresters and water managers, but it is vital for this issue to be subject of serious interest of other entities, including politicians, local and national administration. The experience with disastrous floods over the past years shows that it will be necessary to learn again how to provide for landscape and how to respect the natural laws and events, which include also the floods.

We consider it very important that the issue of forests and water became the subject of this conference. Therefore, we would like to declare that the updated national forest program for the Czech Republic shall fully reflect the commitments arising from the Forests and Water resolution that are summarized concisely in the Declaration, mainly in the following wordings:

„ensure that forests and their sustainable management play an active role in maintaining and enhancing water quality and quantity and in mitigating natural hazards, such as floods, droughts, avalanches, land slides as well as in combating soil erosion and desertification “(Article 14 of the Declaration),

„establish coherence between policies on forest and water resources and coordinate sustainable forest management and integrated water resources management “(Article 20 of the Declaration),

„develop and implement innovative tools for securing water-related services provided by forests, such as payments for ecosystem services or other measures “(Article 21 of the Declaration).

Finally, I would like to express the hope that documents adopted by the Ministerial Conference will contribute to further development of functions that forests and the forestry activities provide for the human society, and I would like to wish our meeting to be successful in every respect.

DENMARK

Mr. J. C. Briand Petersen

Forest Supervisor
Chief Consultant
Danish Forest and Nature Agency

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

As you may know the Danish Government has called for an election the 13th this month.

The Danish Minister of Environment Mrs Conny Hedegaard could therefore not attend the conference, and because of the coming election the Danish Government according to the usual practice renounce political attitudes and manifestations. Denmark is therefore not at the moment in a position to sign the documents of this conference.

As soon as a new government is formed, the papers of the conference will be forwarded for political reconsideration.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen thank you for listening.

ESTONIA

Ms. Rita Annus

Deputy Minister
Ministry of Environment

Your Excellencies, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin with greetings to the Conference from Mr. Jaanus Tamkivi, the Estonian Minister of Environment. Unfortunately, he was not able to participate due to the overlapping of important meetings.

Allow me also to thank the organisers of the Conference for excellent preparations and arrangements of this conference.

Coming to the topic of the conference, I would like to mention that covering more than a half of the territory of Estonia, about 2.2 million hectares, forests constitute an extremely important and integral part of our environment, economy, culture, traditions and history.

In Estonia, we have long traditions of sustainable and complex management of forests and forest management planning. Only by balancing ecological, economical and social interests in forests we can come to an agreement in the society on mutually acceptable principles. Today, sustainability has become a concern of big interest groups in the society.

Estonia adopted the Act on Sustainable Development already in 1995. National agreement on the implementation of principles of sustainable development in forest management was reached in 1997 when the Parliament approved the Estonian Forest Policy. A Forestry Development Plan until 2010 implementing the Forest Policy was adopted by the Government of the Republic in 2002.

Currently, we are drafting amendments to the Forest Act, as well as developing a strategic framework for the new Forestry Development Programme for the next 10 year period. Starting from this early stage all the interest groups are invited to participate in these processes in order to determine the main directions of the forestry development goals and strategy for the next period.

In addition to drafting and implementing of the legal/regulatory instruments, serious work on developing different information tools has been done to monitor and evaluate sustainable forest management. Based on information collected during the inventories for forest management planning, the national GIS based information system of forest resources – a National Register of Forest Resources has been established. The Pan-European criteria and indicators have been used for the development of this system.

In 2001 also a network of permanent sample plots for the National Forest Inventory was established and forest resource assessment based on NFI was started providing already now a lot of information for forestry related strategic planning.

After the completion of the privatisation process based on restitution, private forests comprise more than half of the total forest area. State funded forest management planning, different extension services and training courses for private forest owners and demonstration areas are focusing on new opportunities and techniques for the production of goods and services from private, sustainably managed forests.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe, the declaration and resolutions submitted to the Conference express the Pan-European agreement on the principles of sustainable forest management, reflect the topics relevant today and deal with them in a well balanced way.

To a great extent the main topics of this Conference are of priority for forestry also in Estonia. To increase the visibility of the forest sector in cross-sectoral discussions and thereby on energy, and to strengthen the position of wood in energy, are extremely important also for us.

I hope the Fifth Pan-European Ministerial Conference will give an impetus for in further progress in sustainable forest management in Europe.

The Pan-European process has always been based on open negotiations and provides an example of good cooperation. We have much to share and to learn from each other. I would like to thank everyone who has participated in the negotiations for drafting the declaration and resolutions we are going to discuss and approve here.

Thank you for your attention.



EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Ms. Hilikka Summa

Head of Unit "Bioenergy, biomass, forestry and climate change"
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

on behalf of

Ms. Mariann Fischer Boel

Member of the European Commission

Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to address you in the historical city of Warsaw at this Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Let me first express my congratulations to Poland and Norway for the excellent job they have done in preparing this Ministerial Conference.

Through this regional process over the last 17 years the European countries and the European Community have developed a very fruitful cooperation. The Ministerial Declarations and Resolutions signed in the four previous conferences provide a coherent policy framework for the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe.

This Ministerial Conference is another important milestone. The Warsaw Declaration and Resolutions reflect very well the challenges that the European forest sector is currently facing. It rightly underlines the important contribution that the forest sector can make to the achievement of major objectives, such as climate change mitigation, energy supply and protection of water resources. Key to this is the cross-sectoral nature of forestry and further fostering of the coherence and interlinkages with policies that influence or are influenced by forestry.

In a European Union of 27 Member States, forests and other wooded land account for more than 40% of the land area, providing a source of income for millions of forest owners, workers and entrepreneurs, and contributing significantly to economic development, employment and prosperity, especially in rural areas.

Forests are also important for the fulfilment of the EU's environmental objectives and related international commitments, particularly with regard to preserving biodiversity, mitigating climate change, preserving water resources and combating erosion and desertification. Forests contribute to our quality of life and the social and cultural dimensions of forests are increasingly appreciated by our society.

The European Community has adopted last year a Forest Action Plan 2007–2011. Building on the EU Forestry Strategy, this Plan lists key actions to be implemented jointly by the Commission and the Member States. The overall objectives of the Action Plan are to:

- improve long-term competitiveness,
- improve and protect the environment,
- contribute to the quality of life, and
- foster coordination and communication.



The Action Plan seeks synergies with other Community policies, in particular concerning rural development, industry, research, climate change, energy, biodiversity and the EU's initiative on Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT).

Dealing with climate change and assuring security of energy supply are among the key challenges that Europe needs to address in the coming decades. It is crucial not only to avoid dangerous climate change impacts, but also to safeguard our prosperity and competitiveness in a future low carbon economy. The EU has decided on an integrated energy and climate policy, aiming at a 20% objective of energy savings, a 20% share of renewable energy by 2020 and at least 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2020. In this context, we need to make the best use of the contribution of forests and forest products in the mitigation of climate change and to promote the adaptation of forests to a changing climate.

We also need to enhance international cooperation in order to help reduce GHG emissions resulting from deforestation, particularly in poor developing countries which are most vulnerable to climate change, by promoting forest protection, while preserving livelihoods and ecosystems depending on forests.

Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The European Community is fully committed to the efforts for the protection and sustainable management of forests. We welcome the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests and the Multi-Year Programme of Work adopted at the 7th Session of the UN Forum of Forests. We also look forward to strengthening cooperation between global and regional processes, as well as to continuing our efforts to promote good governance and forest law enforcement to combat illegal logging and related trade of forest products. Within the European Community, we are promoting the use of wood from legal and sustainable sources, in particular through the development of public procurement policies for forest products.

All these aspects are well reflected in the Warsaw Declaration.

The Warsaw Resolution on wood and energy rightly points out the potential of forests in climate change mitigation, in enhancing energy security and in providing job opportunities in rural areas. Within the EU Forest Action Plan, we are working on further development of the use of forest biomass in energy generation, in line with the EU policy on renewable energy. Increased energy use of forest biomass needs to be based on the principles of sustainable forest management, with particular attention to appropriate mobilisation of forest resources as well as to raw material needs of forest-based industries. Increasing research and technological development efforts in this area will be crucial in the long term. The Warsaw Resolution on Forest, Wood and Energy proposes a coherent framework of actions in this area

The European Community also notes with satisfaction that an important number of elements of its existing policies on water are reflected in the Warsaw Resolution on Forests and Water. We particularly appreciate the attention given to water quality and quantity, the valuation of water as a forest ecosystem service as well as the importance of the watershed perspective in forest management, including at the transboundary level.

Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

communicating with the civil society about the benefits of sustainable forest management is very important. Therefore, the organisation of a Pan-European Forest Week next year is a step in the right direction. We believe that giving forests and the forest sector their much needed visibility and raising awareness about their important economic, environmental and social functions will require continued and enhanced efforts.

Finally, I want to mention that we are fully aware and deeply concerned about the problem of forest fires and their catastrophic effects. We acknowledge the urgent need for efficient protection measures and reaction capabilities at all levels.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I want to express my strong belief that this Fifth Ministerial Conference is an important step forward in the forest policy dialogue in Europe. I believe that the future MCPFE work programme will enable forests and forestry to continue their contribution to tackling the emerging issues that challenge our societies.

Thank you for your attention.

FINLAND

Ms. Sirkka-Liisa Anttila

Minister of Agriculture and Forestry

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honour to be here today with you all, distinguished representatives from Europe and all over the world.

Ministerial Conferences as an important contributor to sustainable forest management

These Ministerial Conferences have been a remarkable success in expressing the feelings and desires of European citizens to take good care of our forests. And what is even more important, these feelings have been translated into actions: In all European countries forest policies have been transformed to reflect new values of sustainable forest management.

It has become a tradition that the Ministerial Conferences and their follow-up work have two roles. On the one hand, we translate the global forest commitments into Pan-European action. An example is the regional contribution to the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests. On the other hand, the Ministerial Conferences provide a forum to advance and secure the state of European forests by looking at specific European challenges. One example is the European discussion on the need to increase the use of bioenergy and to better recognise the interlinkages between water and forests. However, in the future we need to strengthen our European collaboration and coordination on forest-related issues.

Consumption of wood based energy

Warsaw Resolution 1 – Forests, Wood and Energy, is of utmost importance. Let me give you some background information from Finland. The use of bioenergy has grown steadily in Finland. In 2006 the share of wood-based energy of our total energy consumption was about 20 per cent. In Finland, the largest producer of wood-based energy are the forest industries.

Wood-based energy, together with other sources of bioenergy, has a significant role in the economies of rural areas in Finland as they provide opportunities for employment. This is very important for us, because we are constantly looking for possibilities for the diversification of economic activities in the rural areas. Wood-based energy will also have an increasingly important role in mitigating climate change in the future.

However, there are certain challenges in regard to the increased use of wood-based energy. One challenge is to steer the development towards a controlled balance between energy and industrial wood uses. We believe that the forest resources potential in Europe provides a good basis for both industrial and energy use. Another very important issue is the further improvement of the knowledge base needed to better design the policies targeted at increased consumption of wood-based energy. This requires innovation, research and development. More research is also needed on the effects of increased use of forest energy on the development of forests as well as the environmental impacts, including nutrition balance and biodiversity. Our suggestion is that in the future we work together to improve the consistency and compatibility of information and data on wood-based energy and other bioenergy, including the statistics, on both the supply and demand side.

Sustainable forest management at the global level

The UNFF 7 – meeting in New York last April was very successful. The negotiators were able to come home with an agreement on a non-legally binding instrument as well as with a new programme of work for the UNFF for 2015. We would like to acknowledge, once more, this significant achievement in the area of international forest cooperation, and we look forward to deliberations at the UN General Assembly. We have a lot of work ahead of us between now and 2015, when we will decide how to continue with global forest cooperation.

The Warsaw declaration, which will be signed in this Conference, gives us excellent guidelines on how to start implementing the results of the UNFF at the European level. We have to take concrete steps in the near future to promote the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on forests.

As we all know, we are discovering more and more interdependencies between the different factors in nature and in economics. Environmental agreements are an example of these interdependencies, and it is very important that we recognise these links and especially the synergies between different environmental processes and agreements such as the UNFF, Framework Convention on Climate Change and Convention on Biological Diversity. In this connection we would like to express the willingness of Finland to organize a Pan-European meeting on forests in the changing environment in 2008, as a regional contribution to the UNFF.

Future of MCPFE

The success of the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection on Forests in Europe is based on the courage to address challenging and sometimes difficult topics. Examples of these are the threat of air pollution, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, and the European definition of sustainable forest management. Here, I would like to take the opportunity to highlight the work we have carried out in Finland. We have just finalised the assessment of the “State of Finland’s Forests 2007” based on the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for sustainable forest management.

We feel that, in addition to courage, another important contributor to the success of the MCPFE process is the wide participation of stakeholders and institutions as well as the cross-sectoral cooperation. We emphasise the need to continue to work together, also in the future, with the European Ministers for the Environment.

We are most satisfied that we introduced in this Conference the issues related to water and forest. We hope that the MCPFE process will continue along these same lines in the future as well. We also need to address the new challenges jointly, such as strengthening the risk assessment and monitoring of pests and diseases due to the changing climate.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a conclusion, I want to express my strong belief that this Conference in Warsaw is an important step forward in the forest dialogue in Europe and in the whole world. I want to thank sincerely our Polish hosts, the secretariat and all of you for preparing and organising the Fifth Ministerial Conference in such an exemplary fashion. And we will be prepared to give our support to Norway in their demanding tasks in the future.

Thank you very much for your attention.

FRANCE

Mr. Alain Moulinier

Director General for Forests and Rural Affairs
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Monsieur le Président, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Chers Collègues,

A mon tour, je souhaiterais affirmer combien la France se réjouit de participer aux travaux de cette cinquième conférence ministérielle, ici à Varsovie. Je dois malheureusement vous présenter les excuses de Michel Barnier, ministre de l’agriculture et de la pêche, qui est retenu à Budapest pour une importante réunion avec le premier ministre hongrois.

Vous savez qu’avec la Finlande, la France a été à l’initiative de ce processus en 1989 et que la première conférence ministérielle a eu lieu en 1990 à Strasbourg. Le contexte politique et économique était différent. Le contexte forestier aussi et nous étions plus inquiets à cette époque des pluies acides que des conséquences du changement climatique.

Les décisions des quatre conférences précédentes sont pleinement opérationnelles et nous les mettons en œuvre dans nos pays. Vous avez pu voir qu’en 2006 la France avait adopté son programme forestier national et publié les indicateurs de gestion durable de ses forêts, conformément aux décisions que nous avons prises à Vienne en 2003.

Depuis 17 ans notre processus a su s’adapter, évoluer. Notre collaboration avec la Commission Européenne des Forêts de la FAO, avec le Comité du Bois et avec les autres processus paneuropéens est exemplaire et peut servir d’exemple pour d’autres régions du monde.

Monsieur le Président,

Les textes que notre conférence doit adopter et que nous allons signer demain sont particulièrement importants et tout à fait pertinents.

La Déclaration de Varsovie rappelle que, je cite: «les conditions de vie sur notre planète sont menacées et demandent une action immédiate». Gérer durablement les ressources naturelles de la terre est un défi pour nous tous, gouvernements et société civile. Les forêts européennes, on ne le répètera jamais assez, peuvent contribuer à l’atténuation du changement climatique. Nous avons donc décidé que le volet forestier de notre future présidence de l’Union européenne serait placé sous ce thème général. Et la France est tout à fait prête à contribuer à une action de coopération scientifique et technique au niveau européen sur ce sujet.

La première Résolution de Varsovie a pour objet «forêts, bois et énergie». Cette question, au croisement de nos politiques de lutte contre le changement climatique et de nos politiques d’indépendance énergétique, nous interpelle tous.

En France, le bois est de loin la première énergie renouvelable. Face au fort accroissement de la demande et au risque de concurrence, pour la même matière première, entre secteurs utilisateurs, la nécessité d’une mobilisation accrue du bois est clairement établie. Bien sûr, cette mobilisation doit s’inscrire dans le cadre d’une gestion durable des forêts respectueuse de la biodiversité, des sols et des ressources en eau.

J’estime que la valorisation du bois d’œuvre doit être une priorité car elle induit des volumes importants de sous-produits de l’exploitation et de la première transformation, utilisables pour l’énergie. Vous avez entendu parler du «Grenelle de l’environnement» qui vient de se tenir en France pour conforter notre politique de développement durable: dans ce cadre, un plan national en faveur du bois et un plan de mobilisation de la biomasse vont être préparés.

Mais nous devons tous rester vigilants et veiller à ce que le «mix» énergétique, dans lequel la biomasse, et en particulier la biomasse forestière, va jouer un rôle essentiel, reste équilibré.

La seconde Résolution de Varsovie, quant à elle, a pour objet «forêts et eau». La question de la rémunération des services environnementaux sera l’un des points en débat lors des Assises de la Forêt qui seront lancées en France à la fin de l’année. C’est aussi le sujet d’un des groupes de travail mis en place dans le cadre du plan d’action de l’Union européenne en faveur des forêts.

Sur cette question, notre ministère soutient les efforts de développement de la connaissance: une des priorités du plan d’action forêts de notre stratégie nationale pour la biodiversité est le développement des analyses économiques sur le paiement des services rendus par la forêt. Nos agences de l’eau apportent déjà des premiers éléments de rémunération des services rendus par la forêt.

Nous attachons aussi une grande importance aux démarches territoriales. Nous avons mis en place des chartes forestières de territoire qui permettent une concertation entre acteurs des territoires autour de la forêt et favorisent la mise en place de contrats locaux de rémunération des services environnementaux.

Quatrièmement, la semaine paneuropéenne des forêts 2008 fait l’objet d’une déclaration séparée. La France est particulièrement attachée au succès de cette manifestation. J’ai rappelé notre excellente collaboration avec la Commission Européenne des Forêts et avec le Comité du Bois. En 2008 nous avons une occasion unique de préparer des programmes de travail cohérents. Et nous devons préparer, ensemble, une contribution de l’Europe aux prochaines sessions du Forum des Nations Unies sur les Forêts et du Comité des Forêts de la FAO. Je remercie vivement la ministre finlandaise qui vient de nous faire une proposition en ce sens.

Enfin, nous adopterons demain une déclaration de soutien aux pays touchés par les incendies de forêts. Cette question nous tient particulièrement à cœur et notre ministre s’est rendu en Grèce il y a un mois pour montrer la solidarité de la France et renforcer les stratégies de coopération.

Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres,

Au moment de conclure, je voudrais saluer le rôle déterminant joué par l’unité de liaison pour animer et faire vivre au quotidien notre processus forestier paneuropéen. Je voudrais remercier la Pologne pour son travail de préparation depuis quatre ans et pour la chaleur de son accueil, dans cette belle ville de Varsovie.

Je voudrais aussi remercier la Norvège d’avoir accepté de prendre le relais et me réjouis de cette occasion de renforcer nos liens avec ce grand pays forestier.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

English version

Mister Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen Ministers, Dear Colleagues,

In my turn, I would like to state how much France is delighted to take part in the work of this Fifth Ministerial Conference, here in Warsaw. I have unfortunately to present you the apologies of Michel Barnier, Minister for agriculture and fisheries, who is detained in Budapest for an important meeting with the Hungarian Prime Minister.

You know that with Finland, France was on the initiative of this process in 1989 and that the first ministerial conference took place in 1990 in Strasbourg. The political and economic context was different. The forestry context also and we were more anxious at that time of the acid rain than of the implications of climate change.

The decisions of the four previous conferences are fully operational and we implement them in our countries. You could see that in 2006 France had adopted its national forest program and had published the sustainable management indicators of its forests, in accordance with the decisions that we had taken in Vienna in 2003.

For 17 years our process could adapt, develop. Our collaboration with the European Forestry Commission from FAO, with the Timber Committee and with the other Pan-European processes is exemplary and can serve as an example for other regions of the world.

Mister Chairman,

The texts that our conference has to adopt and that we will sign tomorrow are particularly important and fully relevant.

The Warsaw Declaration recalls that, I quote: “conditions of life on our planet are threatened and call for immediate action”. Managing sustainably the natural resources of the ground is a challenge for us all, governments and civil society. The European forests, we’ ll never repeat it enough, can contribute to the mitigation of climate change. We therefore decided that the forestry part of our future presidency of the European Union would be placed under this general topic. And France is completely ready to contribute to a scientific and technical co-operation project at European level on this subject.

The first Warsaw Resolution deals with “forests, wood and energy”. This question, to the crossing of our policies to combat the climate change and to our energy independence policies, challenges to us all.

In France, wood is by far the first renewable energy. Facing the strong increase in demand and the risk of competition, for the same raw material, between user sectors, the need for increased mobilization of wood is established clearly. Of course, this mobilization has to come within the framework of sustainable management of the forests respectful of the biodiversity, of the soils and of the water resources.

I consider that the development of timber has to be a priority because it induces large volumes of by-products from harvesting and from the first transformation, usable for energy. You heard about the “Grenelle of the environment” which has just held in France to consolidate our sustainable

development policy: Within this framework, a national plan for wood and a plan of mobilization of the biomass will be prepared.

But we have all to remain vigilant and ensuring that the energetic “mix”, in which the biomass, and in particular the forestry biomass, will play an essential role, remains balanced.

The second Warsaw Resolution, for its part, concerns deals with “forests and water”. The question of the payment of the environmental services will be one of the points discussed during the “Forest Conference” (Assises de la Forêt) which will take place in France at the end of this year. It is also the subject of one of the working groups set up under the forest action plan of the European Union.

On this question, our ministry supports the efforts of development of knowledge: one of the priorities of the forest action plan of our national strategy for the biodiversity is the development of the economic analyses on the payment of the services rendered by the forest. Our water Agencies already bring first elements of remuneration of the services rendered by the forest.

We also attach great importance to the territorial approach. We set up forestry territory charts which allow co-operation between stakeholders involved in the territories around the forest and encourage the setting up of local remuneration contracts of the environmental services.

Fourthly, the Pan-European forest week 2008 is the subject of a separate statement. France is particularly attached to the success of this event. I pointed out our excellent collaboration with the European Forestry Commission and with the Timber Committee. In 2008 we have a unique opportunity to prepare coherent work programs. And we will have to prepare, together, a European contribution to the next meetings of the United Nations Forum on Forests and to the Committee on Forestry of FAO. I thank very much the Finnish minister who has just made us a proposal in this direction.

Lastly, we will adopt tomorrow a statement of support for the countries touched by forest fires. This question is very important for us and our minister went to Greece a month ago to show the solidarity of France and to strengthen the cooperation strategies.

Mister Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen Ministers, Dear Colleagues,

At the time of concluding, I would like to welcome the decisive role played by the liaison unit to manage and make live to the daily our Pan-European forestry process. I would like to thank Poland for his preparatory work for four years and for the heat of his reception, in this beautiful town of Warsaw.

I would also like to thank Norway for having agreed to take over and am delighted by this opportunity to strengthen our links with this large forestry country.

Thank you for your attention.

GERMANY

Mr. Richard Lammel

Director for Forestry
Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

on behalf

Mr. Horst Seehofer

Federal Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

Forests – in a way – are similar in nature to the process of European integration: they grow in a continuous and sustainable manner.

At the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome, we all have realised in the EU how far this integration has already made progress. From a German perspective, I can also look back on a successful EU Council Presidency that has achieved a lot and gave fresh impetus. I am therefore more than pleased that the Lisbon conference has marked a breakthrough. The new fundamental treaty will secure the future viability of EU to some degree and enable it to develop further.

In the wake of the MCPFE conferences held in Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon and Vienna, this meeting here, too, underlines the progressive integration within Europe.

How much Poland sees itself as a partner in Europe can also be gathered from Poland's responsibility for this key process of forest policy. Dear Minister, I warmly congratulate you on the good preparation and excellent work performed by the Liaison Unit Warsaw in the past few years.

I wish the new Polish government a good start and this comes from the depth of our hearts. Germany as the direct neighbour will make every effort to broaden the foundations for good cooperation on all levels.

We are here today to assume joint responsibility in meeting the current challenges facing European forest policy.

The two priority themes “Forests and Water” as well as “Forests, Energy and Wood” are of concern to all countries in Europe. I welcome the fact that we succeeded in developing joint guidelines for our policy in these fields in order to adopt them at this conference. Both are topics where we can benefit from technical exchange, but also from Pan-European cooperation.

In view of the climate changes, the availability of water – in the right place at the right time, in fact – will constitute one of the major challenges of the future. Water-related natural phenomena are becoming increasingly relevant. I remind on the floods in Poland, Germany, Czech Republic.

The resolution “Forests and Water” addresses the need for a more intensive cooperation amongst our countries as well as with water resources management – and this is an urgent issue. It seems to me as if not all options have been exhausted to incorporate forests as a key regulatory element for the water regime. This holds true for supra-regional and cross-border cooperation especially along major stretches of rivers.

The topic “Forests, Wood and Energy” is just as up-to-date.

Wood is also currently enjoying a revival in Germany. The German Government fosters this development with its Charter for Wood Promotion – a set of measures endorsed by policy-makers that concerns the entire sector. Current developments in the energy sector additionally promote this tendency. They also prompted many urban city-dwellers to again become aware of the benefits of this natural product. Because of this the forestry sector and forests are gaining quite a bit of popularity again.

The German charter aims to increase the per–capita wood consumption from around 1.2 m³ (round wood equivalents), at present, to around 1.3 m³. We have almost reached this goal in a relatively short period of time. Compared with 2000, we want to double the share of renewable energies in the total energy consumption to 4.2% by 2010 and to 10% by 2020.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Germany will sign the documents of the 5th Ministerial Conference.

I assume that we will agree on steps for their implementation under the future work programme. This will also contribute to further progress at global level, most specifically to the UNFF process.

Let me briefly turn to the future of the process now.

I wish Norway every success for taking charge of the Liaison Unit in the near future and for assuming the responsible mandate of task manager for the overall process.

I believe we owe many thanks to Austria, that is withdrawing from the general Coordinating Committee, for its very intensive and committed involvement in the past few years.

I am delighted to be able to announce here that Germany will join the Steering Committee as the fifth country in 2008. Germany is thus prepared to be more pro-actively involved in steering the fate of the process in the future.

I express my warmest thanks again to the organisers for ensuring that this conference in Warsaw turns out so well and wish you every success for today and tomorrow.

Thank you for your attention!

GREECE

Mr. Konstantinos Kiltidis

Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Food

Colleagues and delegates distinguished,

It is with joy that I participate with you, in Warsaw, representing my country Greece, at the 5th (fifth) Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

The notion of the Forest, beyond the typical definition, illustrates the philosophy of the opposites of Heraklitos, and cultivates in an admirable and interactive way the unbreakable relation with the four elements of nature: the earth, the water, the air and the fire. These four elements create and destroy at the same time.

Holy and beloved place of gods, of Dimitra, protector of the Agriculture and of Diane-Artemis, goddess of hunting, nymphs and divine spirits, chosen as their residence, the Forest inspired myths and fables in antiquity. Since it was chosen by the gods, it obliges us, the mortals, to protect it for its vivifying offer.

At national level, the Forests and the wooded lands cover the 50% (fifty per cent) of the area of my country and they have public character.

Today, the functions of the Forest are:

- the hydrometeorological functioning
- the protection of the soil
- the reduction of atmospheric pollution
- the absorption of carbon dioxide (CO₂)
- the assurance of biodiversity.

All these functions are of greater importance than in the past, due to the urgent need for reduction of the malevolent consequences of climate change.

Greece, being a country of South-East Europe, attributes great importance to the functioning of the Forests at the level of the water and the soil, following the policies of sustainable management of the Forests since 1953 (fifty three).

Ecological management is completed by the intensification of the production of wood as a material, since 60% (sixty per cent) of our forest production is constituted by wood for human consumption.

Last year was a dark year for the country, the citizens and the forest. Millions of hectares have been burned and tens of thousands of people have sacrificed. For the first time, man felt powerless in the face of the destructive power of fire.

At this point, I would like to thank all those among you who have helped us during this ordeal and who are collaborating with us for the rehabilitation of the natural environment.

I must remind you of the proposal of our Prime Minister, Mr. Konstantinos Karamanlis, relating to the creation of an authority for prevention and intervention in order to deal with situations of extreme urgency and natural catastrophes. This authority could function on the principle of subsidiarity and I believe that with the contribution and the support of all, it will acquire the status of a European Force for Rapid Intervention.

At the same time, I estimate that the sustainable management of forests, biodiversity and climate change, require the coordination of the policies of the member states with those of the Community as a condition sine qua non.

To conclude, I would like to underline that Greece, faithful to the objectives set by the European Commission, conforms to:

- the improvement of the long-term forest competitiveness
- the improvement and protection of the environment
- the contribution to the improvement of the quality of life

Greece will conform to the decisions taken by this Conference and to the cooperation.

As Secretary of State of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, in charge of the Forest Policy File, I will sign all the resolutions concerning Greece, ratifying our engagement for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome in Warsaw and to congratulate the co-organisers, Poland and Norway, for the excellent organisation of the Conference.

Thank you very much for your attention.

English version

Dear Colleagues and Delegates,

It is my pleasure to be here today, in Warsaw, representing my country, Greece, at the 5th Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

The significance of the Forest, apart from the formal definition, illustrates the philosophy of Heraklitos' contradictions and cultivates in an admirable and interactive way the unbreakable relation with the four elements of nature: the ground, the water, the air and the fire. These four elements create and destroy it at the same time.

Holy and beloved place of gods, of Dimitra, protector of the Agriculture and Diane-Artemis, goddess of hunting, nymphs and divine spirits, chosen as their residence, the Forest inspired myths and fables in antiquity. Since it was chosen by the gods, it obliges us, the mortals, to protect it for its vivifying offer.

At national level, the Forests and the wooded lands cover the 50% (fifty per cent) of the area of my country and they have public character.



In our days, the beneficial operations of forest are:

- the hydronic operation
- the protection of the ground
- the reduction of the atmospheric pollution
- the absorption of important quantities of dioxide of coal (CO₂)
- the guarantee of biological diversity

All these operations are of more vital importance than in the past, if indeed we take into consideration our imperative need for the reduction of the harmful consequences due to the climatic change.

Greece, as a country of South-eastern Europe, attribute a considerable importance in the functions of Forests’ protection concerning the water and the soil following the policies on the sustainable forest management since 1953 (nineteen fifty three).

The ecological management is supplemented by the intensification of timer production given that the 60% of our forest production destines for human consumption.

The summer of 2007 was “a black summer” for our country, for the citizens and the forests. Millions of hectares were burnt and many people sacrificed themselves. For the first time man stood with awe in front of the disastrous fury of fire, unable to act.

At this point, I would like to thank you all for your assistance and your collaboration for the re-establishment of the natural environment.

I would like to remind you the proposition of our Prime Minister Mr. Konstantinos Karamanlis, on the foundation of an institution for the prevention and intervention to confront the emergency situations and natural disasters. This could be operated on the principle of subsidiarity and I believe that with the contribution and support of all of you, it will acquire the statute of a European Force of Rapid Intervention.

At the same time, I appreciate that the sustainable forest management, the biodiversity and the climatic changes, require the co-ordination of the State Members’ policies with those of the Community as a condition *sine qua non*.

Finally, I would like to underline that Greece, being faith in the objectives of the European Commission, conform to the:

- long-term improvement of competitiveness of forestry
- improvement and protection of environment
- contribution in the improvement of quality of life.

Greece will conform to the decisions taken by this Conference and to the cooperation.

As Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Food, charged to exercise the Forest Policy, I will sign all the resolutions on behalf of Greece, ratifying also our engagement for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

I would like to thank for the cordial hospitality in Warsaw and to congratulate the co-organising countries, Poland and Norway, for the exceptional organisation of the Conference.

Thank you for your attention.



HOLY SEE

Outline of the Statement

Rev. Ionuț Strejac
Secretary

In the intervention, orally done, H.E. Mons. Janiak has thanked Poland, the amphitryon country, and Norway as co-organizer, pointing out that the Holy See as well as it does not have indications and technical solutions to offer to the Conference, it follows with interest since the beginning the MCPFE, convinced that a correct protection of the forests and a sustainable management of its resources can be an essential factor for the guardianship of the environment and to face particularly the new challenges of the climatic changes and so to favor a best quality of the life. The intervention concluded with a benediction on the works and on the succeed of the objectives of the MCPFE.

HUNGARY

Mr. János Kiss

Head of Department of Natural Resources
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be able to greet the ministers, delegates and guests at the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) on behalf of the government of the Republic of Hungary.

I should like to express my sincere gratitude to the governments of Poland and Norway for organising the conference, and to the General Coordinating Committee and the Liaison Unit for the high standard of the preparations.

We welcome the two priority themes of the conference, the relation between forests and water, and forests, wood and energy, to which ever greater attention is being devoted in Hungary as well in both professional and social forums. Each of the two topics are highly relevant to the climate change influencing life on earth, and to satisfying our basic needs, to clean drinking water and a reliable, environmentally sound energy supply.

We believe the realisation of the resolutions of the ministerial conferences is important as are studies summarising the state of forests in Europe, which through results and figures made known give an account of the effectiveness of the ministerial conferences.

As regards forests and energy, I wish to point out that, due to the dominance of deciduous stands in Hungary, over half of wood felled is used as firewood. Two thirds of this is consumed by households and the remaining third by power plants. At present wood is a determining share among renewable energy sources.

Like most European countries, Hungary does not exploit the potential of forest production and this is particularly true of forests in private ownership. We intend to promote the exploitation to the highest degree possible of wood available in forests managed primarily for economic use by increased support for private forest management and also by simplifying legal limits while bearing in mind environmental protection considerations. The significance of the use of wood for energy purposes is also proof that, besides ecological aspects, it is essential to devote special attention to preserving the economic viability of forestry.

In satisfying demand for renewable energy sources, wood plantations for energy purposes could contribute to relieving the burden on indigenous forests but in the long term this can only supplement wood produced from forests. Thus forests will continue to be a major source in the environment-friendly production of energy and in view of this we consider that it is necessary that the interests of the forestry sector are given heightened emphasis in consultations between the sectors concerned.

95% of Hungary's water stocks arrive in the country from beyond its borders, from the Carpathians and the Alps, and in many cases as sudden, destructive floods. For many centuries the primary aim was to quickly divert the floodwater away from the country and from the Carpathian Basin.

Nowadays the task is more complex: our aim is now to ameliorate the impact of flooding while retaining the waters. The implementation of this in the catchment areas can only be envisaged through national, and indeed in many cases international, co-operation between the sectors, which is reinforced by the resolution of this conference as well. An important element in this co-operation are forests and forest management which contribute to the retention of water resources and the prevention of disasters through the skilled maintenance of forest cover.

Implementing the resolutions due for signature will be a major challenge for the ministers responsible for forest management as the success of implementation depends on the positions of foresters within the relations and networks of contacts developed with the other sectors concerned. We believe that it is exceptionally important to increase the social acceptance and role of forest management, and one means of doing so is through publicity. This is one of the reasons why we support the staging of the Pan-European Forestry Week in 2008, which affords a good opportunity for making products and services provided by forests, the forest, the work of foresters, and international organisations and processes promoting forest management better known. Social recognition and support can help us most effectively to be successful in the implementation of the foreseen 19 adopted MCPFE resolutions.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention.

ICELAND

Mr. Throstur Eysteinnsson

Director National Forests Iceland Forest Service

on behalf of

Mr. Einar Kristinn GUDFINNSSON

Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture

Despite the continuing trend of global deforestation, forest cover has increased in a few areas, notably in much of Europe. Increasing forest cover could be a sign that forest management and utilization has improved or that the country in question is reducing the use of forest products or utilizing them more efficiently through recycling and the like. Or it might simply mean that the country is importing those products from someplace else to a greater extent than before.

We are, for the most part, not using less. In some cases forest management and utilization have improved but that has mostly led to lower prices, not greater conservation of forest resources. Unfortunately, it is probably most often the case that increased forest cover in one part of the world is bought at the price of decreased cover somewhere else.

We should be happy about increased forest cover where that is the case. We in Iceland certainly are. We do not have a forest resource in Iceland that is sufficient to support a forest industry. However, we use forest products every bit as much as other countries with a similar standard if living, all imported. Therefore we Icelanders should also be aware of our responsibility to use forest products in a sustainable way. But because we do not have a forest industry, the issue seems rather far removed. Sustainable forestry is somebody else’s problem in the minds of most Icelanders. It seems strange, but there are some people in Iceland who don’t want more forest cover and many who do not think that rebuilding our forest resource is terribly urgent. They think of planting trees is a fine hobby but are content to leave it at that.

Unfortunately, this type of attitude is not confined to Iceland. In many forested countries, people believe that their use of forest products is sustainable because they have large areas of protected forest and strict regulations protecting biodiversity and sociocultural values. Many do not realise that protection of their forests may result in increased pressure on forests elsewhere. The connection between protecting forests and consumption of forest products is all too often not made.

We are entering an era where the pressures on forest production will increase because of global warming concerns and the ever increasing need for forest products as very large economies such as China and India develop. Here in Europe, energy production based on the productivity of our forests is becoming ever more important.

The emphasis in forest research and management, which for the past 20 years has been on biodiversity and other values, looks to be shifting back again to production forestry. Emphasis on silviculture, forest genetics and breeding for faster growth and adaptation to a changing environment is increasing. In this new environment, we who have had the luxury of being able to take our forests out of production or even to not have forests where we should, will find ourselves forced to reassess the situation.

We must however not forget the lessons of the last 20 years. We must continue to find increasingly effective ways to integrate production, biodiversity conservation and sociocultural aspects, as indeed the MCPFE process has always attempted to do.

We all must bear responsibility. We Icelanders have a responsibility to rebuild and sustainably utilise our own forest resource. It is our hope that some day our forests will contribute to global forest resource sustainability.

IRELAND

Ms. Mary Wallace T.D.

Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Distinguished Ministers and Delegates,

I am delighted to be here in Warsaw, a truly beautiful city steeped in history and culture. I welcome the opportunity to participate in the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and to sign the Warsaw Declaration and adopt the two proposed Resolutions on behalf of Ireland – all three measures designed to further improve forest management and practice. Ireland has much in common with our host country, and I recognise the pivotal position that Poland holds in the centre of our new enlarged Europe.

I am very conscious of the spirit of cooperation which forms the cornerstone of MCPFE forest protection, and I am pleased that Ireland is an active contributor to this important Pan-European initiative. Informed forestry policy can only be developed in full awareness of the changing context in which it exists. I think it is fair to say that forces such as climate change, the energy agenda and biodiversity are increasingly impacting on forestry policies throughout the world. As reservoirs of carbon, providers of habitats and sources of renewable fuel, the need for sustainable forest management has never been greater.

I welcome the reports on the “State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007” and “Implementation of MCPFE Commitments”, and look forward to reading about the achievements of European countries in implementing the Sustainable Forest Management commitment. This is a valuable piece of work and it is important that all signatory States are implementing the Resolutions of the MCPFE in this area.

The theme of the Warsaw Declaration, “Forests for Quality of Life”, is timely and has particular resonance for Ireland. In the earlier part of the twentieth century forest cover in Ireland stood at only 1% of land cover. Thanks to EU and national policies, and the involvement of farmers and private landowners, the face of Irish forestry has changed significantly. Today forest cover stands at 10%, which is still well below the European average, but we aim to expand this to 17% of total land cover. Ireland is committed to the expansion and development of the sector, and this will be carried out in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management. We continually strive to raise the profile and awareness of the benefits of forestry and seek to strengthen the competitiveness of the entire sector.

Traditionally, the primary function of forests in Ireland was understood to be as a provider of raw material for the timber processing sector and this is still of key importance. Timber, as a raw material or in the form of engineered wood products, is a renewable source of alternatives to energy-intensive materials such as steel, aluminium and plastics in many applications. In recent years, we have come to appreciate the many additional functions that forests can provide, in the form of public goods. These public good functions have the potential to contribute hugely to improving the quality of life of our people. The use of forests for recreation and leisure pursuits is an obvious contributor to quality of life. Forests also have an important role to play in supporting biodiversity, while the Afforestation programme in Ireland forms part of our National Climate Change Strategy.

Forestry activities have the potential to interact both positively and negatively with water resources. Careful planning and management avoids negative impacts, while maximising the positive aspects

of forestry; such as aquatic biodiversity enhancements and the creation of appropriate riparian ecosystems. In Ireland a statutorily based extensive forest consent system is in place for all afforestation, involving public consultation and consultation with statutory public bodies. This may, at times, impede the speed with which we can afforest or reafforest, but it is essential to maintain the overall balance in forestry development.

On the 17th November, the International Panel on Climate Change will publish its synthesis report, bringing together the scientific information from its reports earlier in the year, in an accessible format for policymakers. I think we are all aware of the critical role played by forests in the global challenge presented by Climate Change. Sustainable Forest Management is moving centre-stage as we strive to reconcile the world’s increasing demand for energy with striving towards a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

In Ireland, the Government is committed to securing both long-term energy security and a low carbon future. We will accelerate the growth of renewable energy sources in the electricity, heat and transport sectors. Wood energy is a renewable, sustainable, carbon-neutral and a secure source of heat and electricity. It is a proven, cost-effective technology with very high efficiency, and will assist in reducing the amount of imported fossil fuel, increasing our self-sufficiency and playing a part in securing our long-term energy supply. The cultivation of wood energy crops represents a significant potential source of income for farmers and landowners. The emerging market for woodchip and pellets will provide a welcome outlet for thinnings from forestry plantations. Clean sawmill waste also has the potential to be used to generate energy on-site. The demand for wood fuel is increasing rapidly as it becomes more competitive compared to other heat sources. Developments in renewable energy are gathering momentum and promise to become an essential part of everyday life for us.

The protection of the environment and enhanced biodiversity are important issues for us all. In Ireland, we maintain stringent controls over new and existing plantations to ensure that forestry development and management is fully compatible with the highest standards of protection worldwide. All forestry activities carried out in Ireland must conform to the Irish National Forest Standard, a Code of Best Forest Practice and a suite of environmental guidelines, all of which are underpinned by MCFPE criteria and compliance with the resolutions adopted by the MCPFE since 1990. The concept of sustainable forest management is not frozen in time. It must develop as global and cross-sectoral influences on forestry, such as the emerging energy sector, also evolve. We must continue to apply Sustainable Forest Management approaches with rigour so that we can use our forests without abusing them. It is clear that forestry has a significant role to play in the sustainable development of society as a whole.

From the commitments we will be signing today, it is clear that the participants in this Pan-European process recognise the current challenges for forestry in relation to climate change, energy supply and water protection. By signing up to these commitments we are ensuring that forestry issues are considered and integrated into our own country’s Governmental policies on sustainable development. I am happy to say that I will be signing the Warsaw Declaration on the theme Forests for Quality of Life, Resolution 1 on Forests, Wood and Energy, and Resolution 2 on Forests and Water as an indication of my country’s commitment to the protection of forests in Europe.

In conclusion, I wish to thank Norway and Poland for their role in organising this event, and wish to thank everyone who put so much work into the smooth running of this conference. You have been great hosts and have treated us extremely well during our stay here. Also, I wish to pay tribute to the excellent work of the MCPFE since it’s establishment. Successful relationships are about bringing people together and sharing what each has to offer. This you do splendidly, and I wish you every success in your future work.

ITALY

Mr. Stefano Boco

Deputy Minister of State
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest Policies

Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I first of all convey my congratulations to You, Mr. Chairman and to the Co-Chairman, for the excellent organisation of this conference and the high quality of the documents to be signed. May I also convey my special thanks to all the members of the “Warsaw Liaison Unit” who, over the past four years since the last Vienna Conference, successfully improved the Pan-European project on forests while setting it in the framework of a changing world.

We are now facing a moment when forests are the focus of public attention and of the media, both at the national, the EU and the international level. The attention is mainly due to the dangers faced forests. I am talking about forest fires which, over the last season, destroyed extremely large areas across my country and other Mediterranean countries bringing serious mourning among peoples. I also refer to the news coming from Tropical countries where a wild deforestation is on the way. Deforestation is, indeed, based on the search for a personal benefit, careless of compromising the regeneration possibilities and the survival of the whole ecosystem.

Fortunately, there are also good news: the awareness of the need to preserve and broaden forests is not only an heritage of limited environment-friendly elites, it indeed involves the wide public mainly in the industrialised countries where, with the abandonment of marginal rural areas, forests are constantly expanding as it is proven by official statistics.

Another big challenge for forests are “climate changes”, whose effects are clear to all of us, even if they require a further analysis in order to detect their exact causes and possible evolutions. Before those scenarios forests represent a real bulwark. The power of storing carbon dioxide and turning it into wood and renewable raw material characterised by multiple applications, must be recognized and properly enhanced.

In order to exactly know the scope of such phenomenon, in Italy we established the “National Inventory of forests and carbon stocks”, proving that forestry resources, in my Country, cover more than 10 million hectares, that is around one third of the national territory. This sets the Italian index of trees density up to the world average. The increased knowledge of our forestry resources, allowed us to raise the awareness of their importance within the goals of the Kyoto Protocol, with a potential positive follow-up on the economic budget connected to its implementation.

Climate changes also require to gauge the possibility to adjust forests to new possible contexts, this is the core of the studies we are carrying out in order to build up possible evolutionary models while detecting the best interventions man can adopt to accompany and lead their positive evolution.

Another issue stated in one of the two resolutions at the focus of this Conference, is the relationship between forests and water. Such link is already existing since long time in my country, where the difficult orography and the irregular regime of rainfalls forced the legislator to map the presidium against slips and floods as the main benefit brought by forests. In 1923 the first forest law was set and it imposed the “hydro-geological bound” on most wooden territories located on hilly and mountain areas.

Now the biggest anthropic pressure on the territory, with a following enormous increase of water consumptions, accompanied by the evolution of climate towards increased droughts, forces to reconsider the benefit of forests, not only as a defence against the impetuosity of waters but also bringing “clear and fresh” water, referring to the adjectives attributed to water by Francesco Petrarca, a poet of 1300, who lived between Italy and France and who was one of the first great “European Citizens”. For the protection of waters, the Forestry State Body, promoted a specific initiative implemented through the constant control and monitoring of water bodies. An initiative that is also linked to the Framework Directive on waters, issued and implemented by the European Union.

The subject of the other resolution, considering wood as a source of renewable energy, is linked to the new Kyoto Protocol and to the need to partly replace fossil fuels – net sources of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere – with renewable energy sources whose emissions are clearly part of the natural “carbon cycle”. It is therefore necessary to pay the maximum attention so that the appreciable initiatives carried out are compatible with the environment and the concept of sustainable management, while taking into account all the other uses of woody materials. In order to detect the best methodologies complying with the above mentioned criteria and to propose valid models of action, the Ministry that I represent, promoted an ad hoc program called “Probio”, implemented in collaboration with Universities, Research bodies and Regions and linked to the community initiatives on this subject, specifically the UE Plan of Action on biomasses.

Moreover, forests keep cultural and spiritual values that are part of the heritage of the European people and the initiative of the Ministerial Conference is extremely appreciable since it paves the way for a specific initiative aimed at deepening and spreading its knowledge.

Mr. President,

The motto chosen for this Conference “Forests for the quality of life” perfectly proves the expectations and trust that European people set on forests, the same feelings we want to state here today. Not to disappoint such trust, I am well pleased to be about to undersign the declaration and the two final resolutions we are going to sign today.

LATVIA

Mr. Arvids Ozols

Deputy State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. Chairmen, Excellence's, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and pleasure for me to address Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe on behalf of Latvia's Government.

Countries of Europe are responsible for the stewardship of approximately one quarter of the world's forests. This is a great challenge to balance production of wood as still economically the most important function of forests and the increasing demand for non-wood goods and services from the European forests. This challenge should be met in a manner that is consistent with sustainable forest management including social functions and conservation and appropriate enhancement of forest biodiversity,

Significant progress has been made in the years since the first ministerial conference in Strasbourg.

This progress has been primarily determined by increasing common understanding of the role forests can play, that the benefits of forests extend far beyond wood and non-wood products and services. Forests are a major reservoir of the world's biological diversity and also play an important role in global carbon, hydrological and ecological cycles at the national, regional and global levels. For many countries, especially those with economies in transition, forests have been an essential precondition for sustainable national development.

In Vienna "Living Forest Summit" it was recognized that forests are an integral part of sustainable development that effect and is affected by other sectors. Therefore, cross-sectoral solutions must be sought within the context of other national policies, for example, agriculture, environment, rural development, energy, water. The scope of ministers decisions taken at this Ministerial Conference were far beyond the scope of initiatives undertaken at Strasbourg.

Today ministers responsible for forest, are meeting second time in the 21st century, four years after Vienna "Living Forest Summit". Four years of intensive work implementing commitments of Vienna declaration and five resolutions.

Mr. Chairmen, Excellence's, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In Latvia political desire of the society towards democracy and market economy has influenced forestry and its administration. Successful land reform has created a large sector of private forest landowners. It should be noticed that secure property and land tenure rights has motivated forest owners to invest in sustainable forest management. In its turn, privatisation of state forest industry and forest product manufacturing sector has produced one of the most active economic developments in the country.

Reforms implemented in Latvia and the EU integration had a positive impact on the economic development of the country: Latvia has achieved high economic growth rates.

The forest sector occupies an important and stable place in Latvia's economy, contributing significantly to stabilisation of Latvia's economy. Forest based industry's average growth rate during the last 10 years has been close to 10%. This was the result of a successful use of the sustainably managed forest resources. Overall, the forest sector contributes significantly to the Latvian gross domestic product growth and contributes to 8% of the total employment in the national economy.

The progress was achieved by involving forest stakeholders – forest based industry and private forest owners, as well as civil society, non-governmental organizations and in many cases learning by doing. Participatory approach made this development a success story.

I would like to mention just some of them: formulation of Forest Policy, institutional reform – the separation of state's public and private functions. Latvia's forest sector now has reached some stage of maturity to elaborate the National Forest Cluster Programme, by involving related sectors as environment, energy, construction, education, research, finance, etc.

Today in Warsaw our attention is concentrated on the role of Forests for quality of life. Climate change policy, energy policy, water policy are examples where forests and forestry have a crucial role to play. Today MCPFE with Warsaw Resolution 1 and 2 take the responsibility to guide the Pan-European discussion on the important inter-linkage between forests, wood and energy, as well as forestry and water. We can say that water and energy are among the most valuable commodities in the word. They ensure not only quality of life but in number of cases are the preconditions for life.

I hope this will be a significant contribution to balanced policy development both at national and international levels. And this in return is a basic prerequisite for sustainable development of forest sector.

Today this is the right time and place to re-consider and re-evaluate the progress and achievements of Pan-European process.

Are we approaching the Vision? What are the milestones and what is MCPFE contribution at local, national and regional level, how MCPFE has contributed to global forest related processes in general and how to the single forest owner in particular?

I would like to invite all us to translate our political decisions into work programme for the implementation of the commitments of this Fifth Ministerial Conference. We have to look forward to address challenges we are facing and to demonstrate that forest sector In Europe can provide substantial and innovative solutions to society's general concerns.

Mr. Chairman, we have a great satisfaction to be there and participate at Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and be ready to sign on behalf of Latvia's Government the Warsaw declaration – "Forests for quality of life" as well as two Warsaw resolutions – "Forests, Wood and Energy" and "Forests and Water". Latvia would like to join the adoption of Ministerial Statement on Pan-European Forest Week 2008 and Ministerial Statement on Forest Fires.

Mr. Chairmen and Dear Colleagues, I would like to extend my acknowledgements to the Liaison Unit of MCPFE. They did an excellent job in the preparatory process and organizing this Conference.

Mr. Chairman, Latvia would like to thank the Government of Poland for excellent contribution to Pan-European Process and our support to Norway and all GCC members in our further work.

Thank you for attention.

LIECHTENSTEIN

Mr. Felix Nascher

Director General Ministry of Environment Affairs, Agriculture and Forestry

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start with my sincere thanks to the government and the people of the Republic of Poland for the warm hospitality and the excellent preparation of this conference.

Being involved in this MCPFE-process personally since the very beginning in Strasbourg, allow me, Mr. President, not only to applaud ourselves for tasks, which we already fulfilled together or for decisions, which we agreed on to further implement together.

I feel a strong need to say, that till now MCPFE narrowed the term “cross-sectoral” too much on talks and negotiations between the different players within the forestry sector.

In our opinion the big challenge for the forestry sector is a broader one: There is an urgent need to widen the scope and to energetically take over the lead in the cross-ministerial dialogue on forest matters – too many original policy topics of the forestry sector tend already to be taken over by other ministries.

However, if challenges, put on the table by other policy areas, find no echo in the forestry sector itself, binding responses on these challenges will be formulated from fora outside this forestry sector, e.g. in the framework of the biodiversity convention.

What is needed after 17 years of this process is, to ask ourselves 5 questions, namely,

- who we are (being „only “an informal process);
- where we come from (our history and current situation);
- where we – as a forestry policy sector – want to go (our own mission);
- where other policy areas want us to go (pro-active coordination and harmonization);
- which strategies will give an integrated and holistic response to meet the challenges of the future?

Till now, a commonly agreed, integrated and holistic forest policy is just an expression of good will. In order to be credible and predictable for the outside society, we need to set concrete targets and strategies in a binding instrument – an instrument, having its roots in the forestry sector and an instrument, trusting in the forestry sector as being able to take over competences and responsibilities for an integrated and holistic forest policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Therefore, we strongly support all efforts to foster the elaboration of a regional convention on forests – a convention aiming at “forests for quality of life” in the hands of those, who know, what they are speaking about.

Thanking Poland and Norway as well as the Liaison Unit as organisers and the GCC for their guidance we wish the process continued success.

LITHUANIA

Mr. Arūnas Kundrotas

Minister of Environment

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking our close neighbours, Poland, for organising this conference and for a very warm welcome and hospitality during our stay and for excellent preparatory work.

We have once again an opportunity to evaluate our achievements and reinforce our commitments, made during previous conferences and to undertake the new ones towards implementation of Sustainable Forest Management and tackling one of the biggest environmental challenges of our time, climate change, in which the significant role of forests has been acknowledged.

Contribution of sustainable forest management towards sustainable development calls for global response, therefore we especially welcome recent agreement by United Nations Forum on Forests on a non legally binding instrument on sustainable management of all types of forests.

I believe that the role of Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in linking national and global forest policies will continue to be effective and leading by providing platform for European countries to engage in policy level dialogue on most important forest related issues.

By signing the prepared documents we reinforce forests role in ensuring the quality of life and are timely focusing on the contribution of forests in climate change mitigation, in particular wood and energy as well as forests and water, subjects, which have been of high relevance during recent years and on which numerous initiatives on regional and national level have been taken.

On this occasion, I would like to highlight recent developments in Lithuania in relation to the discussed issues.

Development of use of wood energy is one of the highest priorities in our national forest and energy policies. Since 2002 there has been significant growth in use of wood for energy generation, especially in district heating. The total capacity of wood-based heat boiler houses, which are rather evenly distributed in the territory of the country, increased more than twice and is still growing while heating energy produced from wood exceeded 15% in total heating energy balance.

Due to rapid wood energy market development the wood demand shifted from wood processing residues towards use of forest biomass. In order to support this progress and decrease the competition between sectors for raw material there have been reviewed and streamlined requirements on forest felling residues extraction and transportation.

One of our major concerns is that efforts to address growing demand for wood, would not jeopardise environmental stability of forest ecosystems, landscape and biological diversity. Therefore, the extraction of wood biomass from ecologically vulnerable forest sites has been restricted. The recommendations on compensative fertilisation using ash has been developed in order to compensate losses of nutrients and to avoid any undesirable effects on the ecosystems.

Extensive opportunities for increasing wood supply in the long run lies in afforestation activities. Since the Vienna Conference the implementation of National afforestation programme progressed

considerably and forest cover increased from 31,3 up to 32,5%. With this pace of development we believe to reach our targeted forest cover of 34 per cent in Lithuania by 2020. Optimal distribution of forests in the landscape through afforestation aiming to strengthen the water-protective functions of forests is an important aspect of our afforestation programme as well.

In Lithuania, which is rich with lakes and rivers forest and water management policies are interlinked through implementation of watershed management, an integral part of which is designation of forests with water-protective functions. Currently in Lithuania 16% of our forests are managed with a view to maintain their protective functions and half of it are forests aimed at protection of watercourses. In order to secure protective functions of forests, integration of well-founded valuation of water-related forest services is an important task for us in coming years.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe that along with our continuous efforts, one of the most important tasks for us should remain how to improve our dialogue with the society on the importance of forests in sustainable development.

Such understanding and support from the society as well as effective cooperation on Pan-European level is essential precondition in achieving objectives of the Warsaw Declaration – Forests For Quality of Life.

Thank you for your attention.

LUXEMBOURG

Mr. Fernand Boden

Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development

Messieurs les Co-présidents, Messieurs les Ministres,
Chers Collègues, Mesdames, Messieurs,

Au nom du Gouvernement luxembourgeois, je voudrais d’abord remercier sincèrement le Gouvernement polonais qui, de concert avec le Gouvernement norvégien, a consacré tant d’efforts à l’organisation de cette cinquième Conférence ministérielle pour la Protection des Forêts en Europe, sous le thème des «forêts au service de la qualité de vie».

Il y a 4 ans à Vienne, je considérais que la situation des forêts dans le monde restait préoccupante surtout en raison de la déforestation dans les pays tropicaux. Aujourd’hui, non seulement ce constat reste valable, mais en plus, de nouvelles problématiques viennent allonger la liste des menaces pour les écosystèmes forestiers et leur gestion, à savoir le changement climatique et la raréfaction imminente des énergies fossiles.

Dans cette optique, je me réjouis des nouveaux engagements que nous allons signer aujourd’hui à Varsovie.

En premier lieu, je salue nos engagements sur la coopération mondiale et les partenariats régionaux et plus particulièrement celui concernant notre contribution à la réalisation des 4 objectifs globaux de l’instrument volontaire sur tous les types de forêts, élaboré lors de la présidence luxembourgeoise de l’UE en 2005 et conclu cette année à New York. Le Luxembourg entend participer activement à la réalisation de ces 4 objectifs globaux, notamment par des actions ciblées en matière de coopération au développement pour réduire la pauvreté des populations dépendant des forêts.

En relation avec les problématiques du changement climatique et de la raréfaction imminente des énergies fossiles, je tiens à saluer les engagements des 2 résolutions sur le thème du bois, de l’énergie et de l’eau.

Sachant que la forêt peut réellement contribuer à la mitigation du réchauffement climatique, le Luxembourg a mis en place une politique de promotion de l’utilisation du bois en tant que matériau renouvelable et comme vecteur d’énergie à bilan CO₂ neutre. Avec un taux de boisement de plus de 34%, le Luxembourg n’entend pas augmenter sa surface forestière pour stocker davantage de CO₂, mais va concentrer ses efforts sur une utilisation plus intensive des ressources ligneuses disponibles pour soutenir l’effet de substitution à d’autres matériaux ou combustibles fossiles.

Dans le cadre d’un projet interrégional, nous avons sensibilisé les élus locaux des municipalités propriétaires de forêts à l’utilisation de leur ressource bois selon le slogan «Penser Forêt – Agir Bois». Concrètement, on encourage les propriétaires de forêts publiques à utiliser prioritairement le bois comme matériau de construction et comme combustible énergétique dans les projets de constructions publiques. Cette initiative commence à porter ses fruits dans plus de 20% des communes de mon pays.

Ce type d’utilisation du bois énergie proche du consommateur respecte le principe de l’efficacité énergétique, principe qui devrait à mon avis guider tous les projets d’utilisation de la biomasse

à des fins énergétiques, sachant que la biomasse est une ressource limitée qui est produite dans un écosystème naturel qui fournit aussi une série d'autres services et fonctions pour notre qualité de vie. Dans ce sens, parallèlement aux mesures de promotion, je salue notre engagement à évaluer les impacts environnementaux de la production de biomasse ligneuse pour l'énergie.

Actuellement, le Luxembourg ne récolte que 60 à 70% de l'accroissement de sa ressource ligneuse. Pour augmenter sa contribution aux objectifs fixés par l'UE en matière de combustibles renouvelables, le Luxembourg va promouvoir la mobilisation de ses ressources ligneuses tout en encourageant le développement de schémas de production durables. A cet effet, tout en améliorant les infrastructures, le gouvernement va participer à un projet transnational dans ce sens au niveau de la Grande Région qui est l'une des plus grandes zones transfrontalières d'Europe, composée du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, des Länder allemands de la Sarre et de Rhénanie-Palatinat, de la région Lorraine ainsi que de la Wallonie, et il va également renforcer les organisations en charge des propriétaires forestiers privés qui représentent 54% de la surface forestière au Luxembourg.

Mais le changement climatique aura aussi des effets néfastes sur les écosystèmes forestiers. Dans cette optique, nous soutenons les recherches en cours pour déterminer les mesures à mettre en place pour assurer la sauvegarde et l'adaptation du milieu forestier à ce changement.

En ce qui concerne les engagements en relation avec l'eau, je tiens à souligner que ce sujet est aussi d'une grande importance pour notre pays. Au Luxembourg, la relation forêt – eau a toujours été traitée implicitement dans le cadre tant des politiques forestières que des politiques de l'eau. Plus de 20% de la surface forestière, soit l'ensemble des forêts semi-naturelles des collines du grès de Luxembourg, protègent un sous-sol qui constitue le principal réservoir d'eau potable du pays.

Ainsi, le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg a-t-il l'intention de renforcer la délimitation des zones de protection pour l'eau en forêt et de revoir les dispositions réglementaires concernées.

Finalement, je désire aussi rappeler que le Luxembourg a activement travaillé à la réalisation des engagements pris à Lisbonne et à Vienne. Ces engagements qui avaient placé l'homme et la société au milieu du débat sur la gestion durable des forêts, soulignant les avantages communs et les responsabilités partagées, ont fait l'objet de diverses mesures nationales et transnationales, notamment:

- la réalisation du premier programme forestier national sous la forme d'un processus participatif et continu de dialogue et de prise de décision,
- la création de réserves forestières intégrales représentatives sur plus de 1% de la superficie forestière pour renforcer nos efforts de conservation de la biodiversité,
- la promotion du matériau bois dans le cadre d'un programme interrégional, afin de contribuer à une prise de conscience générale de concepts de production et de consommation durables,
- la promotion de la certification des forêts en tant qu'instrument de dialogue entre les consommateurs et les producteurs,
- le soutien des associations de sylviculteurs et la formation d'une main-d'œuvre qualifiée,
- la réalisation de l'inventaire complet des sites historiques et culturels en forêt.

Plus que jamais, les engagements pris au fil des années dans le cadre des Conférences Ministérielles pour la Protection des Forêts en Europe et leur application sur le terrain, nous aident à progresser face aux nouvelles problématiques.

Enfin, c'est avec intérêt que j'accueille la déclaration de la semaine paneuropéenne des forêts en 2008. Le Luxembourg entend participer à cet effort de communication, notamment en essayant de faire coïncider le Weekend du Bois que nous organisons annuellement en collaboration avec la Wallonie, avec la semaine paneuropéenne des forêts.

Au nom du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, je tiens à exprimer toutes mes félicitations aux Gouvernements polonais et norvégien d'avoir organisé de manière aussi remarquable cette cinquième Conférence ici à Varsovie. Mes compliments également à tous ceux qui ont contribué à la réussite de cette conférence.

MONTENEGRO

Mr. Milosav Andjelić

Deputy Minister for Forestry
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to greet you on behalf of Montenegro and express my pleasure that, for the first time, Montenegro, as an independent state, participates in the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Forests, as one of the most important natural ecosystems, are of the utmost importance for the development of Montenegro: woody biomass is the major domestic heating fuel; trade in high-quality timber and non-timber forest products (medicinal plants, forest fruits and mushrooms) make a significant contribution to the livelihoods of many rural communities; they are the key game habitat supporting important faunal diversity, and a long hunting tradition; they are a crucial factor in preserving and regulating our watersheds, including the famous Tara Canyon; forests provide protection against erosion in our extremely steep terrain; and with much forest regenerating on former agricultural lands, contribute to the net absorption of substantial quantities of carbon dioxide. Last but not least, forest based enterprise is key for the development of our national economy to which it contributes some 6 to 8%, and a much greater proportion of revenues in rural areas, thereby sustaining many of our poorer communities.

Forests and forest land cover around 54% of the territory of Montenegro, and around 60% of the population is linked to the countryside and areas, which are rich with forests. With 0.9 ha under forests per capita, Montenegro is one of the most richly forested countries in Europe, with high conservation values, and huge sustainable tourism potential.

Today, forestry in Montenegro faces great challenges: how to improve forest management practice to improve condition of forests, especially condition of forests devastated during periods of political instability in the past.

The Vienna Declaration and Resolutions and all those previously signed have had a significant role in defining the path for our ongoing reform of the Forestry Sector in Montenegro.

The vision for forestry in the Republic is to improve the existing condition of all forests so that protection, environmental, social and economic functions of forests are balanced and sustainability ensured. To this end, we have embarked on a National Forest Programme, and are currently investing heavily to improve the institutional and legal frameworks for the sustainable management of our forests. We are currently completing the process of developing a National Forest Policy, and a new Forest Law. At the same time, we continue to build the capacity of our forestry institutions to implement modern forest management techniques.

I believe that through our ongoing participation in the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, as a regional political process committed to working towards forest protection, Montenegro will respond to the new challenges and will give further contribution to sustainable development in this Sector. The Warsaw Declaration and Resolutions that we will sign at this Fifth Conference, together with the previously adopted documents, provide a strong framework for our future activities.

Montenegro greatly appreciates the assistance we are already receiving from many European countries to achieve best practises in our forestry development, which are well defined in the Declarations and Resolutions.

Beside our clear commitment to building a better Forestry Sector in Montenegro, we look forward to a more substantial inter-government cooperation in terms of stronger networking of forestry experts and promotion of our common ideas – all towards wise forest management in Europe.

To conclude, my dear friends, I wish you all a successful work, and I thank our wonderful hosts for their hospitality.

Thank you for your attention.

NETHERLANDS

Mr. Han de Groot

Deputy Director of the Department of Nature

on behalf of

Ms. Gerda Verburg

Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Mister Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all the Dutch Government likes to express its gratitude to the Governments of Poland and Norway for preparing and hosting this Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

This year forests is regaining prominence on the international political agenda while sustainable forest management received substantial media coverage. Partly, this is for positive reasons, but unfortunately also because of negative developments.

The State of the World's Forests 2007 of the FAO demonstrated that there is still a significant decrease in forest area worldwide. With the loss of this forest cover and forest degradation not only numerous plant and animal species will disappear, but also the livelihoods of people who are daily dependent on forests is under serious stress. On the other hand, fortunately, there is also a significant increase in areas that have been afforested and reforested. Another positive message is that the role sustainable forest management play and could play in mitigation of climate change is more and more broadly recognized. Sustainable forest management is incrementally mainstreamed in other sectors. But there is substantial work ahead of us.

In Southern Europe forest fires impacted societies at a large scale with dramatic loss of lives. These dramatic incidents and its impacts demonstrated how important healthy forests with their multiple products and services are for society. Furthermore it underscored the importance of international cooperation to ensure our common objective of sustainable forest management.

Earlier this year during the seventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests the international community achieved a milestone outcome with the adoption of a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and a multi-year program of work for the United Nations Forum on Forests.

After 15 years of stalled negotiations since United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, the international community was able to set a clear framework for the future of international forest policy working towards the achievement of the four global objectives on forests.

The forest instrument provides an important platform for international cooperation on means of implementation, including financial support, technology transfer and public awareness building.

In our view the MCPFE process, in close collaboration with other existing regional processes, is very important and instrumental to translate global commitments and actions to the national level and, vice versa, inform the international policy arena about specific regional experiences and lessons learned.

The Warsaw declaration is strongly appreciated by the Netherlands due to its recognition of the multiple products and services of forests for society and the challenges ahead of us. But also

because of, the clear recognition that forests is a cross sectoral issue and we need to get “out of the woods”, and, most importantly, the future agenda for action.

At all levels we have to make our promises a reality, whereby words have to be translated into action.

Twenty years have passed by since the first Ministerial Conference. A lot of developments have taken place. Within the forest sector, but also outside the forests.

The MCPFE process has contributed to a common understanding of Sustainable Forest Management and developed a set of principles and criteria.

Besides examining the forest sector exclusively it is also important to keep an open eye on developments in society. Since the last twenty years there is a growing awareness among the public, especially in wood importing countries, including in The Netherlands, about the meaning of forests for society and nature.

Therefore The Netherlands is very pleased with the eloquent slogan for this conference: “Forests for the quality of life”.

This growing public awareness very properly finds its expression in demanding legal and sustainable produced timber. Certification of sustainable timber and proof of legality of the origin of timber were asked.

These initiatives demonstrate that the responsible Ministers for Forest Management in Europe, should take care of public support for their forest management and make their decisions transparent.

That starts with good governance and forest law enforcement and a government procurement policy in our own region that prescribes the use of legal and sustainable produced wood. We must practice what we preach.

Concerning people we must pay special attention to children and young people. They must become more aware of the meaning of forests and nature by creating more green areas in urbanized areas, but also make them clear that it is possible to use forests in a sustainable way.

We have to meet competing needs for forest products and services within the framework of sustainability. Global economic developments and environmental policies on bio energy may lead in our region to a greater dependence on products from European forests and may increase the pressure by these competing needs.

Europe has already a long tradition on sustainable forest management. Let us use that experience from the past to face the future.

The resolutions on Forests and Water and on Forests, Wood and Energy illustrate the tension between sustainable use and conservation. That cannot be solved only by the forest sector itself.

Solutions are not limited to the forest sector, nor to the country level, as forests services and forest products have a transboundary dimension.

The strengthening of co-operation at the Pan-European level between all governments and other stakeholders is needed to stand ready for the challenges of the future.

The Netherlands is convinced that when our efforts at the Pan-European level across all sectors can be streamlined and geared towards the achievement of the global objectives on forests, future generations are in a position to sustainable use and conserve our precious forests to the benefits of all.

Thank you.

NORWAY

Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen

Minister of Agriculture and Food

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on behalf of the Norwegian government.

We are gathered here to take decisions on forest issues of highest political priority within Europe. These priorities, climate change mitigation, energy supply and water protection, are essential for quality of life for the people in Europe and in the rest of the world.

We experience that the Arctic sea ice declines much more rapidly than foreseen. The sea ice extent in mid September 2007 has shown to be reduced by 40 per cent, compared to the 1979 to 2000 average. Coming from a northern country, this is worrying to us.

Expected changes in the global climate, represent a great threat to us all. We face major challenges in meeting these changes and the impact they cause.

European countries have undertaken, or are in the process of setting, quite ambitious goals for future reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. In June this year, the Norwegian government presented a white paper on climate change policy to the Parliament. The proposal from the government implies that Norway will undertake a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, as compared to the base year, by 2020, and be carbon neutral by 2050.

Based on recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the forest sector can contribute significantly towards a reduction in emission of greenhouse gases.

In Norway we emphasise to develop a forest policy which is streamlined with the Norwegian climate change policy.

Firstly, we will stimulate to a continuous high production of wood in the forests, with a view to enhance carbon sequestration, and enlarge the future stock of raw materials. Annual net carbon sequestration in Norwegian forests, as a result of growing stock increment, equals to 50% of the total human induced greenhouse gas emissions in Norway.

Secondly, our policy is focused on measures aimed to increase the use of durable wood products.

Thirdly, emphasis is on the forest sector as a provider of renewable energy.

In particular, I see potential for a significant increase in the production and use of bioenergy from sustainable managed forest resources. A variety of biomass sources could be used for energy purposes. As agriculture area in Norway is rather limited, I have clearly stated that arable land should be used for food production also in the future. Consequently, forests represent the largest raw material base for energy production in Norway. In an international perspective, development of forest-based bioenergy can merit future global food supply.

We have to focus on means to increase wood production, and to bring more wood to the markets in order to address a growing demand. A boost in the use of biomass for energy will also rely on innovative solutions, related to production, distribution and markets for bioenergy. We have to direct our efforts towards research.

Biomass for energy represents a great opportunity for the forest and forest industry sector. Results will, however, depend on our ability to cooperate within the sector, between public institutions, forest owners and forest industry. It is also necessary to involve other sectors in our policy work. We should make full use of the attention the society pay to the role of forests in this context.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the General Coordinating Committee of the MCPFE, Norway has been actively involved in the preparation of the documents for the Warsaw Conference. I am very satisfied with the results, and stay ready to sign both the Warsaw Declaration and the two resolutions.

The decisions we make at this conference can in general terms be grouped into two categories. On the one hand, we commit ourselves to further improving forest management in Europe. On the other, we continue to strengthen the tie between the MCPFE and the global forest processes and express our readiness to contribute to the global forest policy dialogue.

Both aspects should form the basis for follow-up activities.

Norway will soon take over the chairmanship role of the MCPFE. We are fully aware of the responsibilities connected to this position. Norway looks forward to cooperating with all of you in the further development of this unique policy process. We should build on the specific character of the MCPFE and carry on the good traditions developed over the last 15–20 years. At the same time, we should continuously consider the future direction and accommodate to changing conditions. Only in that way we will be able to keep up the political momentum.

Thank you for your attention.

POLAND

Mr. Jan Szyszko

Minister of the Environment

„Warunki życia na naszej planecie są zagrożone i wymagają natychmiastowych działań.” „Europejskie lasy mają do odegrania żywotną rolę w poprawie jakości życia, a zwłaszcza mogą przyczynić się do łagodzenia zmian klimatu, dostaw energii i ochrony zasobów wodnych.”

Z takim przesłaniem zwraca się do rządów i społeczeństw Europy i świata główny dokument V Konferencji MCPFE – „Deklaracja Warszawska”.

Panie Przewodniczący, Ekscelencje, Panie i Panowie,

Polska w pełni zgadza się z powyższą diagnozą i podobnie widzi rolę lasów w poprawie jakości życia.

W tym gronie nie trzeba przypominać o nadziejach ludzi, kierowanych do nas – odpowiedzialnych za lasy: lasy mają stabilizować rozwój ekonomiczny i chronić przyrodę, wzmacniać produkcję rolną i rozwój wsi, przyczyniać się do wyżywienia ludzkiej populacji, mają powstrzymać pustoszczenie, rozstrzygać o stanie różnorodności biologicznej Ziemi, pochłaniać węgiel z atmosfery i chronić klimat, być źródłem odnawialnej energii.

Czy istnieją bardziej ambitne i szlachetne wyzwania?

V Konferencja „Warszawska” ma te wyzwania w naszej świadomości utrwalić i zobowiązać do działań.

Od pierwszej Konferencji Ministerialnej (Strasburg 1990) obserwujemy gruntowne zmiany zarówno w teorii jak i praktyce leśnictwa. Europejskie widzenie gospodarki leśnej poszerza rolę i kompetencje leśników poza granice lasu. Z „producenta drewna” leśnictwo stało się ekonomiczną, środowiskową i społeczną szansą trwałego i zrównoważonego rozwoju świata, alternatywą dla ekonomii wzrostu.

Energia i woda to dwa newralgiczne obszary cywilizacyjne, które bez lasów nie mogą funkcjonować poprawnie. Zwracamy uwagę rządowi, że w poszukiwaniu wyższej jakości życia należy lepiej niż dotychczas wykorzystać lasy i gospodarkę leśną. Wyznaczone cele można tu osiągać niskonakładowo lub nawet bezinwestycyjnie.

Polska w pełni akceptuje i aktywnie popiera stanowisko zawarte w obydwu Rezolucjach naszej Konferencji.

Największym wyzwaniem dla polskiego leśnictwa, myślę, że nie tylko polskiego, jest uczynienie z trwałego i zrównoważonego zagospodarowania lasów procesu samofinansującego się. SFM (Sustainable Forest Management) powinien się opłacać. Potrzebne jest nowe podejście do problemów ekonomicznych – produktem leśnictwa są nie tylko dobra (np. drewno), ale również usługi i funkcje lasu. Potrzebny jest rynek funkcji lasu. Taki, na przykład, jaki tworzy Protokół z Kioto.

Dlatego dla lasów stanowiących własność państwa – jakich jest większość w Polsce – tak ważna jest współpraca międzysektorowa oraz społeczny nadzór i współudział samorządów w zarządzaniu lasami publicznymi.

Szerzej o problemach polskiego leśnictwa mówił wczoraj Dyrektor Generalny Lasów Państwowych na sesji Wielostronnego Dialogu (MSD).

Przemiany ustrojowe w okresie ostatniego dziesięciolecia zmieniły zasadniczo społeczny wymiar gospodarki leśnej w Polsce. Wyłania się przyszły kierunek rozwoju – leśnictwo bliżej przyrody, a las bliżej człowieka. Tworzy się nowy wymiar zawodu leśnika – mądrego zarządcy i opiekuna przyrody. Stanowi to również wyzwanie dla edukacji zawodowej i systemów kształcenia.

Nie tylko w Polsce.

Pamiętajmy: leśnictwo to inwestycja w przyszłość: jeśli jest trwałe i zrównoważone to nie przyniesie bogactwa, ale poprawi jakość życia.

Międzynarodowe „miękkie” prawo podzieliło lasy na fragmenty i zajęło się nimi oddzielnie. Wymieńmy tylko trzy najważniejsze regulacje: Konwencję o Różnorodności Biologicznej, Konwencję Ramową o Zmianach Klimatycznych, Konwencję o Zwalczeniu Pustoszczenia. Bez lasów i leśnictwa nie mogłyby istnieć. Lasy są narzędziem ich realizacji. Podobnie jak dziesiątki innych regulacji dotyczących ochrony przyrody i środowiska.

A przecież las jest przyrodniczą jednością. Funkcjonalnie jest niepodzielny. Jest systemem podtrzymującym życie biosfery i prezentuje niepodzielną wartość obiektywną. Wartość samą w sobie. Niezależną od bieżących potrzeb obecnej generacji.

Dlaczego rolę lasów i leśnictwa w Europie zredukowano do rozwoju terenów wiejskich, o czym wydają się świadczyć niektóre dokumenty UE?

Las jest wielowymiarowy. Jest elementem cywilizacyjnej równowagi nie tylko na wsi.

Również w mieście.

Również w naszych umysłach.

Nowe podejście do lasów i gospodarki leśnej wystrzyło cechy systemowe: rozdzielenie w czasie i w przestrzeni inwestycji od dochodów: dzisiejsze pokolenie inwestuje – a przyszłe zbiera zyski; zalesienia w górach – chronią równiny; my ponosimy koszty – a sąsiad zbiera korzyści. Taki jest charakter leśnictwa: bez granic czasowych i barier w przestrzeni. Dlatego potrzebne są wspólne i obowiązujące regulacje dotyczące ochrony lasów i zasad ich zagospodarowania.

Takie powinno być przesłanie Pan-Europejskiego Procesu do Europy.

Również do świata.

Panie Przewodniczący, Ekscelencje, Panie i Panowie,

Polska od samego początku uczestniczy w Ministerialnych Konferencjach na temat Ochrony Lasów w Europie. Proces Paneuropejski, podobnie jak inne procesy regionalne, jest częścią Planu Działania UNFF (*UNFF Plan of Action*) i wdrażania *IPF/IFF Proposals for Action*.

Począwszy od Rio de Janeiro, gdzie odrzucono Konwencję o Lasach, trwa spór o lasy na najwyższych szczeblach międzynarodowych i krajowych. Od dziesięcioleci pojawia się pytanie, od którego Europa nie uchyli się ostrożną polityką między krajami Północy i Południa:

Jakie jest najlepsze rozwiązanie instytucjonalne, które zapewniłoby wstrzymanie wylesień w skali świata i wprowadziło zasady SFM we wszystkich typach lasów?

Czy „prawnie nieobowiązujące” regulacje, zapowiedziane na 7 sesji UNFF w 2007 roku, wystarczą?

Czy tego oczekuje planeta w obliczu klimatycznych kłopotów i uszkodzania systemu podtrzymującego życie?

Przypomnę, że Polska począwszy od 1996 roku wypowiadała się za ustanowieniem prawnie obowiązujących regulacji i proponowała w pierwszym etapie opracować takie regionalne regulacje dla Europy. W istocie Europa takie regulacje już posiada – dokumenty i rezolucje wypracowane w Procesie Pan-Europejskim.

Dziękuję za uwagę.

English version

“Conditions of life on our planet are threatened and call for immediate action. European forests have a vital role to play, as they can improve and benefit the quality of life and in particular contribute to climate change mitigation, energy supply and water protection.”

The above message being addressed to Governments and communities of Europe is included in the “Warsaw Declaration” – the major document of the 5th MCPFE Conference.

Mr. Chairman, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland entirely agrees with the aforementioned diagnosis and perceives in a similar way the role of forests in improvement of the quality of life.

Nobody in our circle needs recalling the expectations of people who have addressed us as those responsible for forests: the forests have to stabilise economic development and protect nature, strengthen the productive role and development of the rural areas, contribute to alimentation of human populations, and have to prevent desertification, decide on the condition of Earth’s biological diversity, absorb atmospheric carbon and protect climate, and yet be a source of renewable energy.

Indeed, no more ambitious and high-minded challenges could have existed.

The 5th “Warsaw” Conference has to consolidate these challenges in our minds and to make us committed to the relevant actions.

Since the time of the first Ministerial Conference held in Strasbourg (1990) we could have noted thorough changes in both theory and practice of forestry. Perception of the forest management as seen from the European perspective has expanded the foresters’ role and competence far beyond the forest boundaries. Beginning from the role of a “timber producer”, forestry has become the global economic, environmental and social chance for sustainable development, thus forming an alternative to the economy of growth.

Energy and water are two sensitive areas of human civilisation which are not capable to function correctly alone, without forests. We bring to the attention of Governments that in seeking for a higher quality of life the forests and forest economy have to be used in a way better than so far. The objectives committed could be achieved with application of the low-cost and even zero-investment methods.

Poland fully accepts and actively endorses the standpoint included in both Resolutions of our Conference.

In my belief, transformation of sustainable forest management into a self-financing process is the task mostly challenging to the Polish and – I do believe – not only Polish forestry. SFM (Sustainable forest Management) has to be cost-effective. New approach to economic issues is needed – not only sole goods (for example, timber), but also services and functions are the forest products. Thus, a market of forest functions is necessary, for instance such like that established under Kyoto Protocol.

Therefore, for forest being the state-owned property – likewise the majority of forests in Poland – the inter-sectoral cooperation on and social supervision over forests and collaboration with self-governments on managing public forests are so important.

These issues were in a more broad way addressed yesterday by Director General of the “State Forests” National Holding during the Multi Stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) Session.

System transformation in the recent two decades changed decidedly the social dimension of forest management in Poland. Forestry closer to nature and forest closer to humans – these approaches have emerged as the future development trends. New dimension of the forester’s profession has begun to form – i.e. as a wise manager and protector of nature. That is also a challenge to the professional education and training systems.

But not only in Poland.

Let us remember: forestry is an investment into future – where it is sustainable there it will bring no fortune, however it will improve the quality of life.

The “soft” international law has divided forests into fragments and addressed separately each of them. May I only mention the three most important regulations: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Combating Desertification. They could never act alone, without forests and forestry. Forests are the tool for their implementation. And that refers also to dozens of other regulations concerning nature conservation and environmental protection.

Indeed, forest is a natural unity. Being functionally indivisible it forms a system which sustains the biosphere life and presents an objective integral value, as itself, irrespective of the current needs of the present generation.

Why has the role of forest and forestry in Europe been only confined to development of the rural areas? And yet certain Community documents seem to prove that.

Forest is a multidimensional system. It is a component of the civilisation equilibrium not only in the rural, but also in urban areas.

And also in our minds.

New approach to forest and forest management has sharpened the the feature of the forest and forestry system: decoupling in time and space of the investments from income means that the current generation makes the investments, but the future one will collect the gains thereof; afforestation in the mountain areas has to protect lowlands; we incur the costs – whereas our neighbour collects the profits. Such is the nature of forestry: no time limits and space barriers. Therefore, the common and mandatory regulations on the protection of forests and their management principles are required.

And just such has to be the message addressed to Europe by the Pan-European Process.

And also all over the world.



Mr. Chairman, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland from very beginning participates in the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forest in Europe. The Pan-European Process, likewise other regional processes, forms a part of the UNFF Plan for Action and implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.

Beginning from Rio de Janeiro, where Convention on Forest was rejected, the controversy about forests is still continued on the highest international and national levels. For decades the questions emerge which Europe cannot avoid by means of any careful policies between the countries of North and South:

What is the best institutional solution which could provide for suppression of deforestation in a global scale and introduction of the SFM principles into all types of forests?

Will the “legally non-binding” regulations, as envisaged on the 7th UNFF Session in 2007, be sufficient enough?

Is it just what the planet expects when facing both the climate disturbances and the damage to the life supporting system?

Let me recollect that since 1996, Poland has spoken for establishment of legally binding regulations and proposed to develop in the first phase just such regulations for Europe. In fact Europe has already had such regulations – the documents and resolutions worked out in course of the Pan-European Process.

Thank you for your attention.



PORTUGAL

Mr. Rui Gonçalves

Secretary of State for Rural Development and Forests
Ministry of Agriculture for Rural Development and Fisheries

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The countries engaged in the Ministerial Process on the Protection of Forests in Europe continue to set an example to the world. This example is based on effective ways of cooperation, by agreeing at Government level on voluntary commitments pursuing the conservation and sustainable management of forests in Europe.

As far as Portugal is concerned the level of commitment towards this Process is as strong as it was in the early nineties, when the MCPFE was launched. And our confidence in the merits of the Process is as positive and enthusiastic as it was when we hosted the Lisbon Conference in 1998.

The challenges European forests face today are neither easier nor harder than the ones of the nineties. They are different, perhaps more complex, but they remain as big and tough as they were in the beginning of the Ministerial Process. Nevertheless, we recognise that the urgency to give answers and solve problems is far more pressing than before. Everything seems to happen faster. We are called to take action more often and in various fields simultaneously. Yet, our goal remains the same: achieve Sustainable Forest Management, thus contributing to the sustainable development of our societies.

Throughout the years, the flexible nature of this Process has been able to bring into MCPFE the latest global concerns and commitments providing, afterwards, the correspondent and updated European approaches.

Once again, in this 5th Ministerial Conference, we succeeded in tackling crucial topics for society in general and for forests in particular. Indeed, when renewable energy sources are increasingly important and when scarcity as well as excess of water becomes so frequent and with so devastating consequences, Europe has to step forward and assume its share of responsibilities. Without water and energy, life on Earth collapses. And forests and forest management can and do play a determinant role in this challenge. In fact, forests act as a renewable energy source. And their correct management contributes to protect water resources.

The commitments made under the Resolution “Forests, Wood and Energy” are perfectly in line with the latest developments on that subject in Portugal. We too recognise the role of forests and forest-based products in long term carbon sequestration. On the other hand, we are well aware of the potential of forests biomass as a renewable energy source. By the end of this year, 13 new forest biomass energy plants will be authorized. Their capacity corresponds to the production of 100 MVA, with the total foreseen, by 2010, of 250 MVA¹. This means that we are effectively progressing in our commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by replacing fossil fuels by renewable sources.

¹ MVA – Megavolts-Ampères

But the mobilization of such a huge volume of biomass has for us an extremely relevant added-value: we will be using forest fires' energy. We will capture and use that energy by mobilising forest biomass. And we will transform potentially dangerous energy into a very positive one. This is why the location of the energy plants was chosen taking into account the fire risk.

By doing this, we will strive to decrease forest fire risk, a crucial line of work for Portugal, where, lately, huge efforts have been made in reorganising and reinforcing national forest fires' combat. Local authorities have also joined this common struggle by elaborating Municipal Plans on the Defence of Forests against Fires, a local instrument aiming at putting into action the guidelines set within the National Plan on the Defence of Forests against Fires.

Being well aware that these efforts alone would not solve this recurrent problem, a comprehensive reform is on-going, encompassing the reorganisation and planning of the Portuguese forest.

On the one hand, and covering the whole continental territory, twenty one regional plans on forest planning have entered into force last year. They are the result of a broad participatory process where the inputs from major actors in each of the twenty one regions have been taken into account. These plans, which are sectoral instruments of territorial management, establish the main intervention lines on the occupation and use of the forest areas for each region.

On the other hand, and as more than 80% of the Portuguese forest area is privately owned, the concept of Forest Intervention Area has been launched in order to face another problem – the fragmentation of forest ownership. By gathering small estates into viable forest management units, we believe the conditions to progress towards forest sustainability are created.

We are confident that the articulation of all these planning instruments will contribute, in a decisive way, to reduce the burnt forest area. The large forest destruction by fire registered in the last decades has countless consequences in my country, reflected on huge economic losses, on social impoverishment and land abandonment, and obviously on serious environmental impacts. Among those, allow me to emphasise, the risk of floods and the progress of desertification.

Despite the fact that Portugal was pioneer in correcting the torrential regime by also using afforestation techniques, the effect of fires on mountain areas has increased the risk of floods, especially in the North. In the South and in the most continental regions of the country, on the contrary, the problem is the desertification progress. Forests' disappearance can be a fast occurrence but rehabilitation of degraded land through afforestation measures takes a lot longer. The role of forests and forest management in flood alleviation and in combating desertification and protecting soil becomes unavoidable.

And this brings me to the timely development of the Resolution "Forests and Water ". For Portugal the relevance of this topic is closely related to the provision of life conditions. In a country where you can observe the consequences of either excess or lack of water just a few hundreds of kilometres apart, you tend to realise that forests can and do make a difference. We also tend to realise that when we promote the use of forest-based products, we are promoting forests and, therefore, we are contributing not only to alleviate floods but also to combat desertification. To illustrate this idea, allow me to share the *leit motiv* that circulated during last September Conference of the Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification: "use cork stops to stop desertification".

Water is a worldwide issue. And forests cannot be dissociated from it. Indeed, forests and water are strongly interlinked and interdependent. And we all depend on them.

No individual sectoral policy is able to envisage such complex issues successfully. Cross-sectoral coordination is crucial. Nor can a country by itself deal with forests, water, climate change and energy in a complete and holistic manner. These are transboundary challenges, requiring international cooperation.

This conduct, this notion of progressing is very well captured in the Warsaw Declaration. And again, here, we realise that Portugal is also in the right path – in August 2006, the National Forest Strategy was approved. This Strategy is much more than a reflection document on the forest sector, it sets the main lines and action plans, public and private, for the sector in the decades to come. Society in general and all interested parties actively participated in its elaboration. This Strategy addresses cross-sectoral linkages and is in line with the latest international commitments.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Governments are not alone in accomplishing these tasks. For the successful implementation of the necessary measures, the active involvement of all forest-related stakeholders is mandatory. Complementarily, there is still room to strengthen the co-ordination and articulation with other sectors whose policies interlink with the forest sector in order to ensure coherency in the decision making processes. These are fundamental pre-requisites to achieve sustainable forest management, our main goal.

Having said this, Portugal supports the General Declaration and the Resolutions that we have before us and we are ready to sign them. We consider they provide a solid basis for the continuation of our joint work. And I commit myself to engage all efforts in order to implement them at all levels in my country.

In addition, we would like to welcome and support the Pan-European Forest Week. We consider it sends a strong signal to the world, showing that European institutions and partners are willing to work together in the promotion of forests and the forest sector. At the same time, it provides us an excellent opportunity to jointly respond to global challenges and commitments.

Last but not least, we associate ourselves to the words of solidarity addressed especially to the people of Greece so severely affected by forest fires this summer. Portugal has also faced similar catastrophic events. Efforts to prevent forest fires must be further developed.

Finally, on behalf of Portugal, I would like to express the gratitude of my country and government to the governments of Poland and Norway for having organised the Fifth Ministerial Conference in Warsaw in such a pleasant way.

Thank you.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Mr. Grubii Ghenadie

Head
Forestry Service and Forest Reganaration

Гн. Председатель.
Глубоко уважаемые министры, дамы и господа.

Республика Молдова, являясь страной слабо обеспеченной лесными ресурсами, остро ощущает, оценивает и осознаёт особенную роль и значение лесов, а также необходимость их рационального использования. На национальном уровне, считается, что нынешние леса, которые занимают около 10,7% территории страны, не в состоянии обеспечить надлежащее экологическое равновесие, а из-за того, что на одного жителя приходится менее 0,08 га, они вносят слишком маленький вклад в решение существующих проблем социально – экономического характера.

Эти и другие соображения легли в основу разработки и утверждения Стратегии и Плана действий в области устойчивого развития лесной отрасли страны, на внедрение которых ныне направлены все усилия государства и общества.

На национальном уровне, в целях устойчивого лесопользования, Республика Молдова определило для себя ряд объективов, а именно:

- Сохранение и улучшение лесного биологического разнообразия;
- Увеличение природоохранного и биопродуктивного потенциала естественных лесов;
- Создание новых лесов, в контексте Киотского Протокола и облесение деградированных почв, а также непригодных для сельскохозяйственного пользования, с целью расширения площади лесов и увеличения уровня лесистости территории страны;
- Рациональное использование продуктов и услуг, предоставляемых лесами;
- Уменьшение объёма незаконных рубок и недопущение заготовки древесины путём истощительного пользования;
- Увеличение вклада лесов в решении проблем социально – экономического порядка, и в частности в искоренении бедности и т.д.

Конечно, существует множество проблем, решение которых на данный момент затруднено, в основном из-за финансового дефицита характерного для всех экономик переходного периода. Однако, можно констатировать с удовлетворением, что в стране уже существует богатый опыт в области восстановления, сохранения, экологической реконструкции, охраны, защиты и рационального использования лесов. Также, делается многое в направлении облесения деградированных почв, пораженных эрозией, оползневыми процессами и т.д., и существует оптимистическая надежда, что процессы деградации почв остановятся.

В международном плане, Республика Молдова разделяет озабоченность, связанную с постоянной тенденцией уменьшения площади лесов, уничтожения лесных экосистем, которые являются наиболее внушительными земными природными ресурсами и которые содержат максимальное биологическое разнообразие.

Мы поддерживаем и высоко оцениваем усилия мирового сообщества, в том числе стран Европейского Союза, относительно установления общих задач и конкретных целей, которые предусмотрели бы исчерпывающе обязательства всех сторон в направлении сохранения и восстановления лесов и их устойчивого использования. В этом отношении считаем необходимым структурное усиление международного партнёрства по лесам и использование накопленного опыта в рамках этого.

Мы уверены и желаем подчеркнуть, что при принятии решений по устойчивому лесопользованию, необходимо соблюдать суверенность всех стран, с учётом их международных обязательств, а также интересов сообществ и различных социальных слоёв, в качестве важных консенсуальных условий по увеличению эффективности совместных усилий.

В заключении желаем выразить надежду, что V-ая Министерская Конференция по сохранению лесов Европы, обозначит коренной момент в европейской и мировой политике, будет эффективно способствовать объединению общих усилий и обеспечит благоприятные условия для сохранения и восстановления всех лесов.

Республика Молдова подпишет Варшавскую Декларацию, первую и вторую Варшавские Резолюции.

Благодарю за внимание.

Спасибо, Гн Председатель.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Valery Roshchupkin

Head
Federal Forest Agency

Уважаемый господин председатель, члены делегаций, дамы и господа!

Прежде всего, позвольте присоединиться к ранее уже прозвучавшим благодарностям в адрес наших польских коллег за хорошую работу Секретариата Конференции и, конечно же, за прекрасную организацию самой Конференции.

Разрешите кратко обобщить основные шаги Российской Федерации в лесном секторе после нашей предыдущей конференции в Вене.

- За прошедшие годы мы изменили в корне лесное законодательство, которое определило:
 - новую систему лесных отношений, в основе своей – гражданско-правовых;
 - принципиальное расширение прав субъектов федерации;
 - новый порядок доступа к лесному ресурсу, обусловленный, прежде всего, инвестиционными приоритетами;
 - ответственность бизнеса за ведение лесного хозяйства.
- Инициирована масштабная программа лесовосстановления, в том числе через реализацию проектов так называемых «киотских лесов».
- Уточнены приоритеты развития лесопромышленного комплекса с упором на глубокую переработку древесины и, соответственно, реализацию приоритетных инвестиционных проектов. Одновременно ужесточена лесная таможенная политика.
- При прямой поддержке высшего руководства страны принимаются комплексные меры по пресечению незаконного оборота древесины.

Это далеко не исчерпывающий перечень. Однако даже из вышесказанного очевидно, что в России развернута огромная работа по перестройке лесопромышленного комплекса, имеющая национальное и международное значение.

За эти же годы произошла резкая активизация нашего международного сотрудничества по лесным вопросам.

В 2005 году Россия инициировала запуск международного процесса «Правоприменение и управление в лесном секторе» (ФЛЕГ) по Европе и Северной Азии.

В прошлом году Россия стала полноправным членом ФАО ООН, а на 18-й сессии Комитета по лесам выступила с инициативой создания системы глобального лесного мониторинга.

Три недели назад мы имели честь принимать в Санкт-Петербурге руководителей лесных ведомств девяти крупнейших лесных стран мира, где обсудили ряд важнейших вопросов глобального формата, в том числе по взаимосвязи лесного сектора и изменений климата.

Российская сторона стала инициатором проведения ежегодных международных юниорских лесных конкурсов. Эта инициатива получила поддержку многих национальных лесных администраций, а также ФАО ООН. При этом мы исходим из понимания, что популяризация лесного образования – это наиболее эффективная инвестиция в будущее.

Российские лесопромышленные ассоциации взяли активный курс на сопряжение стратегических целей, задач и структуры лесного комплекса России с Европейской лесной технологической платформой («Видение–2030»).

Несомненно, Европа является нашим стратегическим партнером в международном лесном секторе. 80% европейских лесов находится в России. Можно смело констатировать, что Россия развернулась лицом к панъевропейскому лесному процессу и готова в нем играть более активную роль.

Мы детально проанализировали тексты Варшавской Декларации, резолюций и министерских заявлений Конференции. Российская делегация поддерживает их.

При этом считаю необходимым акцентировать особое внимание исполнительных органов Конференции на важность выработки реалистичной Рабочей Программы на следующие 4 года, сбалансировано учитывающей интересы сторон и возможности реализации принимаемых обязательств, с последующей оценкой их результативности.

Мы готовы активно ее поддержать и в этом контексте имеем честь проинформировать вас о следующих российских инициативах, связанных с озвученными приоритетами Конференции:

в контексте Министерского заявления по лесным пожарам:

Россия готова активизировать сотрудничество по формированию международно-сопряженной системы региональных центров лесопожарного мониторинга и быстрого реагирования.

в контексте Министерского заявления по Панъевропейской лесной неделе:

Россия готова провести международную конференцию высокого уровня «Лес и климат» с акцентом на инновации, инвестиции и развитие кадрового потенциала в лесном секторе для эффективной адаптации к изменениям климата. (Интерес к этому предложению уже проявили Всемирный банк и ФАО ООН, а также наши партнеры из крупнейших лесных стран мира.)

в контексте Варшавской Декларации по разделу «Глобально-региональное сотрудничество и партнерства»:

Россия предлагает провести на своей территории в 2010 году совместное заседание Европейской и Азиатско-Тихоокеанской региональных лесных комиссий ФАО. (С учетом своего географического положения Россия готова выступить в роли активного проводника и катализатора взаимных лесных интересов панъевропейского и азиатского регионов.)

В состав приоритетных направлений Рабочей Программы Конференции предлагаем также включить следующие практические задачи:

- разработка региональных программ по минимизации последствий массового усыхания бореальных и умеренных лесов, увязанных с международным переговорным процессом по изменению климата;

- совершенствование и гармонизация механизмов планирования долгосрочных инвестиций в лесном секторе Европы («Дорожная карта» и «Лесная технологическая платформа»);
- осуществление целевых европейских программ переподготовки кадров лесного сектора (по мнению всех участников российского лесного бизнеса – это самый острый приоритет для развития отрасли).

В заключение, позвольте пожелать нашим норвежским коллегам успехов и удачи в координации работы на новом этапе нашего панъевропейского лесного процесса. Российская Федерация готова активно сотрудничать с Секретариатом в Осло и со всеми заинтересованными сторонами в ее эффективной реализации.

English version

Esteemed Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I am pleased to join previous speakers in expressing sincere gratitude to our Polish colleagues for the smooth operation of the MCPFE Liaison Unit, and, certainly, for the excellent organization of the Conference itself.

Let me briefly summarize Russia's main steps in its forest sector since our last Ministerial Conference in Vienna.

- Over these years, we have fundamentally revised our forest legislation that introduced:
 - a new system of forest relations, based on civil law;
 - substantial expansion of forest management rights for the constituent regions of the Russian Federation;
 - new framework for forest resource allocation, driven primarily by investment priorities;
 - definition of private sector responsibilities in forest management.
- large-scale reforestation program was initiated, including, among other things, projects for establishment of the so-called 'Kyoto forests'.
- Our priorities for forest sector development have been redefined with an emphasis on value-added wood processing and, accordingly, on the priority forest investment projects. At the same time, the forest customs policies have been tightened.
- Backed by direct support from the country's top leadership, we have been able to launch comprehensive interagency measures to combat illegal timber trade.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list. But even this clearly demonstrates that Russia has embarked upon a vast array of activities to restructure its forest management systems, which bears major national and international significance.

Over the same years, we have rapidly increased the scope and intensity of our international forest cooperation.

In 2005, Russia initiated the launch of an international process to improve Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in Europe and North Asia (ENA-FLEG).

Last year, Russia became a full-fledged member of the FAO, and at the 18 Session of its Committee on Forestry, we put forward an initiative to develop a global forest monitoring system.

Three weeks ago, we had the pleasure of hosting, in St. Petersburg, forestry agency leaders from the nine largest forest countries ('MegaFlorestais') to discuss a number of issues of global significance, including interaction of the forest sector and climate change.

The Russian side also became the initiator of annual International Junior Forester Competitions. This idea has already gained support from many national forest administrations and also from the FAO. We based these efforts on our strong belief that promotion of forest education and training is one of the most efficient investments in the future.

Russia's forest industry associations are now actively pursuing efforts to align the strategic goals, objectives and structure of our forest sector with the European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform ('Vision-2030').

Europe is clearly a strategic partner of Russia in the international forest sector. Eighty percent of Europe's forest is located in Russia. One can firmly state that Russia has turned its face to the Pan-European forest process and is ready to play a more proactive role in it.

We have carefully reviewed the drafts of the 'Warsaw Declaration', Resolutions and Ministerial Statements of the Conference. The Russian delegation endorses them.

At the same time, I would like to draw special attention of the MCPFE working bodies to the importance of developing a realistic Work Programme for the next four years that would carefully balance the interests of participants with the likelihood of implementation of assumed commitments, to be followed by an evaluation of their effectiveness.

We are ready to actively support its development and, in this context, we are pleased to inform you of the following Russian initiatives in relation to the priority areas discussed by the Conference:

in relation to the Ministerial Statement on Forest Fires,

Russia is ready to engage in a more intensive cooperation towards developing an internationally connected network of regional forest fire monitoring and rapid response centres.

in relation to the Ministerial Statement on the Pan-European Forest Week,

Russia is ready to host a high-level International Conference on Forests and Climate that would focus on forest sector innovations, investments and human resource capacity building for purposes of effective adaptation to climate change. This proposal has already aroused interest on the part of the World Bank and the FAO as well as our partners from the largest forest countries of the world.

in relation to the Warsaw Declaration's provisions on Global-Regional Cooperation and Partnerships,

Russia is prepared to host, in 2010, a joint meeting of the FAO European and Asia-Pacific Forestry Commissions. Taking advantage of its geographical location, Russia is ready to serve as an active promoter and catalyst of mutually beneficial forest interests of the Pan-European and Asia-Pacific Regions.



We also propose to include the following practical tasks in the list of high-priority directions of the MCPFE Work Programme:

- Develop regional-scale programmes to mitigate the consequences of the mass-scale mortality in boreal and temperate forests and ensure their stronger interaction with international climate change negotiations;
- Enhance and harmonize strategic planning tools for long-term forest sector investments in Europe (e.g. Forest Industry Roadmap and Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform); and
- Implement targeted European programmes for forest sector retraining (all stakeholders in the Russian forest industry agree that this takes highest priority for the future sector development).

In conclusion, I would like to turn to our Norwegian colleagues to wish them success in coordinating our work at the new stage of the Pan-European forest process. The Russian Federation is committed to actively cooperate with Liaison Unit Oslo and with all interested parties towards the effective implementation of these efforts.



SERBIA

Mr. Danilo Golubović

State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be able to participate on this conference aiming to show the extent in which the survival of human kind on this planet which is our only home depends on our own actions and our relation towards the natural resources. This is especially important when we have in mind that in our European region in the last couple of years we have witnessed great floods, droughts and fires whose scope and intensity are set to destroy the heritage of human kind and thoroughly alter the way of life of the population in the endangered areas. Only in Serbia, 33 000 hectares of forests and forest land suffered from forest fires this year.

The forest ecosystems represent one of the key conditions of our survival and the unique natural resource whose contribution to the general welfare is difficult to acknowledge in the complete and just manner. Thus, the significance of this conference in acknowledging and evaluating forest contributions to the contemporary man is immense.

The significance of forests in this sense and all of its formally acknowledged and yet not fully acknowledged functions is recognized in our country as well. In the recent years, in the difficult period of transition and struggle to preserve its own sovereignty, Serbia invested significant efforts in the field of forests and forestry, environmental protection and nature protection.

The numerous initiated processes aim at the capacity building and institutional development on the national level in the aim of facilitating implementation of the obligations taken over on the regional and global level.

Serbia adopted the set of strategic documents with a significant influence on the forestry sector which, through the National Development Strategy, set the objectives and proposed the measures for the protection and improvement of forests and forestry. The elaboration of the new legal framework for the forestry sector is under way. It is aimed to put the strategy designations into practice with full respect, primarily, for the forest sustainable development concept, as well as the needs of the population dependant on forest, the needs of the rural development and nature protection, all in accordance with the national characteristics.

The future National forestry action program will define the necessary measures and resources for the realization of planned objectives and thus contribute to the fulfillment of the part of obligations emanating from the documents we are taking over today.

Serbia is an active participant in all the international processes related to forest and environment on the global and regional level which was undoubtedly confirmed by the recent organization of the 6th Ministerial conference “Environment for Europe” from 10–12 October in Belgrade.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Serbia gladly accepts the signing of the documents of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the protection of forests in Europe. The general declaration and two resolutions, in whose elaboration we participated, express the aspirations of the citizens of Serbia and the forestry sector for the increase of the forest area, protection and improvement of the existing forests.

We are the witnesses of the insufficient respect and acknowledgement of the significance of forests and forestry and the neglect of the forest contribution to the welfare of the population, mitigation of the effect of climate changes, conservation and improvement of the water quality and quantity, but also to the fulfillment of the spiritual and cultural needs of the contemporary man. In this respect, we think that the further work on the elaboration of more precise methodologies for evaluation of all forest functions is necessary.

Serbia will continue to be an active participant in this significant process and put all the effort in imprinting the idea and concepts of the forest sector sustainable development in the minds of people – from politicians to young generations whom we owe to leave the better and healthier environment.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Mr. Miroslav Jureňa

Minister
Ministry of Agriculture

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues Ministers, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to address on behalf of the Slovak Republic the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in the historical city of Warsaw. Let me thank to our hosts from Poland for an excellent organization of the conference and making of creative atmosphere needed for the successful course of the conference.

Going back to the seventeen years old history of the Ministerial Conferences process, the theme of forest-human relationship was discussed many times. The 5th Ministerial Conference brings us an important message with regard to the future. Forests for the quality of life of people in Europe, it is the message which we would like to present to the broad public audience through proposed declaration and the resolutions.

Forests played in Slovakia an important role within living memory, presently they cover 42% of the territory of Slovakia. The mountainous areas cover 70% of our country. Such a conditions highlight a very important tasks of forests for maintaining the quality of life for rural as well as urban communities. Regarding the sustainable forest management we have achieved positive results especially within the area of preservation and protection of the genetic resources as well as biodiversity conservation. These results are backed by the continuous increase of the forest cover, out of which 60% of the forests are natural and 5% is covered by primeval forests. Relatively high degree of preservation of the natural structure of the forests in the Slovak Republic is reflected in their significance for the rural development and landscape and nature conservation.

The quarter of the total area of the Slovak Republic belongs to the habitats which European professional community recognized as rare biotopes in the frame of Natura 2000 network. This high proportion means to us the commitment of maintaining and protection of biodiversity not only for the citizens of the Slovak Republic, but for the citizens of the whole Europe and other regions of the world too.

Our task is to manage and protect the forests in a way, which ensures the biodiversity of the ecosystems as well as enables the provision of the goods and services needed for improving the quality of human life.

Slovak Republic will support such initiatives and by this contribute to the increased competitiveness and vitality of the European forest sector with the final aim to protect and rationally use the natural resources.

Slovak forestry may provide a broad scale of contributions to the international forestry dialogue. From many of them I mention the rich traditions of science and education, management of the forests with high degree of naturalness and biodiversity together with continual secured supply of quality wood raw material within the complex geopolitical conditions of Central Europe. Those as well as other experiences may forestry of the Slovak republic offer as an example of application of the sustainable forest management in practice during three centuries.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we support the adoption on Ministerial Declaration, Resolutions and Statements, we are prepared to implement them to our national strategies, programmes and initiatives. The importance of these documents for us is considered in two ways. On the first side, they again confirm the unity of European countries and ability of consensus in formation of the strategies for management of forest resources and on the other side they address and clarify the significance of the forests for contemporary society and its future development. In the content of the documents we especially value the proactive approach for solutions on the raising demand for ecological and social functions of the forests, creation of the conception for policy integration of forests and water as well as the proposals for the measures aiming at the continually growing demands for wood as renewable and ecological raw material for the various aims use.

We appreciate the Ministerial Statement on the Pan-European Forest Week 2008, which will enable effective means of information and inclusion of public to the questions of forest protection and management in Europe as well as the initiative directed towards the integration of partnership relations with international organizations such as FAO, UNECE Timber Committee and others. We also fully support and join to the results of the 7th Session of United Nations Forum on Forests, where the will of the world community for joint approach in the application of sustainable forest management principles all over the world was reflected.

This year conference is again providing us the possibility to state the strategies for the future management of forests. The importance of forests lies in the provision of various essentials including water, necessary for the preservation of the human life not only in our region but on the whole Earth. Our common obligation and commitment is to protect the forests and approach them with such a responsibility as to ourselves.

In the end of my statement, let me wish all the best to the colleague of mine, the Minister from the Kingdom of Norway for taking the role of the organizer of the next ministerial conference. I believe that Slovak specialists will also contribute with their share to our common effort for maintaining and protecting the forests for the present and future generations. In relation to this, let me present the interest of the Slovak Republic to be the host of the 8th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Thank you for your kind attention.

SLOVENIA

Mr. Iztok Jarc

Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Ministers,

The importance of forests and forestry for the quality of life for present and future generations is growing in Europe and worldwide. Environmental, economic and social forest functions are becoming more and more interlinked. The concept of sustainable forest management, which has been developing within the Pan-European Ministerial Process of Protection of Forests in Europe so successfully, was officially recognised as the most appropriate means of achieving the Four Global Objectives on Forests this year at the United Nations Forum on Forests. We should be aware of the positive impact our process has had on the global forest policy dialogue so far and should therefore continue playing an active role in future also. With the Warsaw Declaration we have a clearly defined program to follow in this respect.

The topics of the Warsaw Resolutions, namely Forests, Wood and Energy as well as Forests and Water very well correspond to the challenges in both energy and environment sectors that are high on political agendas for our common future.

In Slovenia, where forests, with nearly 60 percent of the land area, represent an environmentally beneficial landscape component and have been managed in a close-to-nature way for decades, the guidelines developed under the Warsaw Resolution I are of particular importance. Mobilization of wood especially from private forests, which prevail in our county, is a challenge, which deserved particular attention in our national forest program, which we have just been reviewing and is due for adoption in the Parliament. The fossil fuel substitution effects of wood in comparison to other raw materials could still be exploited much more efficiently, especially if wood products were given priority and if recovered wood was used for energy. Some studies show that in Slovenia the forest sector could potentially contribute 30 percent to CO₂ (carbon dioxide) emissions reduction.

Water management in the changing climate, where periods of drought on one hand and intense precipitations causing floods, landslides and torrents on the other are apparently becoming much more frequent, is very much connected to the management of forests. Highlighting this connection in the context of economic valuation is another very important message we are sending by signing the Warsaw Resolution II.

Advocating functions of the forests, which otherwise stand and grow quiet, is nowadays very important in order to gain adequate support for their rather complex management, where numerous actors and interest groups are included. We see the Pan-European Forest Week, which will be organised in 2008, as a great opportunity, which should have an impact on the target groups not only on the European, but also on national and sub-national levels. We also think it is important to include all interested parties in this dialogue.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The MCPFE process has so far, thanks to the hard work accomplished by Finland, Portugal, Austria and Poland with collaboration of us all, brought excellent documents on nearly all aspects



of sustainable forest management. We would therefore support the idea to begin, building on commitments of all Ministerial Conferences, a new process of preparation of a legally binding instrument on sustainable forest management in Europe, having in mind the potential impact such an instrument could have on the global forest dialogue.

We would like to congratulate the Polish colleagues for the efficient coordination, which resulted in the highly relevant and important Warsaw documents we are signing today and wish the Norwegian colleagues to succeed in an equally, if not even more important task.

Thank you.



SPAIN

Mr. Jose Luis Herranz Sáez

Director-General for Biodiversity
Ministry of Environment

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is for me an honour to take the floor on behalf of Spain in this forum that represents all European countries' commitment for the conservation and sustainable management of our common forest heritage. Mainly I would want to congratulate the hosts of this Conference for its perfect organisation.

It is to be highlighted the great interest Spain attaches to global and regional forest policy, so that Fourth International Conference on Wildfire that took place in Sevilla last may, or Eighth Conference of the Parties to UNCCD in Madrid last September could be mentioned. Also, in the same line, my country not only supports but co-sponsored the UN Resolution that Establishes 2011 as International Year of Forests, and we are looking forward to co-operate very close with Norway in the celebration of the 6th Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe and remain committed to organise and host the 7th Conference in Spain.

I also have the personal satisfaction to come to this Conference with our homework done since the last one in Vienna, four years ago. The forest planning instrument at national level approved by our Government, denominated as Spanish Forest Plan, is currently in implementation, as well as a Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity. The first stage of this implementation has been a new Forest Act that is already in force, which is called to get, in the long run, the Sustainable Forest Management in our country.

In these conditions, noting that the Work Programme that was approved after Vienna Conference has been completed, and that Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon and Vienna Resolutions continue at good speed in their implementation both at Spanish scale and in many European countries, and noting also that indicators are evolving in a way that seems that forest area and its management are improving simultaneously in Europe, we have reasons to feel optimist.

Nevertheless, the main optimistic factors are not so the good results obtained up to now, important with no doubt, as the fact that we do not feel satisfied and remain awake to the emerging challenges and threats that are coming over our forests; a proof of this is that we are today here, reinforcing our co-operation and taking new commitments for the protection and sustainable management of our forests.

In this sense, I can say it has been a satisfaction for us joining the GCC after the Vienna Conference. We are really grateful to the Polish, Norwegian and in special our Austrian colleagues, that are leaving the group, for their understanding, and for their friendliness. It is time to say we will continue working with them and at the same time we are looking forward a new stage towards the next future.

For Southern European country like Spain, with a particular climatic and soil conditions, both Resolutions we are to sign in this Conference are equally important. The promotion of woody biomass use that we are doing in the first one means that all the energy lost in the forest when

this biomass is burning out of control, should be used to combat climate change, so at the same time we get greenhouse gases net emissions reduction, while enhancing the sinks, protecting forest existence in an even more inappropriate climate. It is clear that, for Spain, fight against climate change is the fight against desert advance.

And the relationship between forests and water, that lead us to the payment for environmental services, in a country that is suffering droughts and floods almost every year, increasing in terms of frequency and intensity, is equally important.

Our contribution both to these Ministerial Conferences and to Millennium Development Goals is to be achieved in this respect through the specific tasks of the United Nations Office for the Water Decade, opened in Zaragoza – Spain – last October.

I also want to take this opportunity to invite all countries to participate in the next International Exhibition, which theme is “Water and Sustainable Development”. Its objective is strengthen the essential role of water for people so they know, from the environmental point of view, the importance of this resource integrated management, water ecosystems, drought, water in the most extreme of its features, soil erosion, desertification, and forests as water cycles regulator.

For all these, we are hopeful seeing that European countries meet once again in this Conference at so high level represented, to make steps forward in these directions, and also to make sure our firm will and commitment to continue together our way towards sustainably managed forests all along Europe.

This process, that begun even before Río de Janeiro Earth Summit, is also seen as an example by other regions, some of which are today with us as observers, and, as is demonstrated in this Conference, has not lost the impulse received in 1990.

Coming to the end, knowledge, planning, co-operation, conservation and enhancement of biological diversity, multifunctionality, information and awareness increase and continuous monitoring are the basis of sustainable forest management of our forests, built on the will to carry out the commitments taken, that I understand shall be the ultimate objectives of this Conference.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

SWEDEN

Mr. Rolf Eriksson

State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture

Honorable Ministers and Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Swedish Government I would like to thank Poland for your invitation to this ministerial conference. As a host nation for this conference’s secretariat you have done an excellent work since the last conference which took place in Vienna in 2003.

We appreciate the work which has been done during these years and the process is a proof of a good and long co-operation.

The themes of the ministerial declaration and the two resolutions that we will agree on during these two days, show that the MCPFE process is capable of tackling today’s most topical challenges in forestry and forest policy in Europe. Sweden appreciates that this process is able to follow the fast developments we are facing in today’s world and takes needed actions. In our opinion this approach is a good way of working if we want to stay in the frontline of sustainable development. Our renewable forest resources give us a perfect opportunity to market our important sector.

Over the past decade numerous regional and sub-regional processes in different policy areas and sectors have been developed that are of interest of the forest sector. One example is the regional energy co-operation named BASREC. The regional and sub-regional approaches are natural developments because of various climate conditions, interests and traditions in different parts of Europe.

We have now reached a stage where we should start to make better use of these well functioning networks and pools of expertise. Forestry and forest policy affect and are affected by a complex set of changes in our society and policy areas, which means that this kind of cooperation is needed. A globalized world, the increased urbanization and “quarterly economy” requires adaptation from all sides. We need to coordinate actions. Next year, for example, working programs will be prepared by the MCPFE, the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nation’s Economic Commission for Europe. Here, we have a good possibility to match the parallel working programs. If we synchronize joint working programs and strategies we will make the outmost use of the various organizations and their comparative advantages. Also the sub-regional input is important and will strengthen the MCPFE process. The coming years should also be used to fully market this coordinated and well prepared forest cluster outside our sector and in this way enhance the preconditions for better cooperation with other sectors.

Climate change and the need to find substitution for decreasing reserves of fossil fuels have led to an accelerating need of bioenergy production. Measures how to increase production and harvest of biomass in a sustainable way are good examples where we need to join forces in wider circles. Further on, we should use this opportunity to diversify supply and in addition take our responsibility fighting climate change.

Forest biomass has once again shown its potential in reaching new solutions. Sweden is today targeting increased forest production without consuming our natural resources. It is necessary that

we are able to meet the demands of an increased use and production of bioenergy and still have a competitive forest industry. Of course, this means challenges such as safeguarding biodiversity, our cultural heritage and recreation possibilities.

Sweden has a long tradition in sustainable forest management, although the way we define sustainability changes over time. We established the first version of the forestry act already in 1903 and we carried out our first forest inventory already in the 1920's. In the present forestry act, biomass production and environmental objectives are given equal importance.

The MCPFE process has been an important player in defining the framework for sustainable forest management and thereby strengthening forestry and forest policy in all European countries. It has been going on for more than 15 years. Knowing the importance of adapting today's and future challenges; Sweden feels that it is time to review what has been done and on the basis of this move forward. We would like to call on an external review of this process in 2008, to find out what added values it has delivered. We should identify the lacks and means of success. On the basis of this, we can propose correcting measures and needs for reformation, if needed.

I am looking forward to the continuation of the MCPFE work and wish our neighbor country Norway good luck in its work as the host country during the coming years.

Thank you.

SWITZERLAND

Mr. Andreas Götz

Vicedirector
Federal Office for the Environment

Esteemed Minister Mr. Jan Szyszko,
Esteemed Minister Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Swiss Government, I would like to thank our hosts for their invitation and hospitality. I would also like to thank the Polish and Norwegian governments for the great dedication shown in the implementation of the Resolutions of the Fourth Ministerial Conference in Vienna. Let me express our special thanks to the members of the "Liaison Unit" for the outstanding co-operation over the past four years and the excellent preparation of this conference. A lot has happened in the forestry sector since Vienna. At the time forestry experts correctly predicted just how strongly factors arising from other economic and political sectors can affect the forest. These include rising energy prices, climate policy imperatives and society's everincreasing requirements of the forest. All of these influences fundamentally alter the basic operating conditions of the forestry sector. Moreover, they engender new conflicts that we must deal with. But this is nothing new for foresters. Sustainable forest management has always constituted the art of striking a balance between wide-ranging needs and requirements. And Switzerland is ready and willing to make an important contribution to the sustainable management of the resource forest in Europe.

Demand for coniferous wood as a high quality and sustainable construction material and for deciduous wood as a valuable renewable energy source has become much stronger again. Things are afoot again in the forest: in our own densely populated country, we have noticed that the generation of "credibility" and "trust" in the forestry sector is emerging as a central challenge. In our view, what works in this context is participative planning processes that involve the local population and create regionally-supported planning bases. A partnership-based approach to planning is also gaining in significance in relation to the long-term safeguarding of the wide-ranging functions of the forest. Thus, in Switzerland, we are currently working on the development of an ecological safety net in the form of basic requirements for close to nature silviculture.

The influence of climate change on the forests and forestry strategies for the reduction of the risks associated with natural hazards have also become key topics for us. The traditional role of the forests in hazard prevention has been highlighted once again against the background of the flood events of recent years. The filter effect of the forest in the production of high-quality drinking water has also become a focus of attention in recent times. The key question here is how optimum groundwater protection can be provided and who pays for it, in particular at a time when wood utilization has become more attractive than it was for many years. Thus, intersectoral cooperation with the water suppliers is also gaining in significance in this area.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A solid foundation was laid for co-operation on the protection of forests in Europe through the previous four ministerial conferences. Even if it is very ambitious, the aim of comprehensive



sustainability in the forest, which takes the ecological, economic and social requirements of society into account and on an equal footing, must continue to be seen as valid. From the perspective of Switzerland, the MCPFE has set some significant milestones over the past 16 years. This process is taken seriously in the context of international forest policy as it continually provides opportunities to approach and foster critical topics and issues in great detail. On behalf of the Swiss Government, I would like to assure you of our continuing participation and political support. We shall give our full backing to the development of an effective programme of work, the continuation of the work that has already been initiated and the implementation of the Warsaw resolutions.

The MCPFE makes it possible to pool strengths, develop innovative solutions and boost our profile as a sector. With a view to reinforcing, Looking at the future of MCPFE, Switzerland first of all supports the planned Pan-European Forest Week due to take place next year. The week should reinforce the synergies that exist with the other forestrelevant European processes and help to resolve key forestry issues on an increasingly intersectoral basis. In case the pressures on the European forests due to the changing context is further increasing, it might be worthwhile to assess the idea of an European Convention on Forests brought forward by Austria.

Thank you very much.

TURKEY

Mr. Osman Kahveci

General Director of Forestry

on behalf of

Mr. Veysel Eroglu

Minister of Environment and Forestry

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my gratitude and privilege to address this Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. I am certain that the conference will be as valuable as the previous four ministerial conferences.

Forestry in Turkey, is very deep rooted and forests are well known for their contribution to basic human needs and to the stability of life support systems. Yet they need greater recognition of their potential in provision of much more services. I am sure that the theme of this conference and the resolutions will help us in demonostrating the multiple dimensions of forests beyond their conventional products and services.

We have spent a lot effort in meeting the challenges of a growing and evolving population, particulary, as a response to the Lisbon Conference, we have given priority to the social functions of forests. The establishment of over 60 urban forests around highly populated cities is one of the example of our actions. The number of recreational and picnical areas for the use of society has almost tripled reaching 500. The involvement of society and stakeholders in our activities has been relatively intensified. Upon the preparation of our National Forestry Program, we have tried to set participatory mechanisms as it was defined in the documents of Vienna Conference. At the same time, we have never ignored the economic and ecologic functions of forests. The rehabilitation of certain valuable stands of semi-natural degraded forests is still our priority. Each year, we almost add 30–40 thousand hectares of forests to the existing forest resource. Wood production has risen to 10 million cubicmeter from 7,5. And we have recorded praiseworthy success in combating forest fires.

Mr. Chairman,

I do not want to eloborate on the progress and achivements of the forestry in Turkey. And I do not claim that what we have done is the best example of what can be done. On the contrary, we are well aware of the fact that full delivery of forest products and services to sustainable development requires much more effort. We have a long way to go, and the characteristics of our problems are quite different from those of other European countries.

Excellencies,

As regards to the resolutions yielded from this conference; we fully support the enhancement of the role of forests in supplying biomass for renewable energy and for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. As a matter of fact, a big portion of Turkish forests are managed for fuelwood production. But the consumption patterns are not well developed and the efficient use of wood and wood residues for energy should be one of our prime concerns. I hope we will be able to cooperate with you on this issue, and I have no doubt that in doing so, we will manage to contribute to the quality of life of our people.

Forestry activities in our country provide valuable contributions to eradicating poverty and ensuring food security by generating employment and income particularly for forest villagers which amounts to 7 million. The forests, no doubtly, provide a wide spectrum of goods and services needed by almost whole country. The management of watershed areas, fragile forest ecosystems, preservation of wildlife, protected areas and national parks are environmental roles that have long been incorporated to our management regimes. The conservation of water and soil is may be the oldest practise that we affiliate to forestry in Turkey, like many other countries do. But as we have been talking about drinkable fresh water much and much recently, we realize how important role that forests play in balancing water cycle and protecting fresh water sources.

Fresh water is one of the important issue in Turkey. Particularly after the drought in the last summer, concern for fresh water has occupied a high position in our national agenda.

It is not new debate, of course, to bring in the idea of incorporating economic value of water related forest services into relevant water policies or strategies, but it is certainly not easy to reach the expected tangible result overnight. The good news is that the Government of Turkey has decided and realized incorporating the State Water Affairs General Directorate under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Now both the official authorities for forestry and water are under the same roof. This promising change will certainly ease the coordination of forest and water policies.

Mr. Chairman,
Honorable Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Minister for Environment and Forestry, I would like to express full support to the Warsaw declaration, and to the two ministerial statements. I would also like to reaffirm our commitment to implement the two resolutions in the best possible way.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me congratulate our gracious host, Poland, and the other member countries of the General Co-ordinating Committee, for the excellent preparations and arrangements for this conference.

Thank you.

UKRAINE

Mr. Viktor Sivets

Head
State Forestry Committee

От имени 80-тысячного коллектива лесоводов Украины позвольте приветствовать вас и поблагодарить за предоставленную Украине возможность выступить на этой авторитетной международной встрече.

На сегодняшний день в мире существует много организаций и процессов тем или иным образом имеющих отношение к лесам. Однако мне хотелось бы отдельно выделить роль министерских конференций по защите лесов Европы и важность этого процесса для лесного хозяйства Украины. Благодаря диалогу, проводимому с момента учреждения конференций в 1990 году, удалось углубить и интенсифицировать политическое и научное взаимодействие между лесными секторами разных стран в Европе, наладить успешное сотрудничество по ряду важных вопросов, связанных с лесами и лесным хозяйством. При этом, необходимо отметить, что данный диалог охватывает не только представителей правительств стран-участниц, но и немалое количество лиц, глубоко заинтересованных данной проблематикой, как например неправительственные организации экологического и социального направления, ассоциации лесовладельцев и лесопромышленников, а также межправительственные организации и структуры. Это позволяет своевременно реагировать и откликаться на меняющиеся проблемы общества. Если в середине 90-х Европа была обеспокоена выполнением требований устойчивого управления лесами, то на сегодняшний день на первый план выступают вопросы роли лесов в глобальном изменении климата, мобилизации лесных ресурсов с целью увеличения использования древесины как биотоплива, повышения социальной ответственности работников лесного сектора.

Украина присоединилась к общеевропейскому процессу защиты лесов и последовательно работала над выполнением подписанных ею резолюций.

За прошедших 17 лет в украинском лесном хозяйстве произошло немало позитивных изменений, особенно в последние годы:

- Принята и успешно выполняется государственная программа «Леса Украины» на период 2002–2015.
- В прошлом году приняты изменения в Лесной кодекс Украины, призванные гармонизировать лесное и земельное законодательство и содействовать принципам устойчивого развития, улучшению экологической ситуации, увеличению площади лесов.
- Разработана и принята в 2006 году концепция реформирования и развития лесного хозяйства.
- Значительно расширены работы по лесной сертификации, сформирована система проведения мониторинга лесов Украины.
- Значительно увеличены объемы строительства лесных дорог, что не только позитивно влияет на эффективность лесозаготовительных работ, но и помогает в решении

социальных вопросов местного населения в плане обеспеченности работой, развития туризма и т.д.

- С целью улучшения инвестиционной привлекательности лесозаготовительного производства ежегодно увеличиваются объемы выполнения работ субъектами негосударственной формы собственности.
- Активизирована работа с общественностью в лесном секторе. С прошлого года на ежегодной основе проводится акция «Будущее леса в твоих руках». В этом году в ходе проведения акции было высажено 83 млн. штук семян и саженцев лесных пород. В акции вместе с лесниками приняли участие более 107 тысяч человек, в том числе более 55 тысяч учащейся молодежи.

Присоединение Украины к пан-европейскому процессу по сохранению и защите лесов дало возможность определить уровень ведения национального лесного хозяйства в сравнении с европейскими странами. Мы с успехом доказали, что украинское лесоводство как научная школа и практическое ведение лесного хозяйства отвечает европейским критериям устойчивого развития, а в некоторых направлениях имеет даже более жесткие принципы и подходы к хозяйствованию. Мы включились в активный обмен информацией и выполнение серии международных проектов, направленных на согласование национальных аспектов лесного хозяйства с международными, оценку наличия и состояния лесных ресурсов и мониторинга влияния загрязнения воздуха на леса. Выполнение международных обязательств также помогло открыть пути для получения международной технической помощи и инвестиций.

Украина поддерживает вынесенные на обсуждение в рамках этой встречи резолюции и декларацию и намерена их подписать. Представляется также важным и интересным инициатива по проведению пан-европейской недели леса в октябре 2008 года. Проведение мероприятия такого масштаба не останется не замеченным и будет содействовать выполнению поставленных перед лесным сектором целей.

Мы верим, что подписание вынесенных сегодня на рассмотрение документов действительно может способствовать в стабилизации обстановки, связанной с изменением климата, сохранением природных ресурсов, усилением водозащитных функций, а в целом улучшения качества нашей с вами жизни.

Благодарю за внимание.

English version

On behalf of 80 thousand Ukrainian foresters let me welcome you and thank for the opportunity given to Ukraine to address this important and respectable international meeting.

At present there are a lot of organizations and initiatives on the national and international level related to forest. But I would like to stress the role of Ministerial Conferences on the protection of forests in Europe and importance of this process for forestry of Ukraine. Thanks to the dialog provided since MCPFE process launching in 1990, political and scientific co-operation between forest sectors in different European countries was strengthened and established close and successful collaboration on a wide range of issues related to forests and forestry. It is worth to be mentioned that this dialogue not only involves governmental representatives of the participating countries, but

also a variety of different stakeholders including environmental and social NGOs, forest owners' associations, the forest industry, as well as intergovernmental organisations. This allows timely reacting and responding to changing society needs. If in the middle of 90's Europe was concerned with implementation of requirements of sustainable forest management, than today issues of role of forest and forestry in global climate change, mobilization of forest resources for enhancing of wood energy supply, increasing social responsibility of foresters are highlighted.

Ukraine has joined to Pan-European process of protection of forests in Europe and consistently worked on implementation of the signed resolutions.

During the last 17 years there were a lot of positive changes, especially last few years:

- State programme "Forest of Ukraine" for period 2002–2015 was adopted and is being successfully implemented.
- In 2006 amendments to Forest Code of Ukraine aimed to harmonize land and forest legislation and facilitate principles of sustainable development, improvement of ecological situation, increasing of forested area were adopted.
- In 2006 Conception of Forestry Reforming and Developing was developed and adopted.
- Area of certified forests was significantly enlarged; system of forest monitoring was formed.
- Quantity of forest roads was significantly increased. It positively effects on forest logging efficiency and in the same time helps in solving social problems of local people including employment, tourism development, etc.
- For improvement investment attractiveness of logging activities, share of contractors in forest is annually increasing.
- Efforts in communication and public relation in forestry were increased. Since last year we have been provided forestry campaign "Future forest in your hand" on annually base. This year during campaign it was planted 83 million seedlings and saplings. 107 thousands people including 55 thousands pupils have taken part in this campaign.

Joining to Pan-European process of the protection of forests in Europe gave Ukraine possibility to define level forest management in comparison with other European countries. We proved that forestry in Ukraine meets all the European criteria of sustainable forest management both from silvicultural and practice point of view, and in some cases Ukraine even has more strict principles and approaches. We have joined to active information exchange and implementation of several international projects related to coordination of national aspects of forest management with international requirements, assessment of forest resources and their condition, monitoring of air pollution, etc. Implementation of international commitments creates wider possibilities for receiving international technical assistance and investments.

Ukraine supports declaration and resolutions which was brought up for discussion on this meeting and has intention to sign them. We also support providing Pan-European forest week in October 2008. It is very interesting and important initiative. Event of such scale can not be unnoticeable and will promote implementation of tasks given to forest sector.

We believe that signing and implementation of Warsaw declaration and resolutions can help in contribution of forest and forestry in climate change mitigation, wood energy supply and water protection. So in general it can really contribute in improving quality of life.

Thank you for your attention.

UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. Phil Woolas

Minister
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Distinguished Delegates,

Today we are of course discussing the challenges facing forestry in Europe. We recognise for economic, environmental and social sustainability the forests of Europe are vitally important for the future of a sustainable Europe.

We meet at a very busy time a month before the Bali Summit where major climate change policies will be addressed. Of course there are powerful socio-economic forces which lead to deforestation in many countries. This is an enormous issue in our view. As has been said by experts deforestation alone contributes to around 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The net forest loss between the years 2000 and 2005 was 7.3 million hectares per year. The UK firmly believes that forestry has a key role to play both through halting deforestation and through afforestation and through restoration of degraded forests. We will be looking to Bali to see that process embedded. The UK is promoting the restoration of forest cover through the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration. This does of course require resources.

We need further action on sustainable forest management across the globe. We are here with our colleagues to play our part in Europe – and our forests we believe will play their part in the global contribution.

The United Kingdom's Forestry Commission, our Director General is here with me, was set up in 1919 to rebuild our forest resources after the Great War and indeed following nearly a thousand years of deforestation. In that 80 years since it's formation we more than doubled our forest area. Today forest management in the UK has shifted radically from the single purpose objective of timber production to one that reflects better the sustainability of production, the management of ecology, wildlife, and water and the needs of people. Our foresters have embraced new skills for the job that reflect the ever-developing concept of sustainable forest management.

We believe that we were the first country in the world to have its public forest estate independently certified against a national standard and we remain committed to managing our forests sustainably.

Increasingly our work takes us beyond the forest to restore the links between urban areas, woods and forests, ultimately with a view to enhancing people's lives, as other delegates have said.

Here in Warsaw also, we address the role that forests have in benefiting the quality of life.

And that means tackling big challenging issues that threaten our way of life; such as climate change and its consequences, reduced sources of energy, energy security and society's need for sufficient supplies of water, these issues are inter linked.

Without sustainable forest management we risk losing the important benefits that are provided by forests and creating serious environmental consequences.

Where resources are limited, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) can help us to generate alternative resources to secure environmental protection, enhance private-sector involvement and create incentives for investment.

The Warsaw Declaration recognises the role of forests, in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

We are working hard to achieve significant emissions reductions and to take new initiatives on energy efficiency and renewable energy production. This week in our Parliament I will introduce the UK Climate Change Bill which sets a legally binding commitment on ourselves of reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the UK by at least 60% by 2050. We will of course discuss and I believe be able to act on Greenpeace and WWF action points.

Of course the increased demands for energy and the rise of alternative energy sources, such as biofuels place greater demands on productive land and have profound consequences on agriculture. Let me address this issue head on. If the alternative is to carry on using liquid fossil fuels then biofuels are the better alternative—provided they deliver lifecycle greenhouse gas savings and are produced through sustainable land management. Managing sustainably reduces risks to our natural resource and to precious ecosystems.

I would like to thank our hosts, not only for their excellent hospitality but also for the excellent chairing of this conference.

A great opportunity exists for us to continue to work together in the region and in this MCPFE process.



STATEMENTS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)

Statement on behalf of Dr. Ahmed Djoghla

Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Announcement received on the occasion of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to convey my greetings to the distinguished participants of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), and I regret that I cannot be with you in person. I applaud the governments of Poland and Norway for choosing the excellent theme 'Forests for quality of life'. This theme strikes a chord with the large and growing global community of experts and enthusiasts who strive to conserve biodiversity. Intact forest ecosystems have an immense recreational, cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic value, in addition to the important economic value of wood and non-wood forest products. The conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity, and the equitable sharing of its benefits, are indeed vital for our quality of life.

Scientists estimate that forests harbour 50–90% of all terrestrial biodiversity. The large margin of uncertainty indicates how many species of plants, animals, micro-organisms and fungi on our planet are still not scientifically described. Yet, forests are disappearing or are being degraded at a fast pace world-wide, and up to 150 species are being lost every day. "The library of life is burning, and we do not even know the titles of the books", as former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland expressed it very aptly.

However, recently we are seeing encouraging progress towards sustainable forest management in many regions of the world. The decisions taken by the past four Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe have shaped European forest policy, but your work also serves as a role model for progress towards sustainable forest management in other regions, and globally.

I am very pleased to note that the 2010 Biodiversity Target is referred to in the draft declaration of the Fifth Ministerial Conference. This target, adopted in 2002 by the 190 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, aims to significantly reduce the loss of biodiversity by 2010. European governments have gone an ambitious step further and pledged to stop the loss of biodiversity by 2010. Unprecedented efforts of States, the private sector, and civil society are needed to reach this target, and the forest sector is a key player in these efforts. Indeed, I hope that the much needed collaboration at all levels between actors in the fields of sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation can be further strengthened on the basis of the Warsaw Declaration.

The quality of life that our forests provide is threatened by many factors, and climate change is uppermost in our minds and on our agendas these days. Droughts and forest fires are projected to increase in semi-arid and arid lands; the effects of air pollution on forests will become more severe as our forests are weakened by weather extremes; and a surge in frequencies and intensities of storms and floods will aggravate problems of erosion and disease. At the same time, the forest sector plays a key role for mitigating the effects of climate change, and for adapting forest ecosystems to its

impacts. Ecosystems can better withstand the expected impacts of climate change when they are rich in biodiversity, and the conservation and restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems such as wetlands and forests can be very cost-effective measures to mitigate climate change. The CBD Secretariat has recently drafted, in cooperation with the Secretariats of our two sister Conventions – the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification – an information note to all Parties on the important role of forests for achieving the objectives of the three Conventions.

The Parties to the CBD will review the programme of work on forest biological diversity at their ninth meeting in May 2008 in Bonn, Germany. Preliminary results of the review indicate that the various international and regional agreements with relevance to forests yield best results when they are implemented in synergy. The draft review takes due note of the exemplary success of the MCPFE in contributing to the conservation of forest biodiversity, and of the useful cooperation with the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Much has been achieved in the progress towards sustainable forest management, but more efforts are needed to reach the 2010 Target. Healthy and intact forest ecosystems are a key infrastructure for the XXIst century, and they are our best insurance for a sustained quality of life.

In this spirit, I wish the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe every success.



Congratulatory letter

Ref.: SCBD/STTM/TC/6027

20 November, 2007

Subject:
Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

His Excellency
Mr. Jan Szyszko
Minister of Environment
Government of Poland
Warsaw, Poland

Excellency,

I would like to congratulate you on the success of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

The Pan-European process and the results of the Conference play an important role for the implementation of the Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). We have made due mention of this contribution in the forthcoming review of the implementation of the Programme of Work, to be presented at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in May 2008 in Bonn, Germany.

Sustainable forest management is a key tool to achieve the three objectives of the CBD: to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity, and to share its benefits equitably. I am particularly pleased to note that the Warsaw Declaration makes reference to the 2010 target to halt the loss of biodiversity, and hope that key actors in the forest sector will continue to contribute to this target.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghla
Executive Secretary

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Mr. Eladio Fernández-Galiano

Head of Biological Diversity Unit

The Council of Europe, that was glad to see the first Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe held in its headquarters in Strasbourg on 1990, welcomes the progress in the work of MCPFE and the solidity of the process, which has become the main political forum in our continent to promote sustainable forest management and ensure the maintenance of those valuable ecosystems.

Thus the Council of Europe welcomes the achievements of the process and should like to express its commitment to continue and enhance cooperation with MCPFE in areas of special concern for our organization, in particular the protection and wise use of forest biological diversity, the prevention and minimisation of the impacts of forest fires and the role of forest in mitigating the effects of climate change. In that context we should like to emphasize the importance to address fully climate change adaptation strategies, particularly in fragile mountains areas and in Mediterranean regions, which are expected to suffer more than other an increase in temperatures, leading to more frequent droughts, heat waves and favour forest fires.

It is necessary to promote preventive action and favour a progressive change of European forests to more natural conditions, promoting the use of native trees that may be better adapted to resist environmental stress, thus building ecosystems that are more resilient to fire and climate change. Since the last Ministerial Conference in Vienna important catastrophic fires have occurred in the Iberian Peninsula, France, the Balkans and Greece, a process than seems to be getting worse with time. The Council of Europe's European and Mediterranean Major Hazard Agreement and its network of specialised centres are ready to join MCPFE future work on this topic.

Concerning forest biological diversity, the Council of Europe should like to see Vienna's Resolution 4 fully implemented at the national scale, further work developed on this topic in the framework of MCPFE and, specially, more action on the ground. Still the surface of Europe covered by protected forest is very small, insufficient to ensure the survival of many threatened forest species, specially taking into account that a good number of those species may become even more endangered by climate change. The Council of Europe offers MCPFE its expertise in conservation of biological diversity in the whole continent and is pleased to inform the Conference that, since the last Conference in Vienna, important work has been developed in Invasive Alien Species, Conservation of Invertebrates, Action Plans for Threatened Species, Plant Conservation and adaptation of biological diversity to climate change.

The Council of Europe wishes the Conference a great success.

EUROPEAN OBSERVATORY OF MOUNTAIN FORESTS (EOMF)

Mr. Jean-Claude MONIN

President of EOMF

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Grâce à la Résolution S4 adoptée à Strasbourg en 1990, par les Ministres européens, et à la collaboration active des institutions et des partenaires, les forêts de montagne d'Europe ne sont pas restées à l'écart du débat international sur les forêts en général.

Nous souhaitons aujourd'hui aller plus loin. En effet, les deux Résolutions qui vont être adoptées ici, à Varsovie, vont mettre en évidence deux éléments essentiels de la forêt de montagne que sont l'eau et le bois énergie.

Les scientifiques nous indiquent unanimement que les zones de montagne sont les 'châteaux d'eau' de la planète. Nous savons tous combien l'eau est et sera importante en raison de sa rareté et de la demande croissante en quantité mais aussi en qualité. L'eau est aussi déterminante pour la protection contre les risques naturels.

C'est dans les zones urbaines, que se concentre désormais 80% de notre population. Nous pouvons citer de nombreux exemples où les montagnes, avec leurs forêts, sauvegardent la quantité et la qualité de l'alimentation en eau.

C'est en montagne qu'existent les risques majeurs tels que avalanches, chutes de pierre, glissements de terrain. De nombreuses victimes et des dégâts matériels importants sont à déplorer et sont en augmentation. Ceci est dû, en particulier, au développement des infrastructures et aux aléas climatiques.

En collaboration avec la FAO, nous avons réuni des expériences en Europe et nous souhaitons maintenant les valoriser au travers de la nouvelle Résolution Forêts et Eau.

L'influence des forêts de montagne va bien au-delà de ces territoires et produit des bénéfices pour l'ensemble de la population européenne.

Dans le contexte général de l'utilisation énergétique de la biomasse, les forêts de montagne sont une ressource naturelle renouvelable et localement disponible.

Les montagnards n'ont jamais cessé d'utiliser le bois comme source d'énergie.

Avec les progrès techniques, une véritable filière bois énergie du local peut se développer à l'échelle du massif. Une telle politique, permettra l'amélioration de la gestion forestière, l'accroissement de l'emploi et des activités. Cette filière sera exemplaire pour le bilan énergétique et la protection de l'environnement.

Les actions menées conjointement par la Commission européenne, ELO, la FECOF et l'OEFM ont révélé une véritable dynamique locale pour le bois énergie tout particulièrement dans les zones de montagne. Cette initiative souligne la pertinence de la Résolution Forêt, Bois et Énergie, que vous allez adopter aujourd'hui.

Le travail de notre Observatoire a permis la réalisation et la publication du Livre Blanc Européen sur les Forêts de Montagne et, plus récemment, des indicateurs de caractérisation des forêts de montagne. Il s’agit d’une contribution, basée d’ailleurs sur des données élaborées par la Commission Européenne sur les zones de montagne, qui permet une meilleure information et des moyens d’échange et de négociation entre les acteurs concernés.

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Les forêts de montagne connaissent des difficultés économiques liées aux coûts de mobilisation alors que les prix du bois sont nettement insuffisants. Le bois énergie ouvre de nouvelles possibilités de gestion forestière durable dans un grand nombre de forêts peu ou non rentables, actuellement, en Europe.

Pour l’eau et la prévention des risques naturels, les forêts de montagne ont un rôle déterminant: un rôle économiquement juste, socialement reconnu et écologiquement indispensable.

Les forêts de montagne constituent un bien commun irremplaçable pour l’humanité.

English version

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thanks to the Resolution S4, adopted in Strasbourg in 1990 by the European Ministers, and to the active collaboration with institutions and partners, mountain forests of Europe have not been lagging behind in the international debate on forest in general.

Today we do wish to go further on. In fact, the two Resolutions that will be adopted here in Warsaw are highlighting two essential elements of mountain forests: water and wood energy.

Scientists are unanimously pointing out that mountain regions are the «water towers» of the planet. We all know very well to what extent water is and will be important due to its scarcity and the growing demand in quantity and also in quality. Moreover water is crucial in the protection against natural hazards.

It is in the urban areas that 80% of our population lives. We could refer to a great deal of examples of mountains and their forests safeguarding the quantity and quality of water flows.

It is in the mountain areas that major hazards are found such as avalanches, rock falls, and landslides. A number of victims and relevant material damages are reported and are unfortunately increasing. This is particularly due to the development of infrastructures and to climatic hazards.

In collaboration with FAO, we have brought together experiences in Europe and we wish now to develop them through the new Resolution on Forests and Water.

The influence of mountain forests goes beyond these regions and provides benefits for the whole of the European population.

In the general context of biomass use for energy, mountain forests are a natural renewable energy locally available. Mountain people have never stopped using wood as a source of energy. Along with

the technical progress a real local network of forest and wood energy can be developed at the massif scale. Such a policy would improve forest management and the growth of jobs and activities. This network will be a model for both energy balance and environmental protection.

The joint actions carried out by the European Commission, ELO, FECOF, and EOMF have shown a consistent local dynamics on wood energy, especially in mountain areas. This initiative highlights the consistency of the Resolution on Forests, Wood and Energy that you are adopting here today.

The work of our Observatory have contributed to the publication of the European White Paper on Mountain Forests and, more recently, of a set of indicators characterising mountain forests. It is a contribution, based firstly on data elaborated by the European Commission on mountain regions, providing better information and tools for exchanging and negotiating among the concerned stakeholders.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mountain forests are experiencing economic difficulties related to the costs of harvesting while prices are definitely insufficient. Wood energy opens to new opportunities for sustainable forest management in a number of European forests today slightly or not at all profitable.

As far as water and hazards prevention are concerned, mountain forests have a critical role: a role economically respectful, socially recognised and ecologically necessary.

Mountain forests represent a common asset that humanity can not replace.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

Mr. Jan Heino

Assistant Director-General
Forestry Department

Honourable Minister Riis-Johansen,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

Let me start by emphasizing the continued good collaboration in Europe among the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Environment Programme, the European Commission, and others. However, the many joint initiatives would not have been possible without the tireless efforts from the Liaison Unit in Warsaw. Here, I would like to put on record our appreciation to Mr. Piotr Borkowski for his skilful and active way in facilitating progress.

I would then like to highlight a few of these joint activities which, I believe, have advanced the implementation of the MCPFE resolutions and sustainable forest management in Europe.

Firstly, The State of Europe's Forests 2007 was a true joint effort between the ECE/FAO Joint Bureau in Geneva, and the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment Team in Rome, under the coordination of the Liaison Unit in Warsaw. We ensured the harmonized use of terms and definitions, stored information in the global FAO Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) database, helped review the report and produced all the maps. We are committed to continue the steady improvement in quality of regional monitoring of the state of forests in Europe.

Secondly, FAO contributed a major technical input to the Warsaw Resolution on Forests and Water. This is an increasingly critical issue. The world's freshwater supply and global food security both depend largely on upstream/downstream flows. Our specific focus is to support sustainable management of mountain forests and watershed areas, with special regard to their role in regulating water flows. Given also the current FAO leadership of the UN Water initiative, I would like to offer our major contribution to supporting the implementation of the Warsaw Resolution. I leave this to be considered more in detail in the follow-up process of this Conference.

Thirdly, I would like to commend the MCPFE for your foresight in enhancing the role of the forest sector in energy production. The rapidly changing global energy situation generates both threats and opportunities for forests worldwide. Challenges vary depending on the region, ranging from competition for wood as raw material to increased competition for land between the forest, food and energy sectors. These issues must be addressed in national forest programmes. In this context, I would like to highlight the forthcoming special event on forests and energy during the FAO Conference later this month. This event, scheduled on the afternoon on 20 November, seeks to reinforce, at the global level, political commitment to and action on the role of forests for energy production. It will build upon, *inter alia*, the Warsaw Resolution on Forests, Wood and Energy.

Fourthly, like MCPFE, FAO has put a special emphasis on national forest programmes. Increasing activities of the National Forest Programme Facility, a partnership supported by many European

countries and hosted by FAO, contribute directly also to the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument agreed by the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Finally, it is a great pleasure to join the MCPFE in declaring the Pan-European Forest Week in October 2008. This is a unique joint effort to increase the visibility of the forest sector and engage private sector, civil society and representatives of other sectors in an innovative dialogue. FAO is pleased to host the major part of the regional events in Rome. We will also be working hard to contribute to better coordinating the implementation of the actions agreed by the regional processes impacting the sector in Europe.

In closing, I wish to express FAO's continued support to the implementation of the commitments made in MCPFE. We hope to strengthen the already very effective collaboration in advancing sustainable forest management and monitoring progress, including through the integrated FAO/UNECE programme of work. We look forward to working with the Liaison Unit in Oslo, and together with all Signatory States of MCPFE.

Thank you.

THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION (IUCN)

Ms. Julia Marton-Lefèvre

Director General

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) is honoured to participate in the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE). We would like to express our respect and support for the work ongoing under the MCPFE since the Vienna conference in 2003 as well as emphasise where we feel more efforts are needed. IUCN is very supportive of the joint work programme between MCPFE and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) and emphasizes that in principle such collaboration in concrete terms between environmental and forest related regional processes has exemplary character for other regions in the world. Countries participating in both Pan-European processes should consider providing assistance to regions in the South to establish similar joint programmes. IUCN also would like to see more financial commitments from participating countries to resource the implementation of an even more ambitious joint work programme between PEBLDS and MCPFE in Pan-Europe.

IUCN welcomes the commitment expressed in the Warsaw Declaration to further develop Pan-European guidance for afforestation and reforestation. IUCN contributed to MCPFE work aimed at encouraging Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) practices in carbon sequestration measures, in particular taking into account the conservation of biological diversity. IUCN submitted a publication on “Afforestation and Reforestation for Climate Change Mitigation: Potentials for Pan-European Action” to the MCPFE Expert Level Meeting (ELM). The paper offers an overview on the issue and, most important, provides policy recommendations as a contribution for further discussions. The ELM in September 2005 decided to take these recommendations as basis for further discussions.

Afforestation and reforestation activities enjoy a high degree of attention on the policy agenda in the context of climate change mitigation. Other pressures that trigger afforestation include the decrease of agricultural viability, the desire to protect soils and secure a supply of forest products, and to reduce forest fragmentation. If not done properly, other environmental and social services, including biological diversity, can suffer. Responses to climate change tend to develop on their own tracks without recognition of past experience by the forest sector. This may not only risk inadvertently undermining the very valuable contribution that this sector can otherwise make towards addressing the problem of climate change, but could also potentially risk reversing some (or all) of the hard-won gains that have been made so far in promoting a more people – centred and multifunctional understanding of forests and forest management – something on which the MCPFE and its members have a great deal of experience. One of the very interesting and promising aspects of an integrated forest sector-wide approach is that it could provide a place where different interests from governments, the private sector and civil society intersect and find common ground. Forest landscape restoration, with its emphasis on collaborative restoration of a balanced and negotiated package of forest functions at a landscape level offers a sound conceptual basis on which thinking on both forests and climate change can be practically operationalized and shape decision-making. The need for Pan-European guidance for afforestation and reforestation is obvious and urgent. IUCN has high expectations for implementation and delivery of practical results by Parties to MCPFE in this field.

IUCN also appreciates the commitment on development and implementation of tools for securing services provided by forests and in particular payments for ecosystem services. Forests are commonly known for the basic goods that they provide. Less commonly known is the fact that forests also provide a number of crucial ecosystem services, for example, their role in sequestering carbon from the atmosphere, protecting upstream watersheds, conserving biodiversity and gene-pools for future generations and in providing landscape beauty. In relation to forests and ecosystem services, IUCN wishes to support forest owners in their demand to receive financial payments for the storing of carbon and for the production of drinking water with their existing forests. IUCN is convinced that ecosystem services need to be paid for, that nature needs to have a price and that investments into the delivery of vitally important ecosystem services are making basic economic sense. In turn, the forest sector needs to take into account that in a free market economy one produces what is in demand. Hence, the production of ecosystem services should have highest priority. It is needless to say that the investment in the production of ecosystem services in forests can have beneficial effects on conserving nature.

IUCN works in the frameworks of G8 – eight leading industrialized countries and their 2007 “Potsdam Initiative – Biological Diversity 2010” on the elaboration of a ‘Stern-inspired’ report on biodiversity. We believe that further close cooperation with MCPFE and its Parties is a precondition in securing that biodiversity as a foundation of life on earth is properly taken into consideration in any human activities. And in forestry sector in particular as forests are the largest depositories of biodiversity in the world. IUCN offers its expertise to assist in avoiding negative effects on the rural landscape and forests through the evolution of bio-energy. It is suggested that this subject is incorporated into the joint MCPFE – PEBLDS work programme and resourced sufficiently by the participating governments.

IUCN is hosting the secretariat of the ‘Countdown 2010’ initiative, which aims at mobilising partners in all sectors at all levels to achieve the goal set by all heads of governments in the EU in 2001 and by all environment ministers of Pan-Europe at the 2010. The Countdown 2010 initiative is reaching out to local communities, regional and national governments, to the private sector with by now almost 400 different partners. IUCN is in particular proud that in 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil, the Austrian Federal Forest Enterprise signed its commitment under the Countdown 2010 initiative. Since then, a number of other forest key players have joined the initiative with concrete commitments to contribute to the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target. Herewith, I am calling upon all institutions present here to join the ever increasing movement of Countdown 2010 and in a joined effort demonstrate the true multi-functional nature of sustainable forest management. The added value for you as an individual organization in joining Countdown 2010 is that you are able to communicate what you do for the environment and nature conservation, you raise the image of the forest sector and you streamline demands of the civil society into a concrete programme for biodiversity, at the same time avoiding ‘unsolicited’ further demands of the civil society.

Our present model of sustainable development with the three pillars of Economy, Society and Environment is not working in general. We walk into the supermarket and pick nature off the shelf and when walking towards the exit, there is no cashier. As a consequence, nature the foundation of life is disappearing day by day. May be the big exception in Europe are forests. They seem to even expand in Europe. So what is different? The forest resource, nature is treated as the foundation of sustainable development and not as just a pillar. This principle, we have taken as the starting point when we are developing a new paradigm for sustainability for all parts of human activities. All of you present here today: Join in developing this new paradigm for sustainability. Your resource, forests, will be dramatically increasing in their economic and hence also political meaning. You will not be a sub-sector of agriculture anymore! You will be having the position you deserve.

IUCN was one of the collaborators of recently released by UNEP the Global Environmental Outlook 4, which is an extensive review of the state of the environment in 2007. The report highlights several key concerns of IUCN, including the impacts of climate change on the environment and people, emerging issues of water availability and the increasing threat that biodiversity loss poses to development and poverty reduction. There have been some success stories among the challenges of environmental sustainability but, as the report notes, *“only when society incorporates the values of biodiversity in political or market systems will biodiversity loss really be slowed”*. The MCPFE process has made it from Strasbourg to Warsaw and is going to expand throughout Europe. IUCN wishes the MCPFE further on success and stands ready to assist and support in the spirit of achieving real sustainable use of forest resources not only in Pan-Europe, but inspired by MCPFE in other parts of the World.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Thank you for your attention.

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UNECE)

Ms. Virginia Cram Martos

Director
Trade and Timber Division

Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am addressing you on behalf of Mr. Marek Belka, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, or ECE, who participated in the thematic session yesterday morning, but had to leave for a ministerial conference on aging that is being held in Spain

Before I begin, I'd like to take the opportunity to extend a special note of appreciation to the Governments of Poland and Norway for the outstanding preparation of this Conference, and our particular thanks for a job well done to the Warsaw Liaison Unit and its leader, Piotr Borkowski.

We would like to congratulate the MCPFE on its achievements. Since its first conference in Strasbourg in 1990, the MCPFE process has provided policy level guidance to the European forest sector, defined sustainable forest management and, most impressively has also put in place a system to monitor sustainable forest management and last, but certainly not least, it has stimulated a wealth of cooperative and research activities.

A special feature of the MCPFE process has been its willingness to work with and through other agencies. Over the years, ECE has developed a strong partnership with the MCPFE, which has certainly been beneficial to both organisations. As ECE is a multi-sectoral body covering a wide range of activities this cooperation has involved not only our joint ECE– FAO Timber Section but also the Environment for Europe process, and the ECE's European Transboundary Water Convention. Our ECE/FAO team is the international coordinator for two MCPFE resolutions and has contributed to about a third of the activities in the work programme completed by the Conference. We have every intention of maintaining our commitment to working with and supporting the MCPFE work programme that will provide the follow-up to this Conference.

In fact, Europe is well endowed with regional forest sector bodies, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, who are getting better and better at working together, building on each other's strengths and avoiding duplication. MCPFE has played a crucial role in this, by providing a governmental forum open to other stakeholders and in providing policy leadership. The general declaration before you today reflects well the main concerns that need to be addressed by forest sector policy today and lays out the broad lines for future work. The main responsibility for implementing these commitments lies with national governments, but the international community will certainly play its part.

Another opportunity to demonstrate the dynamism of regional forest cooperation will come next year in October when the Pan-European Forest Week will take place across Europe, jointly organised by the MCPFE, ECE, FAO and the European Union. This will be the occasion for the forest sector to communicate with other sectors, and to demonstrate that we can work together to promote sustainable forest management in Europe. The new ECE/FAO programme for the next five years will be launched during the Pan-European Forest Week. The new programme will be drawn up

in close consultation with the MCPFE General Coordinating Committee in order to ensure that it supports and is well coordinated with the new MCPFE programme of work that will also be developed next year.

A long list of factors including population growth, industrial development, climate change and energy security have increased awareness of how interconnected the world is, both geographically across countries and continents and across policy areas. As a net exporter of forest products, but also a major importer, the question of Europe's ecological footprint at the global level illustrates the multifaceted relationship between these factors and is more complex than is usually believed. Therefore, the cross-sectoral nature of the resolutions before the Conference is very appropriate, as every discussion of major policy significance today must look beyond its own, narrow sectoral environment and take into account its interaction with policies and developments in other areas.

The Resolution on Forests and Water presents the broad principles of action for creating a holistic approach that integrates forests into water management and water issues into forest management. This is a complex field: but now is the time for governments and forest managers to implement these recommendations as they represent only the beginning of a mutually beneficial partnership between the two sectors in support of sustainable development.

The second Resolution addresses what is probably the most intense forest related debate at the moment. This debate covers the interlinked issues of forests, wood, energy and climate change and asks:

- How much can forests contribute to a renewable energy supply?
- What would be the consequences for forest-based industries of drastically increased wood energy use?
- How to mobilise more wood?
- What is the best use for rural land in Europe – supplying food, raw material or energy?
- How to maintain biodiversity while intensifying wood production?
- Should the same rules of the game apply in Europe and elsewhere?
- Who decides on the rules of the game?

The resolution on Forests, wood and energy represents a major step forward, but is not the last word on the subject. Much better information on the use of wood for energy as well as better communications and more discussion with other sectors are needed. The ECE/FAO held a policy forum on these themes just three weeks ago and is working to get a better picture of the truly sustainable level of wood supply in Europe.

One important example of both better information and excellent cooperation between international organisations, governments and the scientific community is the Warsaw report on the state of Europe's forests 2007 which was presented yesterday. We are proud to have been associated with this enterprise, which has truly raised the level of quality for international reporting on forests. I take this opportunity to thank once again our partner organisations, especially the FAO Forest Resource Assessment team and the Liaison Unit Warsaw, the editors and authors, as well as the invisible heroes of this type of study, the national correspondents.

Underlying the improvement in information quality has been the use of the MCPFE set of indicators of sustainable forest management, which has forced countries and the expert community to monitor

all aspects and functions of the forest, not only what is easy to measure or economically important. It is particularly pleasing that criteria that had previously been covered in a rather unsatisfactory way, notably the socio-economic indicators, are now properly addressed.

It is our view that forest management must not be separated at the policy level from other parts of the forest sector, notably the sound use of wood, as markets strongly influence the decisions of forest managers, and vice versa. A forest manager nowadays needs to understand not only silviculture, but also public relations, recreational services and market developments. In addition, they need to be aware not only of local but also of global market developments. This new State of Europe's Forests report is a powerful information tool: we urge all countries to consider the lessons for their own policy that can be drawn from the information supplied. They should also consider whether they are investing enough to ensure their own forests are properly monitored. As Mr. Belka said yesterday, collecting reliable and comparable data on the forest resource is not a luxury, but a necessary investment in good governance.

Finally, we should not be complacent: the report shows that European forests are vulnerable to external influences, and that in some countries the institutional framework is weak. There is forest degradation and illegal logging also in the MCPFE region, usually arising from broader social, economic and political problems. More needs to be done to help countries in need to strengthen their institutions and build their capacity to implement sustainable forest management. But more also needs to be done by all of us to plan for the increased incidence of disease, forest fires and dramatic weather events in order to protect our national and regional forest patrimony. We should no longer allow ourselves to be caught unprepared in the face of disasters that repeat themselves in similar forms on a regular basis.

We in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and in the joint ECE/FAO section in my Division, look forward to addressing these challenges in close and fruitful cooperation with the MCPFE as we all work together to promote sustainable forest management in Europe.

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Ms. Ivonne Higuero

UNEP Coordinator for the PEBLDS Joint Secretariat

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Excellencies, MCPFE signatories, MCPFE observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme is grateful to the Governments of Poland and Norway for the invitation to participate in this 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe' – Forests for quality of life' – and conveys his regrets for not being able to attend given prior commitments he could not change. I am presenting this statement on his behalf.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

UNEP provides the secretariat, jointly with the Council of Europe, for the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy or *PEBLDS*, an intergovernmental process that functions at the regional level through the *Environment for Europe* Ministerial process and has as its main objective the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Pan-European region.

In 1998, the MCPFE and the PEBLDS joined efforts in the conservation and further enhancement of forest biological diversity in Europe and began their Pan-European co-operation. The 4th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, in April 2003 and the 5th Ministerial Conference *Environment for Europe* in May 2003, agreed on a framework for co-operation between the two Pan-European processes. The framework includes joint actions focusing on European priority issues concerning forest biodiversity issues building, amongst other things, on the forest related commitments of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The co-operation of the two high level processes has facilitated a co-ordinated political approach to forest biodiversity issues in Europe and enhanced national level discussions between focal points of the two sectors. It could also be seen as a regional model for co-operation between the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

This strengthened cooperation between MCPFE and the PEBLDS has resulted in a joint position on the linkage between the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management at Pan-European level published in 2006. PEBLDS and MCPFE also jointly organised a workshop on combating illegal harvesting of forest products and related trade in Europe as preparation for the Europe and North Asia Ministerial Conference in November 2005. Draft MCPFE-PEBLDS joint recommendations on afforestation and reforestation have been prepared and are being negotiated. It is foreseen to continue this work and the work on protected areas under the Norwegian chairmanship of the MCPFE.

The MCPFE-PEBLDS framework for cooperation is also the basis of the forest and biodiversity target of the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity, where Ministers of Environment agreed to halt the loss of biodiversity in the Pan-European region by 2010 in Kyiv at the 5th Ministerial Conference *Environment for Europe*. Last month, the 6th Ministerial Conference *Environment for Europe* was held in

Belgrade. The PEBLDS organised the biodiversity session of the Conference and the Countdown 2010 Initiative reported on the implementation of the Kyiv Resolution and progress in the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target. With regards to the forests and biodiversity target, it reported that most Pan-European countries have finalized or are in the process of preparing National Forest Programmes in accordance with MCPFE guidelines. It noted the progress in reducing threats to and enhancing the biological diversity of Europe's forests. In most countries, forests are growing older and are in general more valuable for biodiversity conservation. A significant reduction in air pollution has also been observed. Conserving biodiversity is gaining ground within the objectives of forest management, as well as the certification of products from sustainably managed forests.

Nevertheless, the Countdown 2010 report states that several persistent issues of concern remain. These include threatened forests species, the increasing threat of invasive alien species, and increasing forest fragmentation due to changes in land use and forest fires. The report suggests that – to ensure the application of the ecosystem approach in practice – implementation of the National Forest Programmes will need to be reinforced in the period up to 2010. Illegal logging continues to pose a special threat to forest biodiversity. This is often rooted in poverty, but it is also stimulated by commercial incentives and enhanced by flaws in forest legislation and its enforcement. Illegal logging may also occur in protected forests. In some cases it is a side effect of cross-border conflicts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Working towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in Europe is not something that can be delayed. Governments, the EU, international, governmental and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders have made good efforts but Europe's biodiversity is still declining at a rapid rate according to the European Environmental Agency's *Belgrade Report*. In their Belgrade Biodiversity Statement, the Ministers of Environment of the Pan-European region stated their concerns that habitat destruction, fragmentation and degradation as well as the rapid spread of invasive alien species is increasing in Europe and affecting particularly farmland, mountain regions and coastal zones. Furthermore, European hotspots of endemic species are at risk because of the effects of climate change and the lack of space between habitats to allow for adaptation: current and future economic costs of all of these losses could reach billions of Euros. They also recognised the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change, notably the impact of climate change on species and habitats, on the migratory patterns of species, and on the European landscape. The Ministers stated that important drivers of biodiversity loss worldwide include governance failures, and the failure of conventional economics to recognise the economic values of natural capital and ecosystem services and noted the urgent need to engage all economic sectors in biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use. They also expressed their concern regarding the implications on global biodiversity conservation of the rapidly increasing ecological footprint of Europe.

The Warsaw resolutions under your consideration 'Forests, Wood and Energy' and 'Forests and Water' refer to important and timely issues in the Pan-European region, with the focus on finding alternative energy sources such as agrofuels and the growing awareness of the services that forests provide with regards to quality and quantity of water. While considering these issues, however, it is crucial to continue to uphold the principles of sustainable forest management in order to take into account biodiversity and landscape considerations which are of major importance to the citizens of the Pan-European region.

The demands of European citizens as regards non-food related ecosystems services and requirements are growing. Biodiversity, nature and landscapes are increasingly recognized as important economic

assets for sustainable development in Europe. However, the unsustainable rate which humankind is running down the Earth's nature based and natural assets is brought into stark relief in UNEP's latest flagship Global Environment Outlook-4. The biological carrying capacity of the planet is between 15 and 16 hectares per person but humanity's consumption is estimated to be now close to 22 hectares per person, says the GEO-4 launched in October and the peer reviewed work of over 1 000 scientists.

Historically, forests have all too often been viewed simply as abundant sources of timber for activities like construction, ship building or fuel. However, the wider importance of these ecosystems is now increasingly understood. Reports such as the Millenium Ecosystem Assessment make clear that the goods and services provided by forests are worth billions of Euros, if not more, to the global economy. They range from goods and services linked with water supplies, with stabilization of soils, with purifying the air we breathe, with sustaining biodiversity, and with tourism and recreation, to providing genetic resources and natural medicines. Forests are also natural and economically important 'sinks' sequestering carbon from the atmosphere and locking it away in trunks and branches.

The forthcoming climate convention meeting in Bali in December will be the litmus test of governments' will to not only tackle climate change but to also recognize the important role of standing forests in removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere – alongside the up to 20 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions linked with deforestation – through financial incentives and perhaps as part of the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism.

Economics cannot capture all the benefits forests provide – from the beauty and spiritual value of the old and cherished village tree, the much-loved and productive community woodland, to the vast monumental and mystical tropical rainforest. But we know these are important too. UNEP's new initiative, the Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign, is an engine for voluntary expressions of solidarity. It is inclusive and is open to everyone – from governments and businesses, to community groups and individuals. The Billion Tree Campaign is but an acorn, but it can also be a significant and straightforward expression of our common determination to make a tangible difference in developing and developed countries alike.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pan-European cooperation has its challenges but without Pan-European cooperation many opportunities that we have been able to grasp would otherwise have been lost. We look forward to continued cooperation with the MCPFE Liaison Unit-Oslo in the implementation of the Framework for Cooperation and the new work programme to support the UNFF and the CBD at the regional level. Many thanks to the Governments of Poland and Norway for their kind hospitality and the excellent organization of this Conference. Thank you for your attention.

UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF)

Mr. Pekka Patosaari

Director of the UNFF Secretariat

Your Excellency, Mr. Jan Szyszko, Minister of the Environment of Poland,
Your Excellency, Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen, Minister of Agriculture and Food of Norway,
Excellencies responsible for forests in Europe, Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I speak to you at the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe with a great sense of privilege and honour. At the outset, I would like to congratulate all the European countries and members of the MCPFE for the manner in which you have collectively driven the Pan-European process forward during the last decade and a half.

Globally, this process has become known for its dynamic and long-term prospects on forests and its comprehensive guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management, as well as its emphasis on global-regional policy coherence, leading to their integration into national measures and technical solutions. Likewise, it is well-recognized as a cross-border participatory model, engaging relevant forest-related processes in the development and implementation of joint actions on forests. The interaction of a wide spectrum of countries, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, forest owners and local communities is truly commendable.

Excellencies,

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Economic and Social Council recently adopted the "Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests" (E/2007/L.39) as well as the whole Report of the seventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

By these decisions, ECOSOC has approved the mandate of UNFF and its Secretariat, including the Multi-Year Programme of Work for the period 2007–2015, and transmitted the NLBI for adoption by the General Assembly during its 62nd Session. As part of this resolution, ECOSOC decided to develop and consider a voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework for all types of forests, with a view to adopt said mechanism at the Forum's eighth session.

These decisions of the Council represent a real landmark in the international forest policy dialogue. The Instrument is the first of its kind, and reflects the international commitment to promote implementation of sustainable forest management through a new, more holistic approach. The resolution on the NLBI takes a bold step, by its clear recognition of the need for adequate finance to support the implementation of the Instrument and achievement of the four Global Objectives on Forests. To this end, the MCPFE member countries' support to the Forum's Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting in 2008, as well as of other country-driven activities preceding this preparatory meeting, would be highly appreciated.

In my view, the Instrument has a great deal of potential embedded in it. It opens a new era in the pursuit of Sustainable Forest Management, with a stronger focus on implementation and inter- and intra-regional cooperation than ever before. It brings all sectors of society, from civil society and

business, to local governments, under a global umbrella offering an articulation of Sustainable Forest Management as the overarching set of principles and objectives, at both national and international levels. In addition, it provides countries with a number of policy proposals intended to steer and assist in the implementation of Sustainable Forest Management. These include guidance on such issues as:

- Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
- International Trade in Forest Products
- Protection of Forests
- Science and Research
- Public Awareness and Education
- Private Sector and Industry
- Indigenous and Local Communities
- Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting

Excellencies,

The UN Forum on Forests’ new mandate is a comprehensive and an engaging one. In order to achieve progress on the implementation of the four Global Objectives on Forests and the Instrument, we need to reinforce the links to several other processes and sectors, such as climate change, biological diversity and desertification, and those seamlessly linked to the promotion and implementation of the internationally-agreed development goals.

Drawing on the Ministerial Declaration and the two Resolutions of this Conference, it is apparent that the global-regional policy coherence and action on forests is strong and well-conceived. I firmly believe that the long tradition of cooperation on Sustainable Forest Management will be even further strengthened in the years to come. The next session of the United Nations Forum on Forests will be addressing issues that are closely related to the themes of this Conference, and I am positive that the proactive and visionary nature of this process will undoubtedly contribute to the preparations and the discussion of the UN Forum on Forests.

Excellencies,

Your message will also constitute a significant contribution to the 2nd Annual Ministerial Review of the ECOSOC under next year’s theme, “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development”. You can be assured that the act of this Ministerial Conference is sending a strong message of the region’s continuous commitment and innovative actions in achieving sustainable forest management.

I thank you.

THE WORLD BANK

Mr. Andrey V. Kushlin

Sustainable Development Department
Europe and Central Asia Region

Dear Co-Chairs, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues,

Let me start by expressing sincere thanks to our gracious host, Minister Szyszko, for his personal invitation to Mr. Robert Zoellick, the new President of the World Bank, to participate in this conference, which he unfortunately could not take due to prior commitments. In any case, we see important symbolism in the fact that the very first forestry project supported by the World Bank in Eastern Europe was implemented here in Poland almost ten years ago, and our institution has learned a lot from this highly successful operation, which laid basis for our subsequent activities in this Region. So, many thanks again to our esteemed Polish hosts!

Allow me to focus your attention on several key points that are, in our view, of particular relevance to the Pan-European forest process.

A Context for the World Bank – MCPFE Interface

First – why we are here?

Last month, the World Bank has officially requested the status of Observer Organization with the MCPFE. This was not merely a symbolic gesture. It is recognition of an increasing importance for the Bank to be more directly, operationally, engaged with major, trend-setting regional processes in the dialogue on Global Public Goods – which is one of the six strategic themes for the Bank, underpinning an inclusive and sustainable globalization – as announced by our President at the Bank and IMF Annual Meetings last month in Washington.

The World Bank Group is the largest source of long-term multilateral forest investments in developing and transition economies. Since adoption of our new Forests Strategy five years ago, the volume of our forest lending has tripled and reached more than US\$ 500 million in 2007 – with a significant, although now diminishing, portfolio in the MCPFE countries in Eastern Europe.

An important recent addition to our financial instruments in Middle-Income Countries is our newly acquired ability to do projects directly with subnational governments and municipalities (i.e. without guarantees of central governments), which bears significant opportunities for expansion of our public forest investments in a number of MCPFE countries.

We also understand very well that human capital is a critical factor in development – hence, our overall emphasis on strategic investments, targeted at innovation, capacity building, and training. This is why the World Bank is increasingly focusing on its role as an institution for information, knowledge and learning about development.

All signatory countries of the MCPFE are shareholders of the World Bank as donors or borrowers – and collectively, they represent a powerful voice in the Bank’s policy and operational decision-making process. And there is a broad variety of issues pursued in the MCPFE format that are also in the forefront of implementation of the Bank’s Forests Strategy, both in the European regional context, and globally.

The World Bank already has a history of productive collaboration with the MCPFE, e.g. on such matters as the Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (ENA-FLEG). We are very happy to acknowledge most successful collaboration on this topic with the Governments of Russia and Turkey who hosted milestone ENA-FLEG meetings in 2005–2006. New and additional support for this process is now offered by the European Commission, with the focus on the European Neighborhood countries and Russia, and by the Netherlands Government, with the focus on lower-income countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. We are certainly keen to invite other interested MCPFE countries be active in the information sharing and exchange of practical experiences in this area. In our view, the MCPFE Liaison Unit would be extremely well positioned to play a proactive role on this.

An Inclusive and Sustainable Globalization and the Global Forest Agenda

We believe further substantial benefits can be gained through our more consistent interaction and partnership with MCPFE on new regional and global forest agendas.

Sustainable forest management (SFM) and forest conservation have immense potential to contribute to international priorities of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and of climate change.

Forests in the MCPFE region make a major contribution to achieve these goals. Here are some examples:

- Over 400 million people worldwide depend on forests to a high degree for income, food, energy, medicines and shelter. More than 15 million family and community forest owners in Europe receive significant benefits from their forests while managing them wisely. Closer collaboration with partners in developing countries could show the way on how to stabilize land tenure and contain deforestation.
- Global trade in primary wood products is about US\$ 186 billion per year, and the total trade in all wood products is many times higher. In the MCPFE region producers and consumers closely interact. Markets demanding products from legal and sustainable sources could play a major role in transforming markets in other parts of the world. As European forest industries increasingly move to the South and East, there is a unique chance to promote sustainable forest management and forest certification. Forest smallholders and communities risk being marginalized by such developments. Greater focus must be placed to develop models that distribute more equitably the benefits of forest management and trade.

Other important trends that have a potential to influence the global and local functions and services of forests include biofuels, illegal logging, corruption and bad governance (which was already mentioned above), and an increasing recognition of the global value of forests, which can lead to developing alternative sources of income for forest owners.

The one theme that clearly becomes a powerful and unifying common denominator in the discussions here over these last two days is the theme of forests and climate change. Indeed, yesterday when our colleagues from Greenpeace and WWF proposed to rename the title of the first Resolution to “Forests, Climate Change and Energy”, I mentioned to them that the Conference’s second focus – on water – is as much a climate-related issue; so is the focus on forest fires.

- Let’s refresh some basic facts in our memory. Carbon stored in forests is approximately five times the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. The share of carbon emissions from deforestation and degradation is much higher than that of global transport. It is important

to keep in mind in the Pan-European context that temperate and boreal forest ecosystems combined contain 700 Gt of carbon, which is about 2/3 of the global forest carbon stock.

- Climate change will place significant stress on existing forest resources and ecosystem services with major economic and livelihood losses. More assessment is needed of the most vulnerable regions and countries in order to develop realistic scenarios and strategies to mitigate the risks in relation to all types of forest.

The current urgent focus on tropical forest deforestation is certainly well justified from a short-term perspective, but too narrow to address these risks in a longer term. The following metaphor comes to mind in this context: if you got a hole in your car’s fuel tank that is leaking, you should take immediate care of stopping this leak and possibly refilling the tank – *that’s deforestation, afforestation and REDD agenda*. But you cannot be serious about making a good use of your car for many more years, if you don’t also invest in improving your fuel efficiency and driving skills – *that’s the basics of Sustainable Forest Management*.

It is probably high time to start looking at forests not as simply an attachment to the programs and processes of climate change, but as a key and powerful factor in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and start moving away from exclusive focus on the climate connections at the extreme margins of the forest cycle (i.e. deforestation and afforestation), and start capturing the entire and rich spectrum of forest roles (carbon, hydrology, albedo) in climate management at local, regional and global scales – i.e., coming back to the car analogy, “learn to drive this car efficiently.”

Now, back to business...

Key Forest Agenda Areas That Need Stronger Coordinated Efforts

Given the changing landscape of the global forest agenda, there is a need to scale up activities in the following areas:

- Address poverty through better forest governance by promoting the rights of local and indigenous groups to land tenure, ownership, and access to resources, among others.
- Enhance the role of forests as an engine of economic growth. Increase investments in plantations, expand certification and good forest management, and foster responsible private sector investments.
- Further mainstream forestry concerns into the Bank’s core work, by integrating forest sector issues into our country partnership and poverty reduction strategies and better aligning the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and International Finance Corporation (IFC) resources with World Bank lending.
- Assist countries in integrating the global forest agenda and associated development opportunities into their own national strategies and policies. Highlight forest interdependencies in the design of agriculture, rural development, and natural resource management projects.
- Ensure stringent application of the Bank’s safeguard policies (especially on the social side) in traditional forest lending projects, and strengthen the due diligence for forest concerns in development policy lending, through strengthened participation, better knowledge management and communication, and focused staff training.

Delivering Results through Strategic Partnerships

Through strategic partnerships and programs such as the multi-donor Program on Forests (PROFOR), and the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) initiative, the World Bank is leveraging resources, aligning stakeholder interests, enabling innovation, improving outreach, and scaling up impact. Following the mandate of this year’s G8 Summit, the World Bank has undertaken to develop a new Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), which has been recently approved by the World Bank’s Board and is expected to be launched next month at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Bali. We will continue to contribute to the development and piloting of the REDD mechanism under the UNFCCC.

As another practical step in this new direction, the World Bank is strongly interested in Russia’s initiative, announced earlier today, to convene next year high-level International Conference on Forests and Climate. We welcome the proposed focus of this initiative on forest sector innovations, investments and human resource capacity building for purposes of effective adaptation to climate change. We are ready to support this with our significant recent experience in organization of regional forest investment forums, and we look forward to cooperating with the Russian Federation, other interested governments, international and regional organizations, industry and civil society in the design and preparation of this activity.

The World Bank will be further collaborating with the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in promoting implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests, as approved by ECOSOC in October 2007, and assisting in developing a voluntary forest financing mechanism to be discussed at the 8th session of UNFF in April 2009.

In light of the challenges facing global forest issues, and given that many forest services provide essential public goods, developing innovative financing tools and partnerships to complement existing Bank instruments is vital. The World Bank is currently undergoing a consultation process for assessing the scope for an inclusive Global Forest Partnership (GFP) that would provide an effective platform to achieve tangible progress on the MDGs 1 and 7. We invite and encourage all interested parties, including MCPFE signatory members and observers, to provide their inputs into the on-going consultation process – questionnaire brochures are available for your attention at the conference lobby, as well as on-line at www.iiedgfpconsultation.org. Preliminary results of this assessment are expected by December of 2007.

We look forward to furthering our cooperation with MCPFE on these important matters.

Thank you.



**STATEMENTS
OF OBSERVER COUNTRIES**

CAMERROON

**Declaration received on the occasion of the Fifth Ministerial Conference
on the Protection of Forests in Europe**

Déclaration de Monsieur le Secrétaire Général du Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune du Cameroun à l'occasion de la 5^{ème} Conférence sur les Forêts en Europe Varsovie 5–7 novembre 2007

Excellences,
Messieurs les Délégués à la cinquième Conférence Ministérielle sur les Forêts en Europe,
Mesdames Messieurs,

Le Cameroun est heureux d'avoir été honoré de recevoir l'invitation conjointe des Gouvernements Polonais et Norvégiens en vue d'assister à cette conférence. Je remercie, au nom du Gouvernement, ces deux pays mais aussi l'Europe pour la contribution dans la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers dans le monde.

Mesdames Messieurs,

Le Bassin du Congo dont le Cameroun est une composante est une vaste région forestière d'environ 230 millions d'hectares, qui constitue, après l'Amazonie, le second massif de forêt tropicale humide au monde. Les forêts du Bassin du Congo se situent majoritairement en Guinée Equatoriale, au Cameroun, au Congo Brazzaville et en République Démocratique du Congo (RDC, ex-Zaïre) et couvrent une petite partie de la République Centrafricaine.

Les inventaires scientifiques ont permis d'y recenser près de 11 000 espèces végétales, 438 espèces de reptiles, 336 espèces d'amphibiens, 221 espèces d'oiseaux et 270 espèces de mammifères dont 43 espèces de primates. Aujourd'hui environ 65 millions d'humains vivent dans les forêts du bassin du Congo. D'autres peuples plus vulnérables, regroupés en différentes «ethnies» comme les Baka ou les Twa y vivent et représentent environ 3 millions de personnes. Leur mode de vie est très fortement lié à la forêt. Ils pratiquent la chasse et la cueillette, se soignent avec des plantes, construisent des huttes avec des végétaux et ont de nombreux rites et coutumes pour honorer les esprits de la forêt.

Les forêts du Bassin du Congo ont été soumises ces dernières années à une exploitation soutenue. Chaque année 700 000 ha de forêts disparaissent dans la région. Ce qui correspond à un taux de diminution de la superficie forestière d'environ 0,3% par an. Les forêts camerounaises représentent le deuxième grand massif forestier du Bassin du Congo en Afrique Centrale et recouvrent 60% du territoire national. Soit plus de 20 millions d'hectares pour une superficie de 475 442 000 km².

Le thème choisi pour cette conférence interpelle les pays du Bassin du Congo en général et le Cameroun en particulier. Car la problématique «forêt pour la qualité de la vie» touche prioritairement nos pays et se situe au cœur de nos réalités.

Mesdames Messieurs,

L'expérience européenne en matière de gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers a beaucoup inspiré le Bassin du Congo. Depuis le Conférence ministérielle européenne d'Helsinki (Finlande)

en 1993 en passant par la Conférence de Lisbonne en 1998, vous avez mis sur pied les critères de gestion durable qui ont été une donnée à penser. En Afrique Centrale, le sommet des Chefs d'Etat et des Gouvernement tenue en 1999 a posé les premiers jalons des initiatives sous régionales en la matière. Rendus huit années après, le chemin parcouru a permis de faire asseoir un plan de convergence et de tendre vers une plus grande sensibilisation des acteurs impliqués dans la gestion des écosystèmes. A titre d'illustration, la sixième CEFDHAC (Conférence sur les Ecosystèmes des Forêts Denses et Humides d'Afrique Centrale) se tiendra du 19 au 22 novembre à Libreville au Gabon. C'est un forum d'échange multi acteurs de sensibilisation et de mobilisation de tous les acteurs pour la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers dans la sous région. Ce forum formule des propositions pour la conférence des ministres de la COMIFAC (Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale). Le Cameroun a été l'inspirateur de la plupart de ces processus régionaux et entend aller de l'avant dans l'initiative. Nous avons adhéré à la plus part des processus régionaux et globaux. 18,5% du territoire national ont été affecté à la conservation ce qui nous situe très largement au-dessus de l'objectif 2010 de 12% qui a été fixé par la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique.

Mesdames Messieurs,

La problématique des forêts en rapport avec la qualité de la vie a ses réalités dans nos pays qui doivent tirer une bonne partie de leurs ressources de l'exploitation forestière. Nous nous efforçons ainsi à trouver un juste milieu entre le commerce du bois et la gestion durable. Il s'agit plus concrètement de promouvoir une exploitation forestière à moindre impact, la création et la gestion des plantations forestières pour pérenniser la ressource. Tout cela suppose une grande implication des communautés. Le Cameroun vient d'entamer les négociations avec l'Union Européenne pour la signature d'un accord de Partenariat Volontaire en 2008. Cet accord qui marquera notre ferme volonté à lutter contre l'exploitation illégale des bois posera aussi les jalons d'une politique qui tend vers un mécanisme de développement propre. A ce sujet nous militons pour un assouplissement des conditions du protocole de Kyoto.

Mesdames Messieurs,

A l'heure où les effets des changements climatiques influencent considérablement les équilibres des écosystèmes, la responsabilité des pays forestiers du Bassin du Congo voire celle des pays consommateurs devient plus grande. Le Cameroun est prêt à se mettre aux côtés du monde pour relever les nouveaux défis. Mon pays prend des mesures pour renforcer ses efforts en matière de gestion durable et de lutte contre l'exploitation illégale des forêts.

Depuis le premier Accord sur les bois tropicaux en 1983, beaucoup d'initiatives ont été prises dans le sens d'un commerce des bois respectueux de l'environnement. Et la question des forêts est traitée aujourd'hui dans diverses instances internationales avec le même tonalité et le même souci d'en faire un chapitre important de la grande thématique de développement durable telle quelle a été édictée au sommet sur la terre à Rio de Janeiro en 1992. Le moment est venu donc de susciter des synergies entres les diverses instances internationales au sein desquelles sont traitées les questions forestières. Le sommet de la terre de Rio, nous a permis de prendre conscience de la communauté des destins. Il est question de tendre vers un débat multi acteurs global, décomplexée. Nous pensons que l'Europe peut aider à atteindre ce but.

Je vous remercie.

CANADA

Ms. Jaye Shuttleworth

Director
Environment and Energy Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure an honour for me to participate on behalf of the Government of Canada in the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. I would like to express our thanks to Poland and Norway and the Liaison Unit for their work in organizing this important conference and extend a personal thank you to our hosts for their warm and generous hospitality.

Like the countries of the MCPFE, there are many reasons why Canada manages its forests with special care.

Canada has 402.1 million hectares of forests and other wooded land, representing 10 per cent of the world's forest cover and 30% of the world's boreal forest. Ninety-three per cent of our forest land is publicly owned and 80 per cent of Aboriginal communities are in forested land. More than 134 million hectares of Canada's Forests are certified as being sustainably managed by one or more of three globally recognized certification standards – representing the largest area of independently certified forests in the world.

Yet annually, less than one per cent of forests are harvested across Canada.

However, forests are much more than statistics. Forests are a dominant feature of Canada's landscape and central to its economy. They enrich the lives of all Canadians, offer a place of sanctuary and recreation, and are fundamental to the cultural and spiritual values of Aboriginal peoples.

The critical role that forests play in the ecosystem demands that we manage them in a sustainable manner.

Canada has adopted a vision for the sustainable management of its forests. Our National Forest Strategy for 2003–2008, describes that vision as: "The long-term health of Canada's forests will be maintained and enhanced, for the benefit of all living things, and for the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of all Canadians now and in the future."

The Strategy is a roadmap for achieving this vision. It is a collaborative approach developed by representatives of a broad range of forest users to reconcile the diverse values and expectations that Canadians place on their forests. The Strategy supports an ecosystem-based approach to managing Canada's natural forests.

Canada also has a long history of working with the global forest community. Canada is a founding member of the Montréal Process, created in 1994 to develop and implement internationally agreed-upon criteria and indicators to assess and improve the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests.

Like Europe and other parts of the world, we face many challenges in the sustainable management of our forests. Insect infestations such as the Mountain Pine Beetle have had a major impact on forests in the Province of British Columbia. A changing climate has important implications for the



Canadian forest sector and the more than 300 communities whose livelihood is closely associated with forests.

The complex relationship between forests and climate requires forest researchers, managers and policy makers to work on mitigation and adaptation. Sound policies based on sound science, will be critical at every step for both mitigation and adaptation activities.

The changing world of forests requires governments, communities, civil society and all forest partners to develop innovative strategies to respond to the new challenges facing the forest sector.

Sustainable forest management is a clear priority and central policy focus of Canada’s provincial, territorial and federal governments. As the concept of sustainable forest management shifts and adjusts to address changing circumstances and conditions, so must the forest policies and other initiatives designed to achieve it. A variety of voluntary and legally binding agreements are required to support the global advancement of sustainable forest management

Your work this week will help to advance our understanding of how to sustainably manage our forests in the face of the new challenges that confront us. I wish you a successful conclusion to your discussions today.



INDIA

Mr. Sevugan Regupathy

Minister of State
Ministry of Environment and Forests

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

I am grateful to the Chair for providing the opportunity to make a statement on behalf of my delegation.

Mr. Chairman,

India has been participating actively in the international Dialogue on Forests in different processes. India is committed to the forest principles evolved at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio in 1992. Forestry management in India falls under the concurrent responsibility of federal and State Governments. The National Forest Policy of 1988, formulated four years before the Rio Summit, embodies all elements of Sustainable Forest Management. India considers its forest primarily social and environmental resource, only secondarily a commercial resource.

All member countries of the United Nations have adopted the Non-Legality Binding Instrument for Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests including the shared global objectives during seventh session of United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and also reaffirm our commitment to implement the provisions as reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Forest Principles, Chapter 11 of agenda 21, the Proposals for Action of the IPF/IFF the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as well as in the outcomes of the different sessions of United Nations Forum on Forests.

The UNFF and the CPF have been successful in promoting better understanding of sustainable forest management related issues as well as in facilitating coordination among forest-related instruments and processes. One of the important achievements has been the identification of gaps in the implementation of sustainable forest management, especially in key areas such as the provision of financial resources and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on preferential terms. The Johannesburg Plan of implementation (JPOI) also recognized the need for creating and strengthening of partnerships and international cooperation to facilitate the provision for increased financial resources, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and capacity building to implement sustainable forest management.

The National Forest Programmes (NFPs) have been formulated in many countries in response to international commitments and in conformity with the IPF/IFF proposals for action. However, there are many challenges that need to be met for the implementation of NFPs in developing countries. With the limited financial resources at their command, and with competing demands for development programmes, many of the developing countries are not in a position to allocate adequate resources for NFPs. Food security, health, drinking water, roads and education get priority. Apart from this, the spatial scale and the extent of forest resources necessitate huge financial investments for operationalization and implementation of IPF/IFF proposals of action.



It is well known that the poorest of the poor live in and around forests on which they depend for their basic needs and to certain extent even livelihoods. The Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) from the forests provides large scope of livelihood opportunities to the people living in and around forests. I will like to emphasize here that India has empowered people living in and around forests with occupation and habitation rights on forests through national level legislation. This will benefit around 350–400 million people living in and around forests. More efforts are needed to build the capacity of these people with regards to add value to the NTFP and its trade and marketing. It will enhance livelihood opportunities to these people and help us in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

India is one of the 12 mega diversity countries having 45000 plant species and 81250 species of fauna, comprising 7% of World's biodiversity. There are 16 major forest types, varying from alpine pasture in Himalayas to temperate forests, sub-tropical forests, and mangroves in the coastal line. Though we have only 2.5 per cent of World's geographical area and 1.8 per cent of World's forests, these, however, support 16% of world's human population and 18% of livestock population. In spite of these constraints, we are maintaining around 1/4th of the geographical area of the country under forest and tree cover through involvement of people and strong forest related legislations. Forests are inseparably linked with the livelihoods of people living in and around forests for the purposes of self consumption and sum income generation. Forests contribute to the poverty eradicating to certain extent and are important for environmental protection. India's policy of decentralized centric management of forests, has potential of achieving the most important of the Millennium Development Goals, which is poverty alleviation. In 1990, the Government of India adopted the principles of "care and share", highlighting the need and procedures for the involvement of village communities and voluntary agencies in the protection and development of degraded forests, popularly called the "Joint Forest Management (JFM) Principles". These have become cornerstone of people's participation in forests management. At present 8–10 million people are managing more than 22 million hectare forest with benefit sharing mechanism. India has also empowered communities with occupation and habitation rights on forests through a national level legislation. It is a milestone for enhancing contribution of forests towards achieving Millennium Development Goals as well as shared global objectives. India is very much concerned about wildlife conservation and conserving its wildlife with the creation of more than 600 national parks Sanctuaries, community and biosphere reserves.

The task before us is to identify priority areas and focus attention on such issues at international level that would facilitate actions at the national level to achieve sustainable forest management, keeping in view national circumstances and priorities, and, at the same time, promote actions for support to the developing countries in capacity building as well as in meeting the financing gap.

Any number of programmes or plans will not help achieve the goal of sustainable development unless we devise effective financial arrangements to implement them. India supports establishment of financial arrangements that would assist developing countries in the implementation of proposals for actions. Setting up a Global Forest Fund and earmarking resources for forestry projects in GAF could be some of the options instead of exploring possibility of revenue generation from payment of ecological services for SFM. We are of the view that national forest programmes, where existing, should be the basis for channelising and prioritising financial assistance for forestry sector in developing countries by donor communities including the Collaborative Partnership on Forest (CPF). Furthermore the mandate of CPF members for forestry sector development should be in consonance with the shared global objectives for sustainable development of forests.

At the end, we once again endorse our commitment to the Forest Principles for conservation, management and sustainable development of all types of forests agreed in UNCED at Rio in 1992 and commitment to achieve shared global objectives adopted through Non-Legally Binding International Instrument for Sustainable Development of Forests.

Thank you. JAI Hind.

JAPAN

Mr. Yuichi Sato

Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

on behalf of

the Montreal Process Working Group on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to have this opportunity to make a brief statement on behalf of the Montreal Process Working Group on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests.

The Montreal Process, concurrently with the Pan-European process on criteria and indicators initiated under the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), has developed, adopted and implemented the Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management in temperate and boreal forests in the member countries. The members include 12 countries; Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Mexico, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Korea, United States of America, Uruguay and Japan, that across the Continents, account for 60 percent of all forests in the world, and 90 percent of the world's temperate and boreal forests.

One of the goals of the Montreal Process is to enhance the relevance of the criteria and indicators to sustainable forest management and improve each member country's ability to report on forest trends and progress toward sustainable forest management. Since the Montreal Process adopted a set of 7 Criteria and 67 Indicators in 1995, we have produced a number of outcomes. In 1998, we developed comprehensive Technical Notes to help with data collection and reporting. In 2003, the 1st Country Forest Reports were prepared by member countries using the criteria. Also in 2003, the Working Group prepared the 1st Montreal Process overview report that presents data from all 12 countries. We are in the process of finalizing a three-year process to review and revise the 67 indicators based on experiences gained in preparing the 2003 Country Forest Reports. The set of indicators will be used by member countries in our second reporting period in 2009/2010 in time for the next World Forest Congress and the 2011 International Year of the Forest.

The concept of sustainable forest management is now widely understood among the 12 Montreal Process countries. We have each improved our capacity to assess and report on national forest trends. We have used our C&I as a framework for developing policies, plans and inventories at sub-national levels. In North America and the Southern Cone of Latin America, countries have cooperated to develop and apply consistent approaches to forest inventory and data collection.

We had also appreciated the opportunity to participate in the collaboration workshop hosted by MCPFE in Poland and are working to further the results of that workshop with your scientists in another workshop next year. Through these supportive activities and event, we have accumulated the experiences and lessons learnt in regards to the application of the criteria and indicators in the respective counties.

At the beginning of this year, Japan was given the role of liaison office for the Montreal Process from Canada, which had hosted the Liaison Office since 1995. We will make every effort to fulfill

the expectations of our role. The current challenges the Montreal Process faces include finalizing our revision of the Montreal Process indicators, revision of the technical notes based on the new indicators and developing the first Montreal Process strategic action plan. The Working Group will address these issues at its meeting later this month in Buenos Aires. It was noted in the United Nations Forum on Forests that *the member states should consider the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, which are drawn from the criteria identified by existing C&I processes, and should, on voluntary basis, submit national reports to the Forum taking into consideration the seven thematic elements.* In this regards, it will also be required to facilitate the preparation of the 2nd national reports by each Montreal Process member country with the improvement of reporting quality. Possible future collaboration and harmonization with the other criteria and indicators initiatives, including MCPFE, would also be desirable.

Finally, we would like to thank you for the kind hospitality extended to us during this important meeting. I also thank you for the interesting and important discussion regarding mitigation of climate change during this conference. We look forward to working closely with the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Thank you.

MOROCCO

Mr. Abdeladim Lhafi

High Commissioner
High Commissariat for Water, Forestry and Combating Desertification

M. le Président,
Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Je voudrais à mon tour remercier et féliciter la Pologne et la Norvège pour l'excellente organisation de cette rencontre et pour les conditions qu'ils ont su réunir pour sa réussite.

Le Maroc dans sa première participation, en tant que pays observateur à cette 5ème conférence ministérielle pour la protection des forêts en Europe, montre son engagement pour une gestion durable des forêts sous l'angle notamment des trois principales conventions des Nations Unies et dans l'esprit du sommet de la Terre de Rio, principalement celles relatives aux forêt, à la biodiversité, aux changements climatiques et à la lutte contre la désertification.

La forêt marocaine a, à la fois, la richesse et la fragilité des forêts méditerranéennes. 2ème dans le bassin méditerranéen en terme de biodiversité et en terme d'espèces endémiques propres, la forêt marocaine constitue un élément structurant dans le développement rural du pays, et sa gestion de manière durable appelle un compromis permanent entre d'une part, les légitimes exigences du développement, la nécessaire prise en compte des aspects sociaux, et l'impératif de préserver les fragiles équilibres des écosystèmes. Le développement durable se présente dès lors, comme le point de rencontre que détermineront les arbitrages entre des logiques divergentes.

Sur le plan économique, la prise de conscience d'une réalité s'est imposée; la forêt marocaine est d'abord une forêt de conservation avant d'être une forêt de production en bois et en produits non ligneux. Son rôle dans le développement s'exprime, à travers sa faible productivité directe, certes mais aussi dans la protection des infrastructures, en premier lieu, les barrages et les retenues d'eau, qui reçoivent annuellement près de 75 millions de m³ de terre de fait de l'érosion et qui voient par conséquent leur durée de vie réduite d'autant. La fixation des sols des terres agricoles et par voie de conséquence, la préservation du potentiel de production agricole est aussi un objectif central.

Sur le plan social, la forêt marocaine, domaine de l'Etat dans sa presque totalité, est un espace ouvert, grevé de divers droits d'usage, où les usagers ayant droit ont accès notamment aux prélèvements de bois d'énergie, et aux pâturages en forêt. Le prélèvement de bois est 2 à 3 fois supérieur au potentiel de production et les surpâturages posent un problème de densité, la forêt supportant 2 à 5 fois plus que son offre potentielle en unités fourragères avec un séjour en forêt qui ne se limite plus aux périodes de soudure mais s'étale sur presque toute l'année. Au delà du prélèvement fourrager, la présence du cheptel constitue un élément de désorganisation du cycle de l'eau.

La troisième contrainte est d'ordre climatique. Aux variations classiques d'essence conjoncturelle se superposent les changements climatiques structurels; une tendance lourde, notamment par les sécheresses récurrentes devenues plus fréquentes quant à leur survenue, plus longues dans leur durée et plus aigues dans leur intensité. Et quand bien même les bilans hydriques se révéleraient normaux dans leurs moyennes annuelles, la régularité et la distribution temporelle nous placent de plus en plus dans une rupture consommée entre la sécheresse agricole forestière d'une part, et la sécheresse météorologique et hydrologique d'autre part. Ce découplage est devenu désormais une

constante des changements climatiques, aggravés par les situations extrêmes et des conséquences notamment sur l'inflammabilité des essences forestières ou les inondations pendant les périodes critiques de l'année.

A partir de l'analyse de ces trois contraintes, le Maroc a souscrit une politique forestière basée sur une véritable gestion du territoire et de l'espace sous un angle holistique et intégré, où les arbitrages doivent être constamment rendus notamment dans la gestion des conflits de l'usage de l'espace. A la gestion du territoire s'est imposée une politique de participation et de partenariat avec l'ensemble des opérateurs pour la mise en place d'une culture de coresponsabilité en lieu et place d'une gestion conflictuelle.

L'Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain, initiée dès l'année 2005, est venue consacrer ces principes par une démarche et une approche où le développement durable constitue l'ossature centrale du processus de restauration des écosystèmes dans leur complexité. Elle constitue un catalyseur pour les programmes de reboisement qui atteignent 40 000 ha annuels, pour le traitement des bassins versants et la lutte contre l'érosion hydrique, où une action prioritaire concerne 1,5x106 ha ou encore pour le programme de restauration de l'espace et sa biodiversité sur plus de 150 S.I.B.E pour une superficie de 2,5x106, en plus des réserves de biosphères, arganeraie, palmeraie, cédraie et la dernière réserve intercontinentale de biosphère adoptée par l'UNESCO en 2006 sur plus de 106 ha à partie égale entre l'Andalousie et le RIF occidental.

Le Maroc s'inscrit délibérément dans le mouvement d'une gestion durable qui concilie le développement et le respect des ressources naturelles pour que la pression du présent ne compromette pas le futur et la solidarité intergénérationnelle.

Merci de votre attention.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Ms. Leslie Weldon

Director for External Affairs
U.S. Forest Service

Thank you Mr. Chairman.
Esteemed Delegates,

It is a privilege to be here representing Abigail Kimbell, Chief of the United States Forest Service. The Forest Service mission is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. I have appreciated the opportunity to listen to you these past two days. We share many of your concerns.

Climate change is a great environmental and economic challenge. The contribution of forests to addressing climate change is crucial. As has already been noted, 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions results from deforestation and other land use changes. We can and must find ways to sustain and strengthen the role of forests as carbon sinks and renewable sources of energy. Like you, we are taking steps domestically and internationally to “avoid deforestation” and promote sustainable forest management.

Many areas of the United States have warmed over the past 40 years, with the greatest changes occurring in the north and west, causing earlier snowmelt in the spring and increased evaporation. Rising temperatures are expected to lead to longer summer droughts and changes in water timing and supply, increasing stress on forests and mortality from insects and diseases, as well as fire. Research indicates correlations between the size and intensity of wildfires in the U.S. and the extent and severity of drought and the length of the fire season.

These challenges are complex, but we are working to address them in a number of ways.

The U.S. Forest Service manages millions of hectares of forests to make them more resistant to wildfires, insects and disease, and more resilient to stresses associated with climate change. In the last six years, federal, state and local partners have worked together to restore healthy forests and reduce fire hazards on 8 million hectares of forested land. Together, we have complete over 1 100 Community Wildfire Protection Plans and are helping private forest owners to conserve forests and adapt to climate change. We are also working closely with government, industry and NGO partners to strengthen conservation education and improve forest reporting using the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators.

Our scientists are looking for better ways to forecast how ecosystems will change in response to a changing climate, and are developing tools to help managers and policymakers make decisions. We are fortunate to have an extensive network of research laboratories, over two decades of climate change research, three decades of air pollution research, extensive experience with scientific assessments, and longstanding research partnerships at home and abroad.

The Forest Service is also working to reduce it’s carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions from our agency operations. We are pursuing ways to use more wood, and less coal, to heat and light our buildings, and we are making our vehicles more fuel-efficient. We are pioneering new uses for woody biomass in wood products and for energy. We are “greening” urban areas by planting trees to store carbon, provide shade, reduce municipal water treatment and improve quality of life.

The United States is also partnering with nations worldwide to better manage forests for their multiple benefits, including as sources of wood, energy and water. We provide 80 to 100 million dollars a year in direct assistance to help countries avoid deforestation.

Since 2000, we have concluded debt-for-nature agreements with 13 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These programs have not only relieved debt burdens but are generating 163 million dollars to protect 20 million hectares of threatened tropical forests.

Through the President’s Initiative Against illegal Logging, we are helping countries to strengthen the rule of law, empower communities and establish transparent business practices. In 2004 we launched what is now a 13 million dollar multi-donor Liberia Forest Initiative, which is helping the post-war regime establish a sustainable and legal commercial forest sector. In 2006 we concluded a bilateral agreement with Indonesia to combat illegal logging and associated trade. We are discussing a similar agreement with China to recognize our shared responsibilities as the world’s largest timber producers, consumers and traders. We are also working with a number of you to develop private/public partnerships, to train customs officials, and to develop forest standards and markets.

Mr. Chairman, regional approaches are crucial to addressing forest issues. We are engaged with G8 and other partners to catalyze political commitment and action through regional Forest Law Enforcement and Governance processes. Since 2002, we have committed 68 million dollars to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. In 2005 we began a 5-year, 50 million dollar program to conserve the forests of the Amazon Basin. At the recent APEC Summit in Australia, we co-sponsored China’s proposal to establish an Asia-Pacific Network to enhance forest management and rehabilitation in the region.

These regional processes complement the MCPFE, as does the Montreal Process on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management on Temperate and Boreal Forests. Later this month, the Montreal Process will finalize a revised set of indicators to assess national forest trends and progress toward sustainable forest management, based on lessons learned since 1995.

Regional forest approaches will be key to informing global climate discussions. We welcome Australia’s Global Initiative on Forests and Climate and the UK’s leadership in the Global Partnership for Forest Landscape Restoration. We also welcome the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests adopted by the UN Forum on Forests as a framework for national action and international cooperation, including action to “reduce the loss of forest cover worldwide.”

Mr. Chairman, in concluding, let me come back to the U.S. context. As Forest Service Chief Kimbell listens to people around the country talk about climate change and drought, she has concluded that our most important resource in meeting these long-term challenges is not forests, vital as forests are. Our most important resource is our children. They will need to carry on what we have started. Our kids, the “Google-Earth Generation,” need to learn why forests are so valuable, so they can safeguard the world’s forests for generations to come.

I would like to thank the governments of Poland and Norway for inviting the United States to observe these important proceedings regarding the sustainable management of European forests. These two days have been very informative. We appreciate Poland’s warm welcome and gracious hospitality throughout the conference.

Thank you.



OUTCOMES OF THE FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

5-7 November, 2007, Warsaw, Poland



WARSAW DECLARATION

Conditions of life on our planet are threatened and call for immediate action. The challenge for all governments and civil society is to protect and sustainably use the Earth's natural resources. European forests have a vital role to play, as they can improve and benefit the quality of life and in particular contribute to climate change mitigation, energy supply and water protection.

1. Being aware of continuous change of climate conditions and the foreseen consequences for forest ecosystems and forestry, and recognising the role of forests, sustainable forest management and forest products in climate change mitigation, as well as the ongoing need for adaptation to climate change.
2. Stressing the importance of using sustainably produced wood as a renewable raw material and renewable energy source and recognising the need to enhance wood supply.
3. Stressing the role of forests for water quality and quantity and for alleviating floods and droughts, as well as noting impacts of climate change on forest and water.
4. Recognising the importance of the full economic value of the multiple services provided by forests and the need to have adequate means and measures to secure these services.
5. Acknowledging that secure property and land tenure rights are a prerequisite for the implementation of sustainable forest management.
6. Emphasising that sustainable forest management contributes significantly to environmental, economic, social and cultural dimensions of sustainable development and particularly to the achievement of internationally agreed goals, including the Four Global Objectives on Forests agreed by the United Nations

Forum on Forests (UNFF), the Millennium Development Goals, the 2010 Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS).

- 7. Highlighting the importance of providing European input to the international forest policy dialogue.
- 8. Welcoming the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests and the Multi-year Programme of Work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for 2007–2015 adopted at the Seventh Session of UNFF.
- 9. Building on the 17 years of achievements and experiences and continuous efforts of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) to strengthen the economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects of forests at all levels.

As representatives of the Signatory States and the European Community, we commit ourselves to:

Benefiting Quality of Life

- 10. ensure that forests and their sustainable management play an active role in the sustainable development and well being of European society, for both rural and urban areas,
- 11. ensure that forests and their sustainable management play an active role in combating the negative effects of climate change through both mitigation and adaptation measures,
- 12. maintain, conserve, restore and enhance the biological diversity of forests, including their genetic resources through sustainable forest management,
- 13. enhance the use of wood as a renewable raw material and source of energy from sustainably managed forests,
- 14. ensure that forests and their sustainable management play an active role in maintaining and enhancing water quality and quantity and in mitigating natural hazards, such as floods, droughts, avalanches, land slides as well as in combating soil erosion and desertification,

Tackling Challenges

- 15. strengthen the competitiveness of the forest sector in order to increase its capacity to benefit the quality of life,
- 16. raise the profile and awareness of the multiple benefits of forests and forestry as well as the role of the forest sector, within government structures, private sector and with the general public,
- 17. create enabling conditions in order to increase the mobilisation of wood from sustainably managed forests for all uses,

- 18. ensure that all wood production, including short rotation and fast growing energy crops, is guided by the principles of sustainability in order to provide for fair competition between sectors,
- 19. continue to contribute to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and in this regard to further develop Pan-European guidance for afforestation and reforestation,
- 20. establish coherence between policies on forest and water resources and coordinate sustainable forest management and integrated water resources management,
- 21. develop and implement innovative tools for securing water-related services provided by forests, such as payments for ecosystem services (PES)¹ or other measures,
- 22. further promote national forest programmes or equivalents for cross-sectoral coordination and as a means for coherent implementation of forest related international commitments,
- 23. further strengthen efforts to promote good governance and forest law enforcement to combat illegal logging and related trade of forest products, inter alia by cooperating on and promoting public procurement policies that demand timber and timber products from legal and sustainable sources,
- 24. take effective measures to improve understanding between policy makers, practitioners and the scientific community in order to better use scientific knowledge and research results relevant to forests and the forest sector as a sound basis for decision making,
- 25. strengthen forest and forest sector related employment, education, training and communication and ensure equal opportunities in accessing them,
- 26. promote research, especially on the role of forests in climate change mitigation, adaptation of forests to climate change as well as the use of wood and biomass, the relationship between forest and water and functioning of forest ecosystems,

Global - Regional Cooperation and Partnerships

- 27. further promote effective implementation of sustainable forest management at all levels and contribute to the international forest policy dialogue by continued cooperation on forest issues in Europe and by sharing European achievements and experiences with other regions,
- 28. further support and cooperate with countries undertaking forest sector reform, particularly those countries with economies in transition to fully incorporate the principles of sustainable forest management in their forest sectors,

¹payments for ecosystem services (PES) – contractual transactions between buyers and sellers for ecosystem services or land use/management practices likely to secure those services. In: “Recommendations on payments for ecosystem services in Integrated Water Resources Management”, UNECE Water Convention, 2006.

- 29. contribute to the achievement of the Four Global Objectives on Forests as well as the implementation of the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests and the Multi-year Programme of Work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for 2007–2015,
- 30. develop, in cooperation with other regional bodies, processes and agreements, consistent inputs from the Pan-European region to the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for 2007–2015, addressing issues of the agenda items of UNFF sessions and strengthening the collaboration with the international arrangement on forests, inter alia, through sharing regional perspectives, approaches and experiences,
- 31. support objectives and actions at the Pan-European level that enhance the regional contribution to the achievements of the Four Global Objectives on Forests agreed by the UNFF and other relevant global commitments,
- 32. undertake further efforts towards strengthening collaboration of the MCPFE with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with the aim to recognise diverse roles of forests and their products in climate change mitigation, in the context of the post-2012 climate regime, as far as it contributes to the ultimate objectives of the UNFCCC,
- 33. strengthen collaboration of the MCPFE with the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) with the view to enhance the role of forests in combating desertification and combating floods,
- 34. contribute to the implementation of the relevant programmes of work of the CBD through effectively implementing the MCPFE commitments,
- 35. encourage joint activities of the forest and water sectors and enhance cooperation between the MCPFE and the Water Convention of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE),
- 36. support Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) ministerial processes and enhance collaboration between the MCPFE and the Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (ENA FLEG),
- 37. use innovative and effective approaches to further strengthen the existing cooperation with other regional bodies and processes in Europe, such as Environment for Europe/PEBLDS, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations European Forestry Commission (FAO EFC), and UNECE Timber Committee (UNECE TC) in order to benefit from synergies, including for the development of consistent Pan-European input to UNFF sessions,

Putting MCPFE commitments into action

- 38. develop a work programme for the implementation of commitments of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in cooperation with relevant organizations, institutions and processes and to reinforce implementation of previous commitments,

- 39. organise in this context together with stakeholders actions to communicate at all levels and to raise public awareness on the cross-sectoral importance of forests, and the forest sector,
- 40. carry out a review of the MCPFE process by the Sixth Ministerial Conference, by assessing progress made and obstacles faced in the implementation of its commitments.

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WARSAW RESOLUTION 1

Forests, Wood and Energy

1. Supporting the objectives of mitigating climate change and increasing security of supply of energy.
2. Emphasising that forest biomass, wood processing residues and recovered wood represent important sources of renewable energy that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by replacing fossil fuels.
3. Recognising the need to improve both energy and resource efficiency in production and consumption of bio-energy.
4. Recognising the need to increase knowledge on the role of forest ecosystems as well as forest based products in long term carbon sequestration as a contribution to mitigate climate change in the context of the post-2012 climate regime.
5. Acknowledging that sustainable forest management practices and enlargement of the forest area in Europe have resulted in an increased availability of forest resources, providing in many parts of Europe the potential for increasing wood mobilisation while respecting the principles of sustainable forest management.
6. Recognising the significance of European forestry and forest-based industries, as well as the importance of maintaining their long term economic viability and competitiveness and emphasising that forests provide raw material for the forest-based sector as well as for energy.
7. Noting the increased competing demand for wood as a renewable raw material and as a renewable energy carrier and the need to avoid undue distortion of competition between different end uses.

8. Noting a need for improved and more comprehensive information on wood resources and wood consumption as a basis for better informed policy making and strategy setting.
9. Recognising that an increasing demand for wood, creates new income opportunities for forest owners, entrepreneurs and managers and also for wealth, jobs and economic growth, especially in rural areas.
10. Being aware that the fragmentation of forest ownership in Europe represents a challenge for maintaining active and sustainable management of forests and mobilising wood.
11. Recognising the complementary role of using woody biomass in reducing forest fire risk.
12. Building on previous MCPFE commitments, and recognising the ongoing work in the area of forests, wood and energy carried out by international conventions, organisations and processes.

The Signatory States and the European Community, commit themselves to:

I. Enhancing the role of the forest sector in energy production

13. take effective measures within the framework of sustainable forest management to increase the use of woody biomass for energy generation, taking into account the importance of processing residues and recovered wood as renewable energy sources,
14. assess environmental impacts of wood production for energy including impacts on soil, water, biodiversity and nutrient cycles,
15. adjust policies and instruments, including research and development, to support enabling conditions that encourage investments in the production and distribution of bio-energy, increased mobilisation, efficient use of wood and energy,
16. strengthen the position of the forest sector in cross-sectoral debates concerning energy through developing communication and raising awareness about present assets, the existing potential in the forest sector and the multiple benefits of using wood fuel,
17. encourage partnerships among public and private forest owners, forest based industries and energy producers aiming at the development of markets for bio-energy,

II. Mobilisation of wood resources

18. analyse and assess on a scientific and practical basis, and in dialogue with stakeholders, the existing and potential wood resources in Europe, inter alia, based on national forest inventories, as well as the feasibility and constraints for wood mobilisation,
19. develop and further improve systems of data collection on the consumption of wood for energy,

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- 20.ensure enabling conditions for increased sustainable wood production through stronger interlinking of national forest policies with policies on sustainable development, agriculture, land use, rural development, environment, energy and industry,
- 21.identify and remove unintended barriers to an increase of sustainable wood production and mobilisation in forests of all types of ownership,
- 22.examine different practices under sustainable forest management and promote the use of a range of sustainable management systems including short rotation and coppice forestry in accordance with national law, to increase wood production and mobilisation in order to effectively address a growing demand for wood,
- 23.assess feasibility of mobilising wood resources from areas outside forests,
- 24.encourage capacity building of forest owners and their cooperatives and facilitate their cooperation and information exchange, inter alia, on access to wood markets, providing information, education, training and extension services, to empower and motivate proactive sustainable forest management in order to mobilise more wood,
- 25.promote development of the capacity of the forest workforce, entrepreneurs and managers in order to increase their ability to better respond to the needs of wood markets through education, training, and the use of innovative techniques,
- 26.promote adequate forestry and logistical infrastructures in order to facilitate access to wood resources and flexibility in responding to market demands,
- 27.support mobilisation of biomass from forests with high risk of fires, decreasing in this way a level of forests vulnerability,
- 28.encourage the application of sustainable management practices for wood production outside forests.

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WARSAW RESOLUTION 2

Forests and Water

- 1. Recognising the close interrelation between forests and water.
- 2. Concerned that there is a growing imbalance between freshwater supply and demand.
- 3. Aware of the need to ensure adequate water quality and quantity.
- 4. Stressing the need for adequate water conditions in order to sustain European society.
- 5. Emphasising the role of forests and forest management for biodiversity of water ecosystems.
- 6. Concerned that climate change will have severe effects on the frequency, scale and intensity of natural hazards such as floods, debris flow, avalanches, storms, and droughts and will have an impact on forest and water resources and their management.
- 7. Stressing the role of forests and forest management in protecting water quality, managing water resources for the quantity of all waters, flood alleviation, combating desertification and soil protection as well as the importance of mountain forests in the reduction of land slides, erosion and effects of avalanches.
- 8. Concerned that the frequency and size of forest fires is increasing and that fires occur more frequently, even at higher latitudes and altitudes, resulting in severe impacts on watersheds, water quality, quantity and soil erosion.
- 9. Emphasising that the full economic value of forests has to be adequately recognised and in particular the value of providing ecosystem services.
- 10. Recognising that forest owners have rights and responsibilities and noting the importance of prior consultations regarding the provision of water-related services.

- 11. Stressing the need to involve local communities and other relevant stakeholders in planning and implementation of water related forest policies.
- 12. Building on previous MCPFE commitments and recognising the ongoing work in the area of forests and water carried out by international conventions, organizations and processes.

The Signatory States and the European Community, commit themselves to:

I. Sustainable management of forests in relation to water

- 13. maintain and enhance the protective functions of forests for water and soil, as well as for mitigating local water-related natural disasters through sustainable forest management, including through public and private partnerships,
- 14. assess afforestation and reforestation programmes in terms of their effects on quality and quantity of water resources, flood alleviation and soil,
- 15. promote the restoration of degraded forests, particularly in floodplains and upper watershed areas for the benefit of the water environment, flood reduction, conservation of biodiversity and soil protection,

II. Coordinating policies on forests and water

- 16. develop and improve policies for forest and water resources management that contribute to the maintenance of ecosystems and the sustainable provision of their services,
- 17. coordinate forest and water resources management policies through national forest programmes or equivalents and integrated water resources management plans and strategies at the appropriate levels,
- 18. develop adequate or improve the existing institutional arrangements to better cooperate in addressing the interrelation between forest and water issues,
- 19. address the management of forests and water at the transboundary watershed level through enhanced international cooperation,
- 20. enhance education, training, research and extension services to promote knowledge and understanding of forest and water interactions,
- 21. increase awareness of the relationship between forests and water as well as the potential of forests and their sustainable management to improve the water environment,

III. Forests, water and climate change

- 22. develop a deeper understanding of the potential consequences of climate change on forest and water interactions, including desertification and biodiversity loss as

- well as the frequency, scale and intensity of floods, storms, droughts, forest fires, pests and diseases,
- 23. develop appropriate policies and strategies for managing forests and water resources sustainably to adapt to climate change and contribute to its mitigation,

IV. Economic valuation of water-related forest services

- 24. assess the economic value of forest services related to quality and quantity of water resources and flood alleviation from which society benefits,
- 25. incorporate the economic valuation of water-related forest services into relevant policies and strategies on forests and water,
- 26. facilitate the development and implementation of measures, which may include economic tools such as payments for ecosystem services (PES)¹ in order to broaden and diversify the financial basis for sustainable forest management and to maintain the protective functions of forests.

¹payments for ecosystem services (PES) – contractual transactions between buyers and sellers for ecosystem services or land use/management practices likely to secure those services. In: “Recommendations on payments for ecosystem services in Integrated Water Resources Management”, UNECE Water Convention, 2006.

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5-7 November, 2007, Warsaw, Poland



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

on the occasion of the
Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection
of Forests in Europe

5-7 November 2007, Warsaw, Poland

We, the Ministers responsible for forests in Europe, would like to express our sympathy to and solidarity with the people and the Governments of the countries of Southern Europe who have suffered during recent years from the effects of huge forest fires, the families of people who lost their lives, and those who lost their homes and their ways and means of life, with special reference to the disasters in Greece in the summer of 2007.

We would also like to express our readiness to explore further measures to prevent such forest fires and to restore the economic, social and ecological potential of the affected areas, as soon as possible.

FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

on the occasion of the
Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection
of Forests in Europe

5-7 November 2007, Warsaw, Poland

We, the Ministers responsible for forests in Europe declare the week of 20-24 October 2008 to be the Pan-European Forest Week 2008.

This week should increase the visibility of forests and the forest sector and raise awareness about their important contribution to the protection of the environment and the development of economy and society in Europe.

Building on the progress made in Europe towards sustainable forest management over last decades and the well established and effective regional cooperation to this end, this week would also give an opportunity for additional concerted efforts to promote sustainable forest management and to engage other sectors in a participatory dialogue on forest related issues of cross-sectoral nature.

The Pan-European Forest Week 2008, jointly prepared by the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, European Forestry Commission and Timber Committee, will provide an umbrella and framework for a series of events and for different European actors, including the public and private sector and civil society.

We encourage governments, national and regional bodies and processes as well as stakeholders to engage in this effort and organize actions at all levels to communicate and to raise public awareness on the importance of forests and the forest sector for Europe.

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY of the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

Mr. Hosny EL-LAKANY

Adjunct Professor of Forestry
University of British Columbia
Canada

The Multi Stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) took place on 5 November, 2007 as a part of the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. The MSD involved six Major Groups (MGs): the “youth”, “forest owners”, “forest industry”, “social NGO’s”, “environmental NGO’s” and “scientific community”. The Major Group “forest owners” was represented by two Sub-groups: state forest owners and private forest owners. These groups included all non-governmental and research organizations which participate in the MCPFE. The MSD included statements by the focal points of the six MGs followed by a dialogue with ministers responsible for forests in Europe and with the representative of the intergovernmental organizations.

The MSD was facilitated by Prof. Hosny El-Lakany, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia. He summarized the history of the participation of Civil Society representatives in the international forest dialogue. He recalled that the way MSD’s were conducted and that their results have often been problematic, but noted that it is now more collaborative than confrontational. He called on participants to have an open and constructive dialogue.

The Major Group “Youth” stressed the importance of education and training in the framework of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), and highlighted the role of higher forestry education as a key element of a successful implementation of SFM as well as a significant investment in the future development of science. The students asked the ministers to continue promoting the participation of young professionals in the framework of the MCPFE and encouraged the governments to provide grant programs for education at national and Pan-European levels.

The state forest owners stressed the tradition and contribution of state forests organizations to SFM and their role in transferring the resolutions of the MCPFE to the operational level. They emphasized the fact that management of public forests is more than an administrative mission. Forests could be managed in a sustainable manner so that ecological services and opportunities for jobs and economic development in rural areas are combined with supply of timber. This, in their views, allows forestry to play a crucial role in reaching the European target concerning the renewable energy production and consequently in mitigating climate change. The possibilities offered by the Kyoto Protocol should be taken into account and EUSTAFOR members will take part in the development of operative projects, through afforestation and forest management that will demonstrate the forest potential for carbon sequestration.

Private forest owners called upon the policy makers to acknowledge the cross-disciplinary role of forests and forestry, its goods and services in achieving sustainable development and highlighted the important role forestry plays in policies addressing climate change and water. They underlined challenges to further ensure coherence and compatibility of difference sectoral policies and international processes with relevance to forests and forestry and the use of natural resources. They emphasized the position of forest owners and cooperatives in the mobilization of wood resources and development of local and regional energy networks. There is still need to fully value the goods and services that forests and forestry provide to European society and acknowledge the role of

forest owners in securing these services. They stressed the importance of secure property rights, land tenure and coherence of international processes with forest owners.

Forest industry emphasized the current favorable political atmosphere that pays increased attention to wood and its usage as biomass, hence contributing to climate change mitigation and secure energy supply in Europe. Forests and forestry sector can play a positive role in this context but, they warned, if the efforts will not be coordinated, balanced and accompanied by adequate policies and instruments, there will be significant negative impacts for Europe. In the views of forest industry, disproportionate subsidies for renewable energy developments could lead to further competition for raw materials and biomass and consequently price increases and threat the long standing commitments towards sustainability. They proposed that wood raw material be used primarily for wood industry, then for bio-energy. The forest industry stressed their role in implementing policies related to clean and renewable energy sources.

Social NGO’s highlighted the social dimension of forestry especially in ensuring the multiple values and services forests provide to society as well as their role as a source of employment and income. Sustainable forestry needs sustainable workforce, hence qualified forest personnel are needed for the optimization of all aspects of modern, multi-functional forestry. There is a concern that income opportunities may be threatened if forestry is not competitive with other forms of employment. This could be seen as an obstacle to achieving the goals laid out in the Warsaw declaration and the resolutions. Therefore, it is a crucial challenge for all actors in forestry on both a political and a practical levels to agree on means to strengthen human resources and employment in the forestry sector. Still, foresters, workers, contractors and certifiers are entrusted with the responsibility for creating Forests for Quality of Life and promised to play their role as an essential bridge between the commitments and demands from society and industry for development.

The Scientific community underlined the importance of continued collaboration between scientists and policy makers for informed and effective policy making and pointed out the crucial role of science in bringing up the issue of climate change to the political agenda. There is a need for the MCPFE to formulate adaptation strategies and multidisciplinary tools for assessing the impacts of the changing environment on forests. Studies on impacts of measures and policies for mitigating climate change will play an essential role in creating a scientific knowledge base for decision-makers. These issues are already tackled by the organizations representing the scientific community and there is a will to share the findings and collaborate in the implementation of joint commitments towards research in this Conference. The MCPFE would benefit from more systematic integration of research input and it was suggested, to develop within the process, a research agenda related to future outlooks, implementation needs and key emerging issues.

The environmental NGO’s pointed out the delay in implementing some of the critical commitments agreed upon by the Ministers responsible for European forests at the previous Ministerial Conferences and urged them to take concrete actions in order to implement them. As for the MCPFE, there is concern that pure concentration on SFM may not solve the problems of European forests and weaken the process. The process should have in place crosscutting solutions and more actively look for dialogue with other sectors. The link between forests, climate change and energy, so far has been insufficiently addressed and there is a need for more holistic approach which would balance economic, socio-environmental benefits and values of forests. They called on Ministers to take more effective actions to reduce the alarming rates of deforestations in tropical forests and to participate in the proposed deforestation Action Plan proposed by the environmental NGO’s. they further proposed 8 actions and posed 3 specific questions to the participants.

The group statements were followed by an open discussion, and a dialogue with ministers and delegates. The floor was open to all countries and the participants to intervene.

IIASA stated that the implementation of the MCPFE decisions will depend on the economic health of European forest and will to a large extent depend on the development outside Europe. There was a concern that a link between Europe and the rest of the world is missing in the MCPFE discussion. It is very important to prepare policy tools to look into integrated view on forests, agriculture, energy and water. MCPFE can then help its members facing future challenges.

UK referred to the forest industry statement on competition between raw materials and biomass and its impacts on prices on agricultural and other sectors and once again emphasized the danger of increasing prices if renewable energy developments are supported with either inadequate or with disproportionate substitutes. Credible certification systems for wood produced for biomass are needed for both the producers and consumers.

Norway stated that forest sector need to take strong and immediate actions to meet the society needs for the renewable energy, however, we should not compromise SFM when developing policies related to forest based energy. Europe is a major consumer of forest goods and services from all over the world and have responsibilities that reaches far beyond Europe, and actions to avoid deforestation in tropical regions, as mentioned by WWF/Greenpeace, are needed in order to mitigate the climate change. Norway also welcomed the message from the scientific community that they are ready to contribute to the MCPFE process in the years to come. Austria stressed having ambitious work programme in order to tackle the crucial topics of the future require working in both formulating and implementing policies together with the civil society. IUFRO stated that Pan-European issues can not and should not be seen in isolation, European problems have often global solutions. European Panel Federation underlined the need for a unified and credible certification system and suggested reconsideration of some policies on bio-fuels which might cause a severe consequences for societies in the future. The Greenpeace confirmed that credible certification system is an important tool however, it needs to be accompanied by legislation and regulation of trade.

The Major Groups and the delegations praised the MCPFE for choosing very important and politically relevant topics for the 5th Conference. The Groups expressed their willingness to contribute to the implementation of the commitments made by the Ministers in Warsaw. The MCPFE was regarded as a platform for exchange of experiences and enhancing regional cooperation, although some weaknesses of the process were noted and recommendations were proposed to overcome them. A number of issues for further political attention were identified during the dialogue as well.



REPORTS OF THE FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

IMPLEMENTATION OF MCPFE COMMITMENTS

National and Pan-European Activities 2003–2007

National Implementation

The report on national implementation presents the activities engaged in by MCPFE signatory countries during the period 2003–2007, i.e. since the MCPFE Vienna Conference of 2003. The analysis is based on a questionnaire sent out to countries, to which the Liaison Unit Warsaw received 30 national replies (out of total of 46 MCPFE signatories). Besides the measures undertaken towards the implementation of Vienna commitments, the countries reported on further progress made in implementation of the Lisbon (1998), Helsinki (1993) and Strasbourg (1990) Resolutions.

A summary of country responses would indicate that all the countries providing their reports had initiated multiple actions to implement the MCPFE commitments, and that this had found reflection in national forest policies, legislation, forest programmes, research and other activities. Some of the measures are still in preparation, while many are already being implemented.

Analysis indicates that most countries have developed and are implementing National Forest Programmes (NFPs) or their equivalents, while some have started the review processes. The MCPFE approach to NFPs is being used as a background for NFP development in most of the countries. NFPs take into account many issues addressed by the MCPFE commitments, including inter-sectoral policy coordination, economic viability of the forestry sector, social and cultural dimensions, biodiversity, and the adaptability of forests to climate change.

NFPs and national forest legislature are also viewed by countries as an important instrument where enabling conditions for sustainable forest management (SFM) are to be put in place. Wood, as one of the essential forest products, is being promoted with a new accent on sustainability of forest management, on its importance as a renewable and reusable raw material, and on its status as a source of bio-energy. Besides timber products, European forests are expected to produce a wide range of non-wood goods and services. Although, there are no well-established markets for these goods, and especially for the services provided by forests, other than recreation, many countries have initiated research projects to develop this topic.

Another issue receiving greater attention in recent years is that of the social and cultural dimensions to forestry. Countries have reflected this in their NFPs, in rural development programmes and in educational and research projects. Many projects and events have been devoted to the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices in SFM, the protection of cultural and historical landscapes as well as objects and sites in forests.

Modifications to forest management activity have been made with a view to the protection and enhancement of forest biological diversity being assured. These have been supported by national legislation, NFPs, cross-sectoral cooperation among a wide range of agencies, and multiple research activities. All the countries indicated various measures introduced to improve the assessment and monitoring of forest biodiversity. Work is ongoing on the restoration of degraded forests, the prevention of fragmentation and improvements in ecological connectivity. Extension of existing protected forest networks is planned by majority of European countries, with the aim of representative coverage for all forest plant communities being achieved.

Climate-change issues continue to be an important topic influencing forest management activities. Various actions from the advertising of wood products and wood promotion campaigns through to governmental programmes and regulations for wood have been mobilised in different countries with a view to these means contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Among the forest management activities undertaken by countries with regard to implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, afforestation was named by almost all countries. Numerous countries have special afforestation programmes, goals, or special financial incentives for afforestation projects.

Forest-related ministries and public forest agencies were indicated by countries as the most important actors responsible for securing and implementing measures on various aspects of SFM. Numerous issues are a shared responsibility with other ministries and agencies, where the essential role is played by research and educational institutions.

Many commitments made by MCPFE signatories during the Lisbon Conference gained reflection in the Vienna Resolutions, while Strasbourg commitments continue to be implemented through various European networks and projects in which many MCPFE signatories participate. The Helsinki guidelines on SFM and on conservation of biodiversity provide an essential background to the preparation and revision of many national forest-related documents and the development of protected forest networks.

Pan-European Implementation

For the Pan-European level the international co-ordinators of implementation of Strasbourg and Helsinki Resolutions provided significant information. Moreover, the analysis of the implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme 2003–2007 completed the picture, according to which:

- the MCPFE Work Programme effectively contributes to the implementation of MCPFE commitments across our continent;
- new issues were raised, such as: the Ecosystem Approach vs. Sustainable Forest Management, illegal logging, afforestation and reforestation guidelines;
- the Pan-European actions included in the MCPFE Work Programme also aim to contribute to the further implementation of global commitments, such as those agreed within the WSSD, UNFE, CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD frameworks; as well as to maintain linkages with other regional processes and initiatives;
- Strasbourg and Helsinki commitments continue being implemented by the international co-ordinators, inter alia, through various European networks and projects where many MCPFE signatories participate.

STATE OF EUROPE'S FORESTS 2007

The MCPFE Report on Sustainable Forest Management In Europe

The MCPFE report *State of Europe's Forests 2007* is a comprehensive and up-to-date description of the situation and the management of European forests as well as the related policies and institutions. It shows the status and trends related to forests and sustainable forest management in Europe, structured according to the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management, including, for the first time, qualitative indicators on policies and institutions. In this report "Europe" comprises the 46 countries of the MCPFE listed in the Annex, and includes the Russian Federation.

Forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles

Forests cover 44 percent of the land area of Europe.

At just over 1 billion ha, or 1.26 ha per capita, 25 percent of the world's forests are in Europe. About 80 percent of these forests are in the Russian Federation. Some 80 to 90 percent of forests are available for wood supply in most regions, but only around 40 percent in East Europe.

Europe's forest area continues to increase.

The area of forest in Europe has increased by almost 13 million ha (an area roughly the size of Greece) in the past 15 years mainly due to planting of new forests and natural expansion of forests onto former agricultural land.

74 percent of Europe's forests have been influenced by humans.

About 70 percent of the European forests are classified as semi-natural and about 4 percent as plantations, while the remaining 26 percent, located mainly in Eastern and Northern European countries, are considered undisturbed. Excluding the Russian Federation, only 5 percent of forests in Europe are undisturbed, while 8 percent are plantations.

Wood volume in forests has reached record heights and is increasing.

The total growing stock of forests in Europe amounts to 112 billion m³. In the last 15 years, an average of 358 million m³ – equivalent to the total growing stock of Slovenia – has been added each year.

Forest biomass carbon reserves are huge, and increasing.

In forest biomass 53 gigatonnes of carbons are stored, which is an increase of 2 billion tonnes since 1990. Further substantial amounts of carbon are stored in forest litter and soils, but knowledge on these components remains limited.

Forest ecosystem health and vitality

Although air quality in Europe has improved, trees are still under stress. Further reductions in emissions are needed to improve ecosystem health and vitality.

Air pollution and depositions, especially of sulphur, have been reduced in recent years; however, past depositions accumulated in soils may lead to higher levels of nitrogen, sulphate and soil acidity, which make forests more vulnerable to environmental stress and changing climatic conditions.

Tree crown condition has stabilized but defoliation levels are still high in most regions, indicating that trees have a reduced potential to withstand adverse environmental impacts. Further reduction of related emissions is needed to bring depositions below critical loads.

Forests in Europe have suffered severe storm damages, and forest fires continue to be a major challenge.

Since 1999, large storm damages have occurred in Europe almost annually. Hundreds of thousands of ha of forest are burnt annually. While the number of forest fires increased, the area burnt did not increase in the period 2000–2005, mainly due to more effective fire suppression in many countries.

Productive functions of forests

Volumes of wood harvested in Europe's forests are increasing, but remain considerably below increment.

Harvesting of wood has steadily increased over the last ten years. The forests are growing at an unprecedentedly high and increasing rate that is well above the volume harvested, so the amount of wood in forests continues to increase.

Forests provide a wide variety of goods and services other than wood.

The economic value of non-wood goods and services (NWGS) provided by forests is increasing, but often they are not marketed. In some European regions, NWGS provide more revenue than wood sales.

98 percent of all European forests are covered by a forest management plan or equivalent.

European forest areas are almost completely covered by plans for their long-term management.

Biological diversity in forest ecosystems

Forest management practices increasingly promote biodiversity.

Forest management practices have changed in ways that promote the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity, notably through the increased use of natural regeneration and more mixed species stands. Measures are also being taken to encourage deadwood accumulation.

Less than 1 percent of Europe's forests are dominated by introduced tree species.

In Europe excluding the Russian Federation, the area dominated by introduced tree species is around 4 percent. In many countries, introduced tree species are closely related to the establishment of plantations. Very few introduced tree species are invasive, and while significant in some countries, the total area of introduced tree species is not increasing.

The area of protected forests has expanded by about 2 million ha in the last five years to reach almost 5 percent of Europe's forests.

About 3 percent of Europe's forests are protected with the main objective of conservation of biodiversity and another 1.7 percent with the main objective of conserving landscapes and specific natural elements. For the MCPFE region excluding the Russian Federation, the figures are 8 percent and 10 percent, respectively. In the MCPFE region, these areas have increased by around 455 000 ha annually over the last five years.

Protective functions in forest management

More than one-fifth of European forests are managed primarily to protect water, soil and infrastructure.

Ten percent of European forests are designated primarily for the protection of soil and water, and 11 percent for the protection of infrastructure or managed natural resources. In some areas, notably mountains, the protective functions are particularly important and override the others.

Socio-economic functions and conditions

Forests are mainly public in about half of European countries, and mainly privately owned in the other half.

Due to the vast areas of public forests in the Russian Federation, in Europe as a whole, 90 percent of forest area is public and 10 percent is privately owned, but ownership patterns and trends vary widely across regions and countries. Without the Russian Federation, almost half of Europe's forest area is owned by private forest owners. The number of private forest holdings, currently more than 11 million, continues to grow, mainly due to the ongoing restitution process in some European countries as well as fragmentation due to inheritance laws.

European production and consumption of wood is increasing, as are exports of wood products.

Since the mid-1990s, wood consumption per capita has been rising, reaching 1.1 m³ in 2005. At the same time, Europe has become a major net exporter of wood products to other regions (100 million m³ per year). Large volumes of wood are used for energy, with a significant increase in recent years. Forestry activities, wood industries, and the pulp and paper industry combined contribute about 1 percent to the gross domestic product in Europe and substantially more in a few countries. The total added value and the net revenue of forestry activities remain stable.

Around 4.3 million people work in the European forest sector

Employment in forestry continues to decrease in Europe, but the loss of jobs is slowing down. In 2005, employment in forestry activities, wood industries and pulp and paper industries accounted for 1.1 percent of total employment in Europe. Occupational safety is improving, but forestry remains one of the most hazardous sectors.

More than 90 percent of European forests are open to public access.

More than 90 percent of the forests in Europe are open to public access, and the area of forest available for recreation is increasing. A very large number of archaeological sites, nature monuments, and other sites of cultural and spiritual value are found in forests.

Forest policies and institutions

Public participation in decision-making related to forests is increasing, but challenges remain.

National forest programmes (NFPs) are increasingly widely acknowledged and used across Europe to govern the diversity of forest-related issues in a more open and adaptive manner, but challenges remain. These include better ways and means for cross-sectoral coordination and continued political commitment to further develop NFPs into an effective policy tool.

Forest-related institutions are changing.

Changes in institutional frameworks in Europe indicate an emphasis on further improving the efficiency and effectiveness of state forestry organizations as well as on reorganizing forest research. In addition, organizational structures for private forest owners are further developed. However, it seems that well-functioning coordination mechanisms between different levels of government and stakeholder groups (which are increasingly diverse) are still rare.

Sustainability is given prominence in forest laws and other policy instruments.

MCPFE countries are pursuing sustainable forest management (SFM) through creating new policy instruments and adjusting existing ones. This is done through integrating SFM more systematically into legal and regulatory frameworks when they are revised, through financial support measures addressing the different dimensions of SFM, through efforts to strengthen the forest-related information base, and by improving communication with the public.

Forest policies are becoming more target-oriented, but further improvements are needed.

Several European countries pursue active and often target-oriented policies in a number of areas. In particular, some countries aim to enlarge forest area, increase the use of wood (material and energy use), improve biodiversity conservation and strengthen the economic viability of forestry. However, in other policy areas, including climate change, forest health and vitality, employment, and cultural and spiritual values, the policies at present seem to be less focused or less pro-actively pursued (and are often more dependent on decisions in other policy areas).

Conclusions

It is evident that the MCPFE has played a major role in promoting sustainable forest management and in coordinating and promoting cooperation on forest-related matters across Europe. A number of important and new policy means and instruments have been developed through the MCPFE to address new challenges. These, together with generally well-developed forest-related national organizations, should safeguard the sustainability of European forests and the multiple benefits that they provide.

The MCPFE report *State of Europe's Forests 2007* does not judge whether forest management in a country or region is sustainable or not, since this judgment is dependent on the relative importance given to the different criteria and indicators in countries. However, the report does provide most of the relevant information on which governments and other stakeholders can carry out this assessment. This represents a significant advance in the monitoring of sustainable forest management, although there are still many gaps and weaknesses that should be addressed at the technical and policy level.

The report provides relevant information on a range of major issues, including options for the use of the accumulated growing stock, the need to address threats to forest health by air pollution, storm,

fire and other damaging factors, and on the role of forests and wood in the interlinked policy debates on energy and climate change. It provides information that should facilitate decisions related to the role of forests in sustainable development within a globalizing world and with changing demands from society. Further, it points to potentially unsustainable situations in some indicators in a few countries. Overall, are European forests sustainably managed? The answer is a qualified “yes”, with caveats in all three areas of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.



CHANGE IN THE GENERAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE



AUSTRIA

Mr. Gerhard Mannsberger

Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management

Mr. Co-Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The MCPFE as evolving process has established over time certain structures and procedures to operate its business. The General Coordinating Committee, in short GCC, is at its heart. It is a small group of countries, at present four, steering the process in terms of content and development. It is this group of countries that takes care of the organisational requirements of the process, which means co-funding the Liaison Unit and the meetings.

For Austria it has been an honour, a pleasure and also a challenge to be part of this group since the preparations for the Lisbon conference in 1998. However, membership in the GCC is not forever, but subject to rotation. There is an unwritten rule that at each conference the country having hosted the previous conference will leave the GCC. It is therefore time now for Austria to pass this responsibility further to other committed partners.

We are glad that Slovakia as well as Germany indicated interest in taking up this burden. The current GCC decided to welcome both countries to participate in the GCC. The group will therefore be enlarged to five countries, for good reasons. The number of signatories has enlarged significantly since the Strasbourg Conference and the work load has increased enormously. It is also important that this central group reflects the diversity of Europe.

However, in our view the GCC is not just about the administration of a well established process. It is about providing the dynamics for carrying forest policy forward in Europe to meet the challenges ahead.

In this sense we are very confident in the new GCC comprised by Norway, Spain, Slovakia, Germany and Poland and we are looking forward to working with you, from now on as a regular member of the MCPFE.

GERMANY

Mr. Richard Lammel

Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

Mr. Co-Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank the former speakers for their warm words concerning the future role of Germany in the General Coordination Committee. Already in my statement earlier today I announced that Germany is prepared and looking forward to join the GCC from 2008 on as a fifth country after Slovakia. So I can make it much shorter now.

We are looking forward to interested discussions with our partners on the future of the process. I am sure that with the support of Slovakia and the other GCC members we will achieve good results.

Even though we can hardly look ahead that far into the future – and I am talking of a period some ten years from now – the 9th Ministerial Conference could thus be hosted by Germany.

Let me also take this opportunity to once again thank our hosts for this excellent conference.

Thank you for your attention.

POLAND

Mr. Jan Szyszko

Minister of Environment

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

In respect of the European Forest Minister's Conference, it is established practice that, at the time of a Conference, responsibility for the continuing process is passed on via rotation system. Thanks to this system, many countries have had a possibility to share the responsibility for the process over time. This system guaranties that views and ideas coming from different European regions are well visible in the process works, on the other hand, the process members have a unique opportunity to be better informed on the successes, problems and challenges that are faced by forestry in different parts of Europe.

Austria, which has been a member of the General Co-ordinating Committee since the second Conference in Helsinki in 1993, will now leave the Committee. On behalf of all of us, I would like to thank our Austrian colleagues most sincerely for all the work they have done for this process since that time. Active participation in shaping Pan-European principles on SFM, in particular visible during the Austrian presidency, coroneted by the 4th Ministerial Conference in Vienna – Living Forest Summit, served the process well and will be well remembered by process participants. I thank you very much and invite you to further cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to inform you that, for the first time in the MCPFE history two countries – Germany and Slovak Republic declared their access to the General Co-ordinating Committee and a will to undertake related responsibilities and burdens. On behalf of all of us, I would like to welcome both of the countries to the Committee and express my sincere thanks to Germany and Slovak Republic that they have agreed to take Austria's place, thus ensuring continuity in the geographical representation of the different European regions in the Committee.

I am entirely convinced that this change allow to maintain process' dynamism and to face future challenges.

Thank you.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Mr. Miroslav Jureňa
Minister of Agriculture

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues Ministers, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In relation to the intention of the Slovak Republic to actively participate in the multi-stakeholder international cooperation within the forest sector on the regional level, I would like again to declare and confirm the candidacy of the Slovak Republic for the position of the host country of the 8th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in the approximate time frame of the year 2020. It is an honour and a challenge at the same time for Slovak specialists to contribute to the progress of the sustainable forest management of whole region of Europe through the membership of my homeland in the General Coordinating Committee of the Ministerial Conferences. By this, my acknowledgement belongs to the colleagues of mine responsible for the forests in Poland, Austria, Kingdom of Norway and Kingdom of Spain for reliability expressed and I believe that our mutual cooperation as members of the General Coordinating Committee will be beneficial for the continuing political and professional dialogue in the forest sector.

Thank you very much for your attention.



**CLOSING
STATEMENTS**



NORWAY

Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen

Minister of Agriculture and Food

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are about to close this Ministerial Conference and conclude our deliberations for these two days.

I sense a significant change in the understanding of the contribution from sustainably managed forests to the quality of life – in my country, in Europe and globally. As a minister for agriculture, food and forestry in Norway, I feel a similar renewed interest for issues related to agriculture.

There is a variety of reasons for this renewed interest in forests; energy security, increased demand for forest products, climate change, biodiversity loss and the need for viable rural areas, just to mention a few.

I am convinced that this renewed interest is not of a temporary nature. The underlying factors are strong and of major importance for our economic, social and environmental development.

Forests are in the core of these issues, both as an important element of social and economic development, as well as a part of the major environmental issues we face, notably climate change.

This development should encourage us to keep the momentum and continue our efforts in our European cooperation. We need a continued viable ministerial process in order to approach these challenges jointly and effectively at the European level.

One important follow-up activity of this conference is the review of the process. Let us view our work and process from different angles. Let us not hesitate to suggest necessary changes based on the review. I am fully satisfied with our achievements so far, but it is not forward looking to rest on past successes if we are to meet the future challenges.

Our process has maintained a good cooperation with other regional and global processes – forest specific and others. This needs to continue and we should strive to develop this type of cooperation further.

MCPFE, together with institutions and organisations, can provide comprehensive input on the role of forests, sustainable forest management and the European contribution in this regard. We will start to prepare that work now.

Finally, I would like to thank Minister Jan Szyszko, for the excellent work you, your ministry, the government of Poland and the Liaison Unit have done during this conference. I am very grateful. We will do our best to continue your good work after the transfer of the Liaison Unit to Norway.

I would also like to thank all participants for your contributions to this ministerial conference. It has been encouraging to listen to your interventions and ideas for our future work. We need this process more than ever. And we need your continued active participation.

Thank you.

POLAND

Mr. Jan Szyszko

Minister of Environment

Ekscelencje, Szanowni Państwo, Panie i Panowie,

V Konferencja Ministerialna nt. Ochrony Lasów w Europie dobiega końca. Moment ten jest doskonałą okazją do, z jednej strony, dokonania podsumowań, z drugiej zaś, do refleksji nad przyszłością lasów i leśnictwa na naszym kontynencie oraz współpracy międzynarodowej w tym zakresie.

Przez ostatnie dwa dni dyskutowaliśmy wspólnie o stanie obecnym oraz o perspektywach lasów na naszym kontynencie. Padło wiele stwierdzeń i opinii o wyzwaniach i oczekiwaniach wobec lasów, gospodarki leśnej i leśników formułowanych przez współczesne społeczeństwa w Europie.

Jestem przekonany, że te aspekty znajdują swe odbicie w sformułowaniach i zapisach zawartych w Deklaracji Ministerialnej i dwóch Rezolucjach Warszawskich, pod którymi przed kilkunastoma minutami złożyliśmy swe podpisy.

Rola lasów w Europie XXI w. widziana jest przez pryzmat wpływu lasów kształtowanie warunków bytu człowieka poprzez ochronę klimatu, potrzebę zachowania integralności ekosystemów leśnych i ochrony ich różnorodności przyrodniczej, zachowania dziedzictwa kulturowego i wartości estetycznych i duchowych, walorów rekreacyjnych, ale również poprzez wkład lasów i leśnictwa w rozwój cywilizacyjny oraz pomnażanie dochodu narodowego.

Dlatego jako współgospodarz i współorganizator tej Konferencji ze szczególną satysfakcją odnotowuję fakt, że główne tezy dokumentów warszawskich skupiają się wokół problemu zmian klimatu i potrzeby przeciwdziałania tym zmianom, między innymi poprzez działania ukierunkowane na promocję wykorzystania drewna jako ekologicznego i naturalnego nośnika energii oraz jako surowca w innych gałęziach przemysłu. Również spojrzenie na rolę ekosystemów leśnych w ochronie zasobów wód gruntowych i ich znaczenie w regulowaniu stosunków wodnych zostało w mojej ocenie właściwie odzwierciedlone w dokumentach tej Konferencji. Wszystkie te obszary te stanowią składowe wielofunkcyjnej roli lasów opartej na trzech filarach trwałej i zrównoważonej gospodarki leśnej i doskonale wpisują się w motyw wiodący V Konferencji Ministerialnej nt. Ochrony Lasów w Europie: „Forests for Quality of Life”.

Panowie Ministrowie, Szanowni Państwo,

Precyzyjnie zdefiniowana koncepcja trwałej i zrównoważonej gospodarki leśnej stanowi jedno z licznych osiągnięć Ministerialnego Procesu Ochrony Lasów w Europie, który przez 17 lat swej aktywności zaowocował wypracowaniem czterech deklaracji ministerialnych i siedemnastu rezolucji. Jako członek polskiego rządu i gorący orędownik współpracy międzynarodowej na rzecz lasów i leśnictwa jestem szczególnie dumny z faktu, że również mój kraj wniósł własny wkład do dorobku tego Procesu, zarówno w zakresie praktycznej implementacji wcześniejszych zobowiązań, jak też poprzez sformułowanie nowych koncepcji politycznych w dokumentach warszawskich.

Pragnę podkreślić, że ten wkład był możliwy dzięki doskonałej współpracy z naszymi partnerami w ramach Głównego Komitetu Koordynacyjnego: Norwegią, Austrią i Hiszpanią oraz ze wszystkimi

stronami i obserwatorami MCPFE. W sposób szczególny chciałbym podkreślić tu rolę otwartego dialogu z przedstawicielami grup interesów tak licznie reprezentowanych w Procesie Paneuropejskim. Bez was ten sukces nie byłby możliwy!

Szanowni Państwo, Panie i Panowie,

Przygotowanie tej Konferencji i efektywne sprawowanie przez Polskę „prezydencji” w MCPFE nie byłoby możliwe bez sprawnie funkcjonującej w Warszawie Jednostki Łącznikowej. Jako minister nadzorujący pracę tej Jednostki jestem przekonany, że wyrażone przez Państwa słowa uznania dla pracy Liaison Unit Warsaw zostały pełni zasłużone. Dlatego chciałbym gorąco podziękować Jednostce Łącznikowej za jej pracę w ciągu ostatnich czterech lat. Słowa podziękowania kieruję również do ekspertów z Norwegii, Hiszpanii, Austrii i mojego ministerstwa, którzy wspierali funkcjonowanie tej Jednostki.

Ekscelencje, Szanowni Państwo, Panie i Panowie,

Swoje podziękowania kieruję do Was wszystkich – uczestników tej Konferencji, za wasz wkład i aktywny udział w dwudniowych obradach oraz za wyrażoną gotowość do kontynuowania tej współpracy w przyszłości. Chciałbym również podziękować za wspaniałą atmosferę współpracy, która towarzyszyła naszemu spotkaniu.

Mam osobistą nadzieję, że również Państwo zabiorą jak najlepsze wrażenia z pobytu w Warszawie oraz że jutrzejsza wycieczka terenowa do lasów Puszczy Kozienickiej również uprzyjemni Państwa czas spędzony w Polsce.

Ekscelencje, Szanowni Państwo, Panie i Panowie,

Niniejszym ogłaszam V Ministerialną Konferencję nt. Ochrony Lasów w Europie za zamkniętą.

English version

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe is coming to an end. This moment is an excellent opportunity to, on the one hand, make summaries and, on the other hand, to make reflections about the future of forest and forestry on our continent, as well as about international cooperation in this sphere.

During the last two days, we were discussing the current condition and prospects of forests on our continent. Many statements and opinions were expressed about challenges and expectations concerning forests, forestry and woodmen formulated by modern European societies. I am convinced that these aspects are expressed in statements and provisions contained in the Ministerial Declaration and two Warsaw Resolutions, which we signed just a few minutes ago.

The role of forests in Europe in the 21st Century is seen from the angle of the influence of forests on human living conditions through climate protection, the need to preserve the integrity of forest ecosystems and protection of their biodiversity, preservation of cultural heritage and aesthetic, spiritual and recreational values, but also through the contribution of forests and forestry to the civilization development and growth of the national income. That is why, as the host and co-organiser of this Conference, I am particularly satisfied to notice that the main theses of the Warsaw documents focus on the problem of climate change and the need to counter these changes, inter alia through activities aimed at promoting the use of wood as an ecological and natural energy carrier and as a raw material in other industry branches. The look at the role of forest ecosystems as regards underground water resources protection and their importance for hydrographic conditions regulation was, in my opinion, also reflected properly in the documents of this Conference. All these areas are components of the multifunctional role of forests based on the three foundations of constant and sustainable forest management and they perfectly supplement the leading theme of the 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, namely „Forests for Quality of Life”.

Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The precisely defined concept of constant and sustainable forest management is one of the numerous achievements of the Ministerial Process of Forest Protection in Europe which, during 17 years of its operation, resulted in the development of four ministerial declarations and seventeen resolutions. As a member of the Polish government and an avid advocate of international cooperation for the benefit of forests and forestry, I am particularly proud of the fact that my country also contributed to this Process, both as regards the practical implementation of the earlier commitments as well as through formulation of new political concepts in Warsaw documents. I would like to emphasise that this contribution was possible thanks to the perfect cooperation with our partners within the General Coordination Committee: Norway, Austria and Spain as well as all the MCPFE parties and observers. I would particularly like to emphasise the role of the open dialogue with representatives of interest groups so numerous represented in the Pan-European Process. Without you, this success would not be possible!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The preparation of this Conference and efficient holding of the “presidency” of MCPFE by Poland would not be possible without the Liaison Unit operating in Warsaw. As the minister who supervised the work of the Unit, I am convinced that the words of appreciation for the efforts of the Liaison Unit Warsaw are well deserved. That is why I would like to warmly thank the Liaison Unit for its efforts during the last four years. My words of acknowledgement are also due to the experts from Norway, Spain, Austria and my ministry, who supported the operation of that unit.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my words of acknowledgement to all of you, all participants in this Conference, for your contribution and active participation in the deliberations and for your willingness to continue our cooperation in the future. I would also like to thank you for the excellent atmosphere of cooperation which accompanied this meeting.

I sincerely hope that your impressions from the stay in Warsaw and a trip to the Kozienska Primeval Forest scheduled for tomorrow will be very pleasant.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 5th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe is hereby closed.



ANNEXES

Annex 1. Programme of the Conference

| Time | Action | Location |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Sunday, 4 November | | |
| 16.00 – 20.00 | Registration | Sheraton Hotel Registration desk |
| 19.00 – 21.00 | Pre-Conference Reception | Sheraton Hotel |
| 21.00 | Transfer to the hotels | |
| Monday, 5 November | | |
| 08.00 – 18.00 | Registration | Sheraton Hotel Registration desk |
| 07.30 | Transfer from the hotels | |
| 09.00 – 09.45 | Opening ceremony <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Jan Szyszko</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Opening by the President of Poland H. E. Mr. Lech Kaczynski■ Opening by the Minister of Agriculture and Food of Norway H. E. Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen■ Opening by the Minister of the Environment of Poland H. E. Mr. Jan Szyszko■ Performance by artists | Sheraton Hotel Plenary Hall |
| 09.45 – 10.30 | SESSION I Thematic Session: Europe's Forests - state of art and challenges ahead <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Jan Szyszko</i> Key statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ms. Mariann Fischer Boel, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development■ Mr. Marek Belka, Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of UNECE■ Mr. Jan Heino, Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department , FAO | |
| 10.30 – 11.30 | Poster Session "State of Sustainable Forest Management in Europe" | Sheraton Hotel Foyer |
| 10.30 – 11.30 | Press conference of the Ministers of MCPFE General Coordinating Committee | Sheraton Hotel London |
| 11.30 – 13.30 | SESSION II Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) <i>Chair: Mr. Hosny El-Lakany</i> | Sheraton Hotel Plenary Hall |
| 13.35 | Group photo of the Ministers and Heads of Delegations | Restaurant "Ale Gloria" Dom Dochodowy |
| 13.30 – 15.30 | Lunch | |
| 15.30 – 18.00 | SESSION III Statements by the MCPFE signatory countries and the European Community <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen</i> | |
| 18.15 | Transfer to the hotels | |
| 19.15 | Transfer to the Royal Castle | |
| 20.00 – 23.00 | Gala Dinner | The Royal Castle Warsaw Old Town |
| 23.15 | Transfer to the hotels | |

| Time | Action | Location |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Tuesday, 6 November | | |
| 08.00 – 18.00 | Registration | Sheraton Hotel Registration desk |
| 08.30 | Transfer from the hotels | |
| 9.00 – 12.00 | SESSION IV Statements by the MCPFE signatory countries <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Jan Szyszko</i> | Sheraton Hotel Plenary Hall |
| 12.00 – 14.00 | Lunch | |
| 14.00 – 16.25 | SESSION V Statements by the MCPFE observer countries and organisations <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen</i> | Sheraton Hotel Plenary Hall |
| 16.25 – 16.40 | Summary of MSD <i>by Chair of the MSD Mr. Hosny El-Lakany</i> | |
| | Presentation and signing of the Conference Documents <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Jan Szyszko</i> | |
| 17.15 – 17.30 | Other matters | |
| 17.30 – 18.00 | Closing statements and closure of the Conference <i>by H. E. Mr. Jan Szyszko and H. E. Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen</i> | |
| 18.15 | Transfer to the hotels | |
| 19.45 | Transfer from the hotels to the restaurant | |
| 20.00 – 23.00 | Dinner | Restaurant “Ale Gloria” Dom Dochodowy |
| 23.00 | Transfer to the hotels | |
| Wednesday, 7 November | | |
| 7.30 – 8.00 | Departure from the hotels | |
| 8.00 – 18.00 | Field session | The Kozienicka Primeval Forest |
| All day | Transfer to the Frederic Chopin Airport | |

Annex 2. List of Participants

SIGNATORY COUNTRIES

ALBANIA



Mr. Genci Hoxhaj
Expert
Ministry of Environment,
Forest and Water Administration

Rruga “Duresit” 27
Tirana
Tel: + 355 4 270 630
Fax: + 355 4 270 627
E-mail: gahoxhaj@yahoo.com

Mr. Kozma Kocani
Chief
Forests Sector
Ministry of Environment,
Forest and Water Administration

Rruga “Duresit” 27
Tirana
Tel: + 355 4 270 630
Fax: + 355 4 270 627
E-mail: kozmakocani@hotmail.com

AUSTRIA



Mr. Gerhard Mannsberger
Forest Director General
Forestry Department
Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,
Environment and Water Management

Marxergasse 2
1030 Vienna
Tel: + 43 1 71100 7301
Fax: + 43 1 71100 7398
E-mail: gerhard.mannsberger@
lebensministerium.at

Mr. Harald Mauser
Head
Federal Research and Training Centre
for Forests

Natural Hazards and Landscape Secken-
dorff-Gudent Weg 8
1131 Vienna
Tel: + 43 1 87838 1123
Fax: + 43 1 87838 1250
E-mail: harald.mauser@bfw.gv.at

Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl
Director
Forest Policy and Forest Information
Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,
Environment and Water Management

Marxergasse 2
1030 Vienna
Tel: + 43 1 71100 7305
Fax: + 43 1 71100 7399
E-mail: ingwald.gschwandtl@
lebensministerium.at

Mr. Georg Rappold
Forest Policy Officer
Forest Policy and Forest Information
Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,
Environment and Water Management

Marxergasse 2
1030 Vienna
Tel: + 43 664 2645017
Fax: + 43 1 7100 7399
E-mail: georg.rappold@
lebensministerium.at

BELARUS



Mr. Piotr Semashko
Minister
Ministry of Forestry

Chkalov 6
220039 Minsk
Tel: + 375 17 224 47 05
Fax: + 375 17 224 41 83
E-mail: apparat@minleshoz.org

Mr. Aleksei Kulagin
General Director
Republican Unitary Forest Inventory
Enterprise “Belgosles”

Zheleznodorozhnaya 27
220089 Minsk
Tel: + 375 17 226 31 15
Fax: + 375 17 226 30 92
E-mail: belgosles@open.by

Mr. Valery Pabirushka
Head
Department for Law, Manpower
and Science
Ministry of Forestry

Chkalov 6
220039 Minsk
Tel: + 375 14 224 51 29
Fax: + 375 17 224 41 83
E-mail: mlh@open.by

Mr. Sergei Nekhai
First Secretary for Trade and Economy
Embassy of the Republic of Belarus
Wiertnicza 58

02-952 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 742 09 76
Fax: + 48 22 742 09 80
E-mail: poland@belembassy.org

Mr. Pavel Latushka
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the Republic of Belarus

Wiertnicza 58
02-952 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 742 09 90
Fax: + 48 22 742 09 80
E-mail: poland@belembassy.org

BELGIUM



Mr. Benoît Lutgen
Minister for Agriculture,
Rural Development, Environment and
Tourism Walloon Regional Government

Chaussée de Louvain 2
5000 Namur
Tel: + 32 81 710 310
Fax: + 32 81 732 765
E-mail: benoit.lutgen@gov.wallonie.be

Mr. Andrey Jacquiez

Attaché
Cabinet du Ministre
Chaussée de Louvain 2

5000 Namur
Tel: + 32 81 710 355
Fax: + 32 81 710 381
E-mail: andrey.jacquiez@gov.wallonie.be

Mr. Briec Quevy

Collaborater du Ministre
Cabinet du Ministre

Chaussée de Louvain 2
5000 Namur
Tel: + 32 81 710 353
Fax: + 32 81 710 287
E-mail: briec.quevy@gov.wallonie.be

Mr. Christian Laurent

Attaché, Forest Engineer
Walloon Regional Government
DG Natural Resources and Environment,
Nature and Forest Division
Forest Resources Service

Avenue Prince de Liège 15
5100 Namur
Tel: + 32 81 33 58 42
Fax: + 32 81 33 58 11
E-mail: c.laurent@mrw.wallonie.be

Mr. Daniel Menschaert

Délégué – Représentant Diplomatique
Délégation Walonie – Bruxelles
en Pologne

Skorupki 5
00-546 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 583 70 01
Fax: + 48 22 583 70 03
E-mail: walbru@varsovie.pl

Mr. Jan Luykx

Ambassador
Embassy of Belgium

Senatorska 34
00-095 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 551 28 02
E-mail: jan.luykx@diplobel.fed.be

BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA



Mr. Dušan Nešković

Assistant Minister
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic
Relations

Musala 9
71000 Sarajevo
Tel: + 387 33 209 819
Fax: + 387 33 555 706
E-mail: dneskovic@mvteo.gov.ba

Mr. Alojz Dundjer

Director PIU Forestry and Agriculture
Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water
Management and Forestry

Titova 15
71000 Sarajevo
Tel: + 387 33 213 098
Fax: + 387 33 213 099
E-mail: piusum@bih.net.ba

BULGARIA



Mr. Stefan Yurukov

Chairman
State Forestry Agency

“Hristo Botev” blvd. 55
1050 Sofia
Tel: + 359 298 511 205
Fax: + 359 298 13736
E-mail: syurukov@nug.bg

Mr. Nikolay Ionov

Head of Department
State Forestry Agency

“Hristo Botev” blvd. 55
1050 Sofia
Tel: + 359 298 511 528
Fax: + 359 298 13736
E-mail: afforest@nug.bg

Ms. Dolores Beloretchka

Senior Expert
State Forest Agency

“Hristo Botev” blvd. 55
1050 Sofia
Tel: + 359 2 985 11 525
Fax: + 359 2 981 37 36
E-mail: dolores@nug.bg

CROATIA



Mr. Herman Susnik

State Secretary of Forestry, Hunting and
Wood Industry
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management

Grada Vukovara 78
10000 Zagreb
Tel: + 385 16 10 60 80
Fax: + 385 16 10 92 03
E-mail: herman.susnik@mps.hr

Mr. Tono Kruzic

Head
Forest Protection Department
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management

Grada Vukovara 78
10000 Zagreb
Tel: + 385 98 33 54 71
Fax: + 385 16 10 92 03
E-mail: tono.kruzic@mps.hr

Mr. Miroljub Stojanović

Assistant Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management

Grada Vukovara 78
10000 Zagreb
Tel: + 385 16 10 62 03
Fax: + 385 16 10 92 03
E-mail: miroljub.stojanovic@mps.hr

CYPRUS



Mr. Alexandros Christodoulou

Chief Conservator of Forests
Department of Forests
Ministry of Agriculture,
Natural Resources and Environment

Loukis Akritas Ave 26
1414 Nicosia
Tel: + 357 22 80 55 03
Fax: + 357 22 78 04 28
E-mail: achristodoulou@fd.moa.gov.cy

CZECH REPUBLIC



Mr. Karel Tureček

Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture

Tesnov 17
117 05 Prague 1
Tel: + 420 221 812 761
Fax: + 420 221 812 948
E-mail: karel.turecek@mze.cz

Mr. Tomáš Krejzar

Director
Department of Forest Policy
and Economies
Ministry of Agriculture

Tesnov 17
11705 Prague 1
Tel: + 420 221 812 677
Fax: + 420 221 812 988
E-mail: tomas.krejzar@mze.cz

Mr. Jaromir Vašíček

Director
Forest Management Institute
Ministry of Agriculture

Tesnov 17
117 05 Prague 1
Tel: + 420 322 319 941
Fax: + 420 326 902 434
E-mail: vasicek.jaromir@uhul.cz

Mr. Martin Žizka

Director General of Forestry
Ministry of Agriculture

Tesnov 17
117 05 Prague 1
Tel: + 420 221 812 826
Fax: + 420 222 312 835
E-mail: martin.zizka@mze.cz

Mr. Ladislav Steinhübel

Second Secretary
Embassy of the Czech Republic

Koszykowa 18
00-555 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 52518 60
Fax: + 48 22 525 18 98
E-mail: l.steinhubel@seznam.cz

Mr. Tomáš Staněk

Head
Forest Protection Unit
Ministry of Environment

Vršovická 65
100 10 Prague 10
Tel: + 420 267 122 042
Fax: + 420 267 310 308
E-mail: tomas_stanek@env.cz

DENMARK



Mr. J. C. Briand Petersen

Chief Consultant
Danish Ministry of the Environment
Forest and Nature Agency

Haraldsgade 53
2100 Copenhagen Ø
Tel: + 45 72 54 22 27
Fax: + 45 39 27 98 99
E-mail: jbp@sns.dk

Mr. Christian Lundmark Jensen

Coordinator International Forest Policy
Danish Ministry of the Environment
Forest and Nature Agency

Haraldsgade 53
2100 Copenhagen Ø
Tel: + 45 72 54 26 02
Fax: + 45 39 27 98 99
E-mail: clj@sns.dk

ESTONIA



Ms. Riita Annus

Deputy Minister
Ministry of the Environment

Narva mnt. 7A
15172 Tallinn
Tel: + 372 626 29 98
Fax: + 372 626 28 01
E-mail: rita.annus@envir.ee

Mr. Jaanus Kala

Deputy Secretary General on Nature
Conservation and Forestry
Ministry of the Environment

Narva mnt. 7A
15172 Tallinn
Tel: + 372 626 29 13
Fax: + 372 626 28 01
E-mail: jaanus.kala@envir.ee

Mr. Marku Lamp

Director General
Ministry of the Environment

Narva mnt. 7A
15172 Tallinn
Tel: + 372 626 29 20
Fax: + 372 626 29 29
E-mail: marku.lamp@envir.ee

Mr. Rauno Reinberg

Senior Officer
Ministry of the Environment

Narva mnt. 7a
15172 Tallinn
Tel: + 372 626 29 21
Fax: + 372 626 29 29
E-mail: rauno.reinberg@envir.ee

Mr. Kalle Karoles

Director
Estonian Centre of Forest Protection
and Silviculture

Röömu Tee 2
51013 Tartu
Tel: + 372 7339 713
Fax: + 372 7339 464
E-mail: kalle.karoles@metsad.ee

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY



Ms. Mariann Fischer Boel

European Commissioner for Agriculture
and Rural Development
European Commission

Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium
Mariann.Fischer-Boel@ec.europa.eu

Ms. Hilikka Summa

Head of Unit
DG Agriculture and Rural Development
European Commission

Rue de la Loi 130
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 299 50 93
Fax: + 32 2 299 11 33
E-mail: hilikka.summa@ec.europa.eu

Mr. Marius Lazdinis

Administrator
DG Agriculture and Rural Development
European Commission

Rue de la Loi 130
1040 Brussels
Tel: + 32 2 298 44 48
Fax: + 32 2 292 11 33
E-mail: marius.lazdinis@ec.europa.eu

Mr. Joost Van de Velde

Administrator
DG Environment B1
European Commission

BU9 – 4/58
1049 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 296 95 03
E-mail: joost.vandevelde@ec.europa.eu

Mr. Seppo Kallio

Member of EESG
European Economic and Social
Committee

Rue Belliard 99
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 358 40 75 11178
E-mail: seppo.kallio@eesc.europa.eu

FINLAND



Ms. Sirkka-Liisa Anttila

Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

P.O. Box 30
00023 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 9 16 05 33 01
Fax: + 358 9 16 05 29 00
E-mail: sirkka-liisa.anttila@mmm.fi

Mr. Markku Aho

Counsellor
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Katajanokan Laituri 3
00160 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 405 21 19 12
Fax: + 358 9 16 05 65 67
E-mail: markku.aho@formin.fi

Mr. Heikki Granholm

Counsellor of Forestry
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

P.O. Box 30
00023 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 9 16 05 24 31
Fax: + 358 9 16 05 24 00
Mobile: +358 400 77 42 98
E-mail: heikki.granholm@mmm.fi

Mr. Harri Hölttä

Forest Expert
Finnish Association for Nature
Conservation

Kotkankatu 9
00510 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 407 22 92 24
Fax: + 358 9 22 80 82 00
E-mail: holtta@sll.fi

Ms. Lea Jylhä

Senior Adviser
MTK

P.O. Box 510
00101 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 20 413 24 86
Fax: + 358 20 413 24 03
E-mail: lea.jylha@mtk.fi

Ms. Leena Karjalainen-Balk

Counsellor
Nature Conservation
Ministry of the Environment

P.O. Box 35
00023 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 20 490 7108
Fax: + 358 9 16 03 93 64
Mobile: + 358 503 47 46 63
E-mail: leena.karjalainen-balk@ymparisto.fi

Mr. Jouni Lind

State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

P.O. Box 30
00023 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 9 16 05 33 23
Fax: + 358 9 16 05 29 00
E-mail: jouni.lind@mmm.fi

Mr. Aarne Reunala

Director General
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

P.O. Box 30
00023 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 9 16 05 33 50
Fax: + 358 9 16 05 22 80
E-mail: aarne.reunala@mmm.fi

Mr. Reima Sutinen

Senior Adviser
Ministry of Trade and Industry

P.O. Box 32
00023 Helsinki
Tel: + 358 9 16 06 21 08
Fax: + 358 9 16 06 26 35
E-mail: reima.sutinen@ktm.fi

FRANCE



Mr. Alain Moulinier

Directeur Général de la forêt
et des affaires rurales
Ministère de l'agriculture et de la pêche

78, rue de Varenne
75 349 Paris 07 SP
Tel: + 33 1 49 86 44 36
Fax: +33 1 49 55 80 22
E-mail: alain.moulinier@agriculture.gouv.fr

Mr. Alain Chaudron

Chargé de mission pour les affaires
internationales forestières
Direction générale de la forêt et des
affaires rurales
Ministère de l'agriculture et de la pêche

19, avenue du Maine
75 732 Paris Cédex 15
Tel: + 33 1 49 55 42 32
Fax: + 33 1 49 55 40 73
E-mail: alain.chaudron@agriculture.gouv.fr

Ms. Véronique Joucla

Chargée de mission
Direction générale de la forêt et des
affaires rurales
Sous-direction de la forêt et du bois
Bureau du développement
économiqueMinistère de l'agriculture
et de la pêche

19, avenue du Maine
75 732 Paris Cédex 15
Tel: + 33 1 49 55 51 77
Fax: + 33 1 49 55 40 76
E-mail: veronique.joucla@agriculture.gouv.fr

Mr. Nicolas Perrin

Attaché Agricole
French Embassy

Piękna 1
00-477 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 529 31 28
Fax: + 48 22 529 31 01
E-mail: nicolas.perrin@missioneco.org

GERMANY



Mr. Richard Lammel

Director for Forestry
Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture
and Consumer Protection

Rochusstrasse 1
53123 Bonn
Tel: + 49 228 529 36 79
Fax: + 49 228 529 43 18
E-mail: richard.lammel@bmelv.bund.de

Mr. Matthias Schwoerer

Head of Division
Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture
and Consumer Protection

Rochusstrasse 1
53123 Bonn
Tel: + 49 228 529 33 48
Fax: + 49 228 529 42 76
E-mail: matthias.schwoerer@bmelv.bund.de

Mr. Thomas Schneider

Senior Scientist
Institute for World Forestry
Federal Research Centre for Forestry
and Forest Products

Leuschnerstrasse 91
21031 Hamburg
Tel: + 49 40 73 96 21 30
Fax: + 49 40 73 96 21 99
E-mail: t.schneider@holz.uni-hamburg.de

GREECE



Mr. Konstantinos Kiltidis

Minister
Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Chalkokondili 31
10164 Athens
Tel: + 30 210 212 4728
Fax: + 30 210 524 0122

Mr. Nikolas Ntinos

Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Chalkokondili 31
10164 Athens
Tel: + 30 210 212 4728
Fax: + 30 210 524 0122

Mr. Vaya Stampakopoulou

Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Chalkokondili 31
10164 Athens
Tel: + 30 210 212 4728
Fax: + 30 210 524 0122

Mr. Stavros Sagris

General Director
Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Chalkokondyli 31
10164 Athens
Tel: + 30 210 212 46 16
Fax: + 30 210 524 41 04
E-mail: ax2u112@minagric.gr

Ms. Eirini Nikolaou

Forest Policy Adviser
Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Chalkokondyli 31
10164 Athens
Tel: + 30 210 212 47 28
Fax: + 30 210 524 01 22
E-mail: xa31u037@minagric.gr

HOLY SEE



Mons. Józef Kowalczyk

Apostolic Nuncio

Szucha 12
00-582 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 628 84 88
Fax: + 48 22 628 45 56
E-mail: nuncjatura@episkopat.pl

Mons. Vincenzo Buonomo

Colaborator

Szucha 12
00-582 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 628 84 88
Fax: + 48 22 628 45 56
E-mail: nuncjatura@episkopat.pl

Mons. Edward Janiak

Bishop

Szucha 12
00-582 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 628 84 88
Fax: + 48 22 628 45 56
E-mail: nuncjatura@episkopat.pl

HUNGARY



Mr. János Kiss

Head of Department
Department of Natural Resources
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Kossuth L. 7-11
1055 Budapest
Tel: + 36 1 301 40 11
Fax: + 36 1 301 46 78
E-mail: KissJ@fvm.hu

Mr. Tamás Lapos

Head of Forest Section
Department of Natural Resources
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Kossuth L. 7-11
1055 Budapest
Tel: + 36 1 301 46 76
Fax: + 36 1 301 46 78
E-mail: LaposT@posta.fvm.hu

Mr. Zoltán Somogyi

Research Director
Hungarian Forest Research Institute

Frankel Leó utca 42-44
1023 Budapest
Tel: + 36 1 438 58 80
Fax: + 36 1 326 16 39
E-mail: somogyiz@erti.hu

ICELAND



Mr. Niels Arni Lund

Department Head
Ministry of Agriculture

Solvholsgata 7
150 Reykjavik
Tel: + 354 545 97 62
E-mail: niels.arni.lund@lan.stjr.is

Mr. Jon Loftsson

Director General
Iceland Forest Service

Midvangi 2-4
700 Egilsstadir
Tel: +354 471 21 00
Fax: + 354 471 21 72
E-mail: jonlof@skogur.is

Mr. Throstur Eysteinnsson

Director
National Forests
Iceland Forest Service

Midvangi 2-4
700 Egilsstadir
Tel: + 354 471 21 00
Fax: + 354 471 21 72
E-mail: throstur@skogur.is

IRELAND



Ms. Mary Wallace

Minister of State
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food

Kildare Street, Agriculture House
Dublin 2
Tel: + 353 1 607 22 91
Fax: + 353 1 662 21 70
E-mail: mary.wallace@agriculture.gov.ie

Mr. Denis Byrne

Assistant Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food

Kildare Street, Agriculture House
Dublin 2
Tel: + 353 1 607 22 91
Fax: + 353 1 662 21 70
E-mail: mary.wallace@agriculture.gov.ie

Ms. Marie Lennon

Private Secretary to the Minister
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food

Kildare Street, Agriculture House
Dublin 2
Tel: + 353 1 607 22 91
Fax: + 353 1 662 21 70

Ms. Patricia Reilly

Agricultural Attaché
Embassy of Ireland

Mysia 5
00-469 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 849 66 33
Fax: + 48 22 849 84 31
E-mail: paricia.reilly@dfa.ie

ITALY



Mr. Stefano Boco

Deputy Minister of State
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest
Policies

Via XX Settembre 20
00187 Roma
Tel: + 39 06 46655008
Fax: + 39 06 4819823
E-mail: sott.boco@
politicheagricole.gov.it

Mr. Giorgio Cavalleri

Head
International Affairs Unit of the National
Forest Corps
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest
Policies

Via Carducci 5
00187 Roma
Tel: + 39 06 4818972
Fax: + 39 06 4817690
E-mail: g.cavalleri@corpoforestale.it

Mr. Giorgio Corrado

Head
Forest Policy Service of the National
Forest Corps
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest
Policies

Via Carducci 5
00189 Roma
Tel: + 39 06 46657056
Fax: + 39 06 4743017
E-mail: g.corrado@corpoforestale.it

Mr. Vincenzo Fersino

Head
Office for International Relations
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest
Policies

Via XX Settembre 20
00187 Roma
Tel: + 39 06 46653101
Fax: + 39 06 4884394
E-mail: vfersino@libero.it

Mr. Clemente Intrieri

Particular Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture, Food
and Forestry Policies

Via XX Settembre 20
00187 Roma
Tel: + 39 06 46655008
Fax: + 39 06 4819823
E-mail: sott.boco@
politicheagricole.gov.it

Ms. Chiara Schirosi

Interpreter
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest
Policies

Via XX Settembre 20
00187 Roma
Tel: + 39 06 46653095
Fax: + 39 06 4884394
E-mail: c.schirosi@
politicheagricole.gov.it

LATVIA



Mr. Arvids Ozols

Deputy State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture

Republikas Laukums 2
1981 Riga
Tel: + 37 16 702 72 01
Fax: + 37 16 702 70 96
E-mail: arvids.ozols@zm.gov.lv

Mr. Janis Birgelis

Director
Forest Policy Department
Ministry of Agriculture

Republikas Laukums 2
1981 Riga
Tel: + 37 16 702 74 77
Fax: + 37 16 702 70 96
E-mail: janis.birgelis@zm.gov.lv

Mr. Janis Kinna

Director General
State Forest Service

13 Janvara Iela 15
1932 Riga
Tel: + 37 16 722 66 00
Fax: + 37 16 782 03 77
E-mail: janis.kinna@vmd.gov.lv

Ms. Anna Iltnere

Project Manager
DD Studio

Kalku Street 24-9
1050 Riga
Tel: + 371 720 53 66
Fax: + 371 720 53 69
E-mail: anna.iltner@dd.lv

Ms. Sandra Eglaja

Head
Public and International Relations
Division
Forest Policy Department
Ministry of Agriculture

Republikas Laukums 2
1981 Riga
Tel: + 37 16 702 75 49
Fax: + 37 16 702 70 96
E-mail: sandra.eglaja@zm.gov.lv

Ms. Ilze Silamikele

Deputy Director
Forest Policy Department
Ministry of Agriculture

Republikas Laukums 2
1981 Riga
Tel: + 37 16 702 75 48
Fax: + 37 16 702 70 96
E-mail: ilze.silamikele@zm.gov.lv

LIECHTENSTEIN



Mr. Felix Näscher

Director General
Ministry of Environment Affairs,
Agriculture and Forestry

Dr. Grass Str. 10
9490 Vaduz
Tel: + 423 236 64 00
Fax: + 423 236 64 11
E-mail: felix.naesch@awnl.llv.li

LITHUANIA



Mr. Arunas Kundrotas
Minister
Ministry of Environment
A. Jaksto G. 4/9
01105 Vilnus
Tel: + 370 5 266 34 80
Fax: + 370 5 266 36 63
E-mail: a.kundrotas@am.lt

Mr. Gintaras Visalga
Deputy Director
General Forest Enterprise
Ministry of Environment
A. Juozapaviciaus G. 9
09311 Vilnus
Tel: + 370 5 273 40 48
Fax: + 370 5 273 40 04
E-mail: gintaras@gmu.lt

Mr. Andrius Kuliešis
Director
State Forest Survey Service
Dramones Av 11a
51327 Kaonas
Tel: + 370 37 490 220
Fax: + 370 37 490 251
E-mail: vmt@luml.lt

Mr. Aidas Pivoriunas
Adviser to the Minister
Ministry of Environment
A. Jaksto G. 4/9
01105 Vilnus
Tel: + 370 5 266 34 89
Fax: + 370 5 266 36 65
E-mail: A.pivoriunas@am.lt

Mr. Valdas Vaiciunas
Director
Department of Forests
Ministry of Environment
A. Juozapaviciaus G. 9
09311 Vilnus
Tel: + 370 5 272 58 68
Fax: + 370 5 272 20 29
E-mail: v.vaiciunas@am.lt

LUXEMBOURG



Mr. Fernand Boden
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Viticulture
and Rural Development
Rue de la Congrégation 1
2913 Luxembourg
Tel: + 352 478 25 01
Fax: + 352 22 29 10
E-mail: Fernand.Boden@ma.etat.lu

Mr. Jean-Jacques Erasmy
Director des Eaux et Forêts
Administration des Eaux et Forêts
Rue Eugene Ruppert 16
2453 Luxembourg
Tel: + 352 402 201 222
Fax: + 352 402 201 250
E-mail: jean-jacques.erasmy@ef.etat.lu

Mr. André Loos
Conseiller de Gouvernement
Ministry of Agriculture
Rue Eugene Ruppert 16
1352 Luxembourg
Tel: + 352 478 25 30
Fax: + 352 464 027
E-mail: andre.loos@ma.etat.lu

Mr. Frank Wolter
Directeur Adjoint
Administration des Eaux et Forêts
Rue Eugene Ruppert 16
2453 Luxembourg
Tel: + 352 402 201 216
Fax: + 352 402 201 250
E-mail: frank.wolter@ef.etat.lu

MONTENEGRO



Mr. Milosav Andjelić
Deputy Minister for Forestry
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management
Vektra Squire bb
81 000 Podgorica
Tel: + 382 81 482 275
Fax: + 382 81 234 306
E-mail: andjelicm@mn.yu

Mr. James Acworth
International Project Coordinator
Forestry Development in Montenegro
(FODEMO) Project
Vuka Karadzica Br. 5
81 000 Podgorica
Tel: + 382 69 688 201
Fax: + 382 81 231 722
E-mail: james.acworth@luxdev.lu

Mr. Žarko Vučinić
National Forest Programme Coordinator
Forestry Development in Montenegro
(FODEMO) Project
Vuka Karadzica Br. 5
81 000 Podgorica
Tel: + 382 67 207 101
Fax: + 382 81 231 722
E-mail: zarko.v@cg.yu

NETHERLANDS



Mr. Han de Groot
Deputy Director
The Department of Nature
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food
Quality
P.O. Box 20401
2500 EK Den Haag
Tel: + 31 70 378 5680
Fax: + 31 70 378 6105

Mr. Rob Busink
Senior Policy Official
Department of Nature
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature
and Food Quality
P.O. Box 20401
2500 EK Den Haag
Tel: + 31 70 3784911
Fax: + 31 70 3786146
E-mail: R.L.Busink@minlnv.nl

NORWAY



Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Akersgata 59
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 22 24 91 01
Fax: + 47 22 24 95 58
E-mail: mette.hoie@lmd.dep.no

Mr. Knut Øistad
Counsellor
Mission of Norway to the European
Union
Rue Archimède 17
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 22 34 11 49
Fax: + 32 22 34 11 50
E-mail: ko@mfa.no

Mr. Arne Ivar Sletnes
Senior Adviser
Ministry Of Agriculture and Food
P.O. Box 8007 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 22 24 93 77
Fax: + 47 22 24 27 53
E-mail: arne-ivar.sletnes@lmd.dep.no

Mr. Harald Aalde
Senior Adviser
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Department of Forest and Natural
Resource Policy
P.O. Box 8007 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 22 24 93 90
Fax: + 47 22 24 27 53
E-mail: harald.aalde@lmd.dep.no

Ms. Kristin Dawes
Senior Adviser
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
P.O. Box 8007 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 43 664 510 93 08
E-mail: kristin_dawes@yahoo.com

Ms. Kjersti Bakkebø Fjellstad
Adviser
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
P.O. Box 8007 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 90 50 66 61
E-mail: kjerbafje@gmail.com

Ms. Sigrid Hjørnegård
Political Adviser
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Akersgata 59

0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 22 24 91 03
Fax: + 47 22 24 95 58
E-mail: sigrid.hjornegard@lmd.dep.no

Mr. Ivar Legallais-Korsbakken
Special Adviser
The Norwegian Forest
Owners' Federation
P.O. Box 1438 Vika
0115 Oslo
Tel: + 47 90 03 64 71
Fax: + 47 22 42 16 90
E-mail: ivar.korsbakken@skog.no

Ms. Berit Lindstad
Advisor
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
P.O. Box 8007 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 97 56 25 62
E-mail: berili@umb.no

Mr. Paal Vidar Sollie
Director General
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
P.O. Box 8007 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 22 24 93 60
Fax: + 47 22 24 27 53
E-mail: pal-vidar.sollie@lmd.dep.no

Mr. Gunnar Syverud
Head of Information
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Akersgaten 59/8007
0030 Oslo
Tel: + 47 22 24 91 09
E-mail: gunnar.syverud@lmd.dep.no

POLAND



Mr. Jan Szyszko
Minister
Ministry of the Environment
Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 579 24 00
Fax: + 48 22 579 22 24
E-mail: minister@mos.gov.pl

Ms. Zofia Chrempińska
Director
Department of Forestry, Nature
Conservation and Landscape Protection
Ministry of the Environment
Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 579 25 53
Fax: + 48 22 579 22 90
E-mail: grazyna.bychawska@mos.gov.pl

Mr. Andrzej Matysiak

Director-General
Directorate General of the State Forests

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 825 60 28
Fax: + 48 22 825 85 56
E-mail: sekretariat@lasy.gov.pl

Mr. Edward Lenart

Deputy Director
Department of Forestry, Nature
Conservation and Landscape Protection
Ministry of the Environment

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 579 25 80
Fax: + 48 22 579 22 90
E-mail: elenart@mos.gov.pl

Mr. Kazimierz Rykowski

Head of Advisory Committee
on MCPFE Issues
Forest Research Institute

Braci Leśnej 3, Sękocin Stary
05-090 Raszyn
Tel: + 48 22 715 04 10
Fax: + 48 22 715 04 08
E-mail: karyk@ibles.waw.pl

Mr. Władysław Strykowski

General Director
Wood Technology Institute

Winiarska 1
60-654 Poznań
Tel: + 48 61 849 24 01
Fax: + 48 61 822 43 72
E-mail: w_strykowski@itd.poznan.pl

Mr. Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz

Director
Department of Forest Utilization
Faculty of Forestry
Warsaw University of Life Sciences
(SGGW)

Nowoursynowska 159
02-776 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 59 38 141
E-mail: paschalis@delta.sggw.waw.pl

Mr. Edward Pierzgalski

Department of Forest Site Science
Forest Research Institute

Braci Leśnej 3, Sękocin Stary
05-090 Raszyn
Tel: + 48 22 715 05 32
E-mail: e.pierzgalski@ibles.waw.pl

Mr. Jacek Mizak

Counsellor
Ministry of the Environment

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 579 23 23
Fax: + 48 22 579 22 63
E-mail: jacek.mizak@mos.gov.pl

Mr. Ryszard Kapuściński

Deputy Director-General for Forest
Management
Directorate General of the State Forests

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 825 85 10
Fax: + 48 22 825 85 56
E-mail: r.kapuscinski@lasy.gov.pl

Mr. Konrad Tomaszewski

Chief Analyst
Directorate General of the State Forests

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 825 94 02
Fax: + 48 22 825 85 56
E-mail: k.tomaszewski@lasy.gov.pl

Mr. Tomasz Wójcik

Head of International Cooperation
DepartmentGeneral Directorate
of the State Forests

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 825 99 51
Fax: + 48 22 825 85 56
E-mail: t.wojcik@lasy.gov.pl

Mr. Sławomir Trzaskowski

Director
State Forests Information Centre
The State Forests Information Centre

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 822 49 31
Fax: + 48 22 823 96 79
E-mail: s.trzaskowski@lasy.gov.pl

Mr. Adam Szempliński

Director
Forest Management and Geodesy Bureau

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Fax: + 48 22 825 34 23
Fax: + 48 22 825 85 56
E-mail: adam.szemplinski@zarzad.buligl.pl

Mr. Sławomir Mazurek

Ministry Spokesman
Ministry of Environment

Wawelska 52/54
00-922 Warsaw
Tel: + 48 22 57 92 205
Fax: + 48 22 57 92 505
E-mail: rzecznik@mos.gov.pl

PORTUGAL



Mr. Rui Gonçalves

Secretary of State for Rural Development
and Forestry
Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Develop-
ment and Fisheries

Praça do Comércio
1149-010 Lisboa
Tel: + 351 21 323 49 92
Fax: + 351 21 323 49 95
E-mail: fernandaa@madrp.gov.pt

Ms. Maria Manuela Marques

Head
Cabinet of the Secretary of State for
Rural Development and Forestry
Ministry of Agriculture, Rural
Development and Fisheries

Praça do Comércio
1149-010 Lisboa
Tel: + 351 21 323 49 92
Fax: + 351 21 323 49 95
E-mail: fernandaa@madrp.gov.pt

Ms. Graça Rato

Forest Adviser
Direcção-Geral dos Recursos Florestais
Ministério da Agricultura,
do Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas

Av. João Crisóstomo N.º 26
1069-040 Lisboa
Tel: + 351 21 312 48 43
Fax: + 351 21 312 49 83
E-mail: graca.rato@dgrf.min-agricultura.pt

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



Mr. Grubii Ghenadie

Head
Forestry Service and Forest Reganaration
Agency for Forestry “Moldsilva”

Stefan cel Mare Bd. 124
MD2001 Chisinau
Tel: + 373 22 27 72 88
Fax: + 373 22 27 72 88
E-mail: grubghe@yahoo.com

ROMANIA



Mr. Gheorghe Albu

Secretary of State
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Bdv. Carol I, No 24 sector 3
Bucharest
Tel: + 40 21 307 24 33
Fax: + 40 21 307 86 27
E-mail: elena.abagiu@madr.ro

Mr. Danuț Iacob

Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Bdv. Carol I, No 24 sector 3
Bucharest
Tel: + 40 21 307 24 33
Fax: + 40 21 307 86 27
E-mail: elena.abagiu@madr.ro

Mr. Ciprian Pahontu

General Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Bdv. Carol I, No 24 sector 3
Bucharest
Tel: + 40 21 307 24 33
Fax: + 40 21 307 86 27
E-mail: elena.abagiu@madr.ro

RUSSIAN FEDERATION



Mr. Valery Roshchupkin

Head
Federal Forestry Agency
Ministry of Natural Resources

Pyatnitskaya 59/19
115184 Moscow
Tel: + 7 495 953 37 85
Fax: + 7 495 230 85 30
E-mail: lesinfor@aha.ru

Mr. Andrey Filipchuk

Deputy Director
All – Russian Research Institute for
Silviculture and Mechanization
of Forestry Federal Forestry Agency
Ministry of Natural Resources

Institutskaya 15
141200 Pushkino, Moscow region
Tel: + 7 495 993 30 54
Fax: + 7 495 993 41 91
E-mail: aflipchuk@yandex.ru

Ms. Marina Linicheva

Expert
Ministry of Natural Resources

B. Gruzinskaya 4/6
123995 Moscow
Tel: + 7 495 254 72 22
Fax: + 7 495 254 82 83
E-mail: linicheva@mnr.gov.ru

Mr. Victor Tepliakov

Interpreter
Federal Forestry Agency
Ministry of Natural Resources

Pyatnitskaya 59/19
115184 Moscow
Tel: + 7 495 953 37 85
Fax: + 7 495 953 10 42
E-mail: ustinova@rosleshoz.ru

SERBIA



Mr. Danilo Golubović

State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry
and Water Management

Nemanjina 22-26
11 000 New Belgrade
Tel: + 381 11 363 18 78
E-mail: office@minpolj.sr.giv.yu

Mr. Aleksandar Vasiljević

Director
MAFW – Directorate of Forests
Omladinskih brigada 1

11 000 New Belgrade
Tel: + 381 11 301 53 21
Fax: + 381 11 311 76 11
E-mail: acavas@ptt.yu

Mr. Čedomir Mijović

Chief of Section for Protection Biological
Resource
Ministry of Environmental Protection

Omladinskih brigada 1
11 000 New Belgrade
Tel: + 381 11 313 25 72
Fax: + 381 11 313 15 69
E-mail: cedomir.mijovic@ekoserb.sr.gov.yu

Mr. Predrag Jović

Adviser
MAFW – Directorate of Forests

Omladinskih brigada 1
11 070 New Belgrade
Tel: + 381 11 357 1122
Fax: + 381 11 357 1327
E-mail: pedja.jovic@fao.mediaworks.co.yu

SLOVAK REPUBLIC



Mr. Miroslav Jureňa

Minister
Ministry of Agriculture

Dobrovičova 12
812 66 Bratislava
Tel: +421 2 59266 241

Ms. Eva Kolesárová

Director of Department of Foreign
and EU Relations
Ministry of Agriculture

Dobrovicova 12
812 66 Bratislava
Tel: + 421 2 59266 292
E-mail: eva.kolesarova@land.gov.sk

Mr. Jozef Miňdáš

Director General
Forests of the Slovak Republic

Nám. SNP 8
975 66 Banská Bystrica
Tel: +421 48 4344 260
E-mail: jozef.mindas@lesy.sk

Mr. Július Novotný

Director General
National Forest Center

T. G. Masaryka 22
960 92 Zvolen
Tel: + 421 90 5594 393
E-mail: novotny@nlcsk.org

Mr. Marián Ondrejčák

Director General
Forestry Section
Ministry of Agriculture

Dobrovičova 12
812 66 Bratislava
Tel: +421 2 59266505

Mr. František Ružička

Ambassador
Embassy of the Slovak Republic

Litewska 6
00-581 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 525 81 10
Fax: + 48 22 525 81 22
E-mail: embassy@varsava.mfa.sk

SLOVENIA



Mr. Iztok Jarc

Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Dunajska 58
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: + 386 1 478 91 02
Fax: + 386 1 436 20 48
E-mail: iztok.jarc@gov.si

Mr. Andrej Drasler

Director General
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Dunajska 58
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: + 386 1 478 91 44
Fax: + 386 1 439 20 48
E-mail: andrej.drasler@gov.si

Mr. Aleksander Golob

Undersecretary
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Dunajska 58
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: + 386 1 478 91 44
Fax: + 386 1 436 20 48
E-mail: aleksander1.golob@gov.si

SPAIN



Mr. Jose Luis Herranz Saez

Director-General for Biodiversity
Ministry of Environment

Gran via San Francisco 4
28005 Madrid
Tel: + 34 915 96 46 03
Fax: + 34 915 96 48 77
E-mail: jherranz@mma.es

Mr. José Cuenca Anaya

Ambassador for Environmental Issues
and New Technologies
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and Cooperation

Plaza de la Provincia 1
28071 Madrid
Tel: + 34 913 79 85 81
Fax: + 34 913 66 39 53
E-mail: joscuencana@hotmail.com

Ms. María Jesus Rodriguez
De Sancho

Deputy Director-General for Forest
Policy and Desertification
Ministry of Environment

Gran via San Francisco 4
28005 Madrid
Tel: + 34 915 96 46 03
Fax: + 34 915 96 48 77
E-mail: mjrodriguez@mma.es

Mr. Jose María Solano Lopez

Head
Forest Planning and Management Area
Ministry of Environment

Gran via San Francisco 4
28005 Madrid
Tel: + 34 915 96 49 13
Fax: + 34 915 96 48 77
E-mail: jmsolano@mma.es

SWEDEN



Mr. Rolf Eriksson

State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture

Fredsgatan 8
103 33 Stockholm
Tel: + 46 8 405 1000
Fax: + 46 8 405 4972
E-mail: rolf.eriksson@
agriculture.ministry.se

Ms. Birgitta Naumburg

Deputy Director
Ministry of Agriculture

Fredsgatan 8
103 33 Stockholm
Tel: + 46 8 405 2228
E-mail: birgitta.naumburg@
agriculture.ministry.se

Mr. Per Andersson

EU-Coordinator
Ministry of Agriculture

Fredsgatan 8
103 33 Stockholm
Tel: + 46 7 0519 0232
E-mail: per.andersson@
agriculture.ministry.se

Ms. Linda Eriksson

Advisor Forestry Policy
Swedish Forest Industries Federation

P. O. Box 55525
102 04 Stockholm
Tel: + 46 7 0670 7209
E-mail: linda.eriksson@forestindustries.se

Mr. Tomas Landers

International Coordinator
Swedish Forest Agency

Vallgatan 8
55 183 Jönköping
Tel: + 46 3 635 9436
E-mail: tomas.landern@forestagency.se

Ms. Tora Leifland Holmström

Political Advisor
Ministry of Agriculture

Fredsgatan 8
103 33 Stockholm
Tel: + 46 8 405 1000
Fax: + 46 8 405 4972
E-mail: tora.leifland.holmstrom@
agriculture.ministry.se

Mr. Bert-Åke Näslund

Senior Advisor
Swedish Forest Agency

Vallgatan 6
55183 Jönköping
Tel: + 46 3 635 9379
Fax: + 46 3 616 6170
E-mail: bert-ake.naslund@skogsstyrelsen.se

SWITZERLAND



Mr. Andreas Götz

Vicedirector
Forest and Natural Hazards
Federal Office for the Environment

3003 Berne
Tel: + 41 31 32 28295
Fax: + 41 31 32 27958
E-mail: Andreas.Goetz@bafu.admin.ch

Mr. Christoph Dürr

International Forest Policy Advisor
Forest Services and Forest Quality
Section Federal Office
for the Environment

3003 Berne
Tel: + 41 31 32 47689
Fax: + 41 31 32 47866
E-mail: christoph.duerr@bafu.admin.ch

Mr. Christan Kuchli

Head of Section
Forest Services and Forest Quality
Section Federal Office
for the Environment

3003 Berne
Tel: + 41 31 32 47780
Fax: + 41 31 32 47866
E-mail: christian.kuechli@bafu.admin.ch

Mr. Rolf Manser

Head
Forest Division
Federal Office for the Environment

3003 Berne
Tel: + 41 31 32 47839
Fax: + 41 31 32 47866
E-mail: rolf.manser@bafu.admin.ch

Ms. Sibylle Vermont

Senior Scientific Officer
International Affairs Division
Federal Office for the Environment

3003 Berne
Tel: + 41 31 32 28547
Fax: + 41 31 32 30349
E-mail: sibylle.vermont@bafu.admin.ch

TURKEY



Mr. Osman Kahveci

General Director
General Directorate of Forestry

Tel: + 90 312 296 4168
Fax: + 90 312 296 4171
E-mail: osmankahveci@ogm.gov.tr

Mr. Tamer Otrakçier

Head
Strategy Development Department

Tel: + 90 312 296 4215
Fax: + 90 312 296 4217
E-mail: apk@ogm.gov.tr

UKRAINE



Mr. Viktor Sivets

Head
State Forestry Committee

Shota Rustaveli 9-a
01601 Kiev
Tel: + 38 44 235 56 20
Fax: + 38 44 235 44 09
E-mail: yyy@mlg.kiev.ua

Ms. Valentyna Maksymenko

Chief Editor of Forest and Hunting
Magazine
State Forestry Committee

Shota Rustaveli 9-a

01601 Kiev
Tel: + 380 44 235 81 91
Fax: + 380 44 235 31 36
E-mail: lpolyakova@dklg.gov.ua

Mr. Vasyl Mateychyk

Deputy Head
Forest Management Department
State Forestry Committee

Shota Rustaveli 9-a
01601 Kiev
Tel: + 38 44 234 09 40
Fax: + 38 44 235 76 07
E-mail: gushcha@dklg.gov.ua

Ms. Lyubov Polyakova

Senior Officer
Science & Information Department
State Forestry Committee

Shota Rustaveli 9-a
01601 Kiev
Tel: + 38 44 234 26 35
Fax: + 38 44 234 26 35
E-mail: lpolyakova@dklg.gov.ua

Mr. Valeriy Uhov

Head's Assistant
State Forestry Committee

Shota Rustaveli 9-a
01601 Kiev
Tel: + 38 44 235 62 24
Fax: + 38 44 235 62 24
E-mail: gushcha@dklg.gov.ua

UNITED KINGDOM



Mr. Phil Woolas

Minister
Department for Environment, Food and
Rural Affairs

Smith Square 17, 621 Millbank
c/o Nobel House
SW1P 3JR London
Tel: + 44 207 238 6034
E-mail: ps.phil.woolas@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Mr. Neil Hornby

Senior Private Secretary
to the Minister for the Environment
Department for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs

Smith Square 17, 621 Millbank
c/o Nobel House
SW1P 3JR London
Tel: + 44 207 238 6034
E-mail: neil.hornby@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Mr. Michael Dudley

Head
International Policy
Forestry Commission

Corstorphine Road 231
EH12 7AT Edinburgh
Tel: + 44 131 314 6115
Fax: + 44 131 316 4344
E-mail: mike.dudley@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Ms. Frances Snaith

Policy Advisor
Forestry Commission

Corstorphine Road 231
EH12 7AT Edinburgh
Tel: + 44 131 314 6497
Fax: + 44 131 316 4344
E-mail: frances.snaith@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Mr. Tim Rollinson

Director General
Forestry Commission

Corstorphine Road 231
EH12 7AT Edinburgh
Tel: + 44 131 314 6243
Fax: + 44 131 316 4344
E-mail: tim.rollinson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

OBSERVER COUNTRIES

CANADA



Ms. Jaye Shuttleworth

Director
Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Sussex Drive 111
K1N 1J1 Ottawa
Tel: + 1 613 995 2168
Fax: + 1 613 995 9525
E-mail: jaye.shuttleworth@
international.gc.ca

Mr. Shawn Morton

Senior Policy Advisor
Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Sussex Drive 111
K1N 1J1 Ottawa
Tel: + 1 613 944 0524
Fax: + 1 613 995 9525
E-mail: shawn.morton@
international.gc.ca

INDIA



Mr. Sevugan Regupathy

Minister of State
Ministry of Environment and Forests

Lodhi Road, CGO Complex
Paryavaran Bhawan, Room No.424
110003 New Delhi
Tel: + 91 11 24 36 17 27
Fax: + 91 11 24 36 39 58
E-mail: mef@nic.in

Mr. Gopal Krishan Prasad

Additional Director General of Forests
Ministry of Environment and Forests

Lodhi Road, CGO Complex
Paryavaran Bhawan, Room No.416
110003 New Delhi
Tel: + 91 11 24 36 32 32
Fax: + 91 11 24 36 27 85
E-mail: gkprasad2000@yahoo.co.in

Mr. Nagabhushan Rao Reddy

Private Secretary to Minister of State
Ministry of Environment and Forests

Lodhi Road, CGO Complex
Paryavaran Bhawan, Room No.425
110003 New Delhi
Tel: + 91 11 24 36 17 27
Fax: + 91 11 24 36 27 85

JAPAN



Mr. Yuichi Sato

Senior Policy Advisor
International Cooperation Office
Forestry Agency
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry
and Fisheries

1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku
100-8952 Tokyo
Tel: + 81 3 3591 8449
Fax: + 81 3 3593 9565
E-mail: yuuchi_satou@nm.maff.go.jp

MOROCCO



Mr. Abdeladim Lhafi

High Commissioner for Water, Forestry
and Combating Desertification
High Commissariat for Water, Forestry-
and Combating Desertification

Quartier Administratif – Chellah
Rabat
Tel + 212 37 66 09 84
Fax: + 212 37 66 09 85

Mr. Abdesselam Alem

Ambassador
Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco

Starościńska 1 appt. 11, 12
02-516 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 849 33 28
Fax: + 48 22 848 18 40
E-mail: info@moroccoembassy.org.pl

Mr. Benhammou Bouzemouri

Directeur du Developpement
Prime Ministry

Quartier Administratif
Rabat

Mr. Abderrahim Houmy

Directeur de la Planification
Prime Ministry

Quartier Administratif
Rabat

Mr. Abdesselam Omerani

Chef de la Division de la Conservation
des Eaux et des Sols et de la Protection
de le Foret
Prime Ministry

Quartier Administratif
Rabat

USA



Ms. Leslie Weldon

Director
External Affairs
U.S.D.A. Forest Service

1400 Independence Ave. S. W.
20005 Washington DC, U.S.A.
Tel: + 1 202 205 1083
E-mail: lweldon@fs.fed.us

Ms. Stephanie Caswell

Director, Office of Conservation
Us State Department

2201 C Street NW, OES/ETC Room 4333
20520 Washington DC
Tel: + 1 202 736 7351
E-mail: caswellsx@state.gov

Ms. Jerilyn Levi

Deputy Director
International Programs
U.S.D.A. Forest Service

1099 14th St, NW 5500 W.
20005 Washington DC
Tel: + 1 202 273 47 27
E-mail: jlevi@fs.fed.us

OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS

BIOVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL



Mr. Jozef Turok

Regional Director for Europe
Biodiversity International

Via dei Tre Denari 47/a
00057 Maccarese, Fiumicino, Italy
Tel: + 39 06 6118250
Fax: + 39 06 61979661
E-mail: j.turok@cgiar.org

Mr. Jarkko Koskela

EUFORGEN CoordinatorBiodiversity
International

Via dei Tre Denari 472/a
00057 Maccarese, Fiumicino, Italy
Tel: + 39 06 611 82 23
Fax: + 39 06 619 79 661
E-mail: j.koskela@cgiar.org

CEI-Bois



Mr. Filip De Jaeger

Secretary General
European Confederation of Woodworking
Industries

Rue Montoyer 24/20
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 556 25 85
Fax: + 32 2 287 08 75
E-mail: filip.de.jaeger@cei-bois.org

Mr. Ladislaus Döry

Vice President
Association of the Austrian Wood Industries

Schwarzenbergplatz 4
1037 Vienna, Austria
Tel: + 43 1 712 26 01 22
Fax: + 43 1 712 26 01 19
E-mail: office@saege.at

CEPF



Mr. Stefan Schenker

President
Confederation of European Forest Owners

Rue du Luxemburg 66
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 219 02 31
Fax: + 32 2 219 21 91
E-mail: office@cepf-eu.org

Ms. Natalie Hufnagl-Jovy

Policy Adviser
Confederation of European Forest Owners

Rue du Luxemburg 66
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 49 151 12 22 13 66
E-mail: nhufnagl@agdw.org

Mr. Atilla Lengyel

Policy Adviser
Confederation of European Forest Owners

Contact Office Budapest
Benczur U. 34
1068 Budapest, Hungary
Tel: + 36 14 61 20 19
Fax: + 36 13 51 70 29
E-mail: attila.lengyel@fao.org

CEPI



Ms. Elisabeth Salander Björklund

Executive Vice President
Stora Enso

P.O. Box 70395
107 24 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel: + 46 10 464 66 31
Fax: + 46 10 468 27 90
E-mail: elisabet.salander.bjorklund@storaenso.com

Mr. Bernard de Galember

Forest Director
Confederation of European Paper Industries

Avenue Louise 250, box 80
1050 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 627 49 17
Fax: + 32 2 646 81 37
E-mail: b.degalember@cepi.org

COPA-COGECA



Mr. Thomas Stemberger

Chairman
COPA/COGECA Working Party Forestry Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the EU and General Confederation of Agricultural Co-operatives in EU

Schauflergasse 6
1014 Vienna, Austria
Tel: + 43 1 53441 8590
Fax: + 43 1 53441 8529
E-mail: forst@lk-oe.at

Ms. Ingeborg Bromée

Policy Advisor
Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the EU and General Confederation of Agricultural Co-operatives in EU

Rue de Trèves 61
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 287 27 26
Fax: + 32 2 287 27 00
E-mail: ingeborg.bromee@copa-cogeca.be

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Mr. Eladio Fernández-Galiano

Head
Biological Diversity Unit
Council of Europe

67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France
Tel: + 33 388 41 22 59
Fax: + 33 388 41 27 87
E-mail: eladio.fernandez-galiano@coe.int

EFI



Mr. Risto Päivinen

Director
European Forest Institute

Torikatu 34
80100 Joensuu, Finland
Tel: + 385 10 773 43 13
Fax: + 385 10 773 43 77
E-mail: risto.paivinen@efi.int

ELO



Mr. Robin du Parc

Director
Forest Department
European Landowners' Organization

Rue de Trèves 67
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 234 30 00
Fax: + 32 2 234 30 09
E-mail: forest@elo.org

ENFE



Mr. Barrie Hudson

Chairman
European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs

Dalfling Farm, Blairdaff
AB51 5LA Inverurie Aberdeenshire
United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 146 765 1770
E-mail: barrie@hudsonconsulting.ltd.uk

Mr. Edgar Kastenholtz

Secretary General
European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs

Rütteberg 10
79294 Sölden, Germany
Tel: + 49 761 4536 7431
E-mail: edgar.kastenholtz@enfe.net

EOMF



Mr. Jean-Claude Monin

President
European Observatory of Mountain Forests

Rue de la République 256
73000 Chambéry, France
Tel: + 33 479 33 49 52
Fax: + 33 479 33 38 95
E-mail: jacques.plan@onf.fr

Mr. Jacques Plan

European Observatory of Mountain Forests

Rue de la République 256
73000 Chambéry, France
Tel: + 33 479 33 49 52
Fax: + 33 479 33 38 95
E-mail: jacques.plan@onf.fr

EUSTAFOR



Mr. Pierre-Olivier Drege

Chief Executive Officer
European State Forest Association

Avenue de Saint Mandé 2
75570 Paris Cedex 12, France
Tel: + 33 1 40 19 58 04
Fax: + 33 1 40 19 58 77
E-mail: drege@onf.fr

Mr. Frédéric Delport

In Charge of European Affairs
European State Forest Association
Avenue de S'aint Mandé 2

75570 Paris Cedex 12, France
Tel: + 33 1 40 19 58 04
Fax: + 33 1 40 19 58 77
E-mail: frederic.delport@onf.fr

Mr. Erik Kosenkranius

Executive Director
European State Forest Association

Rue du Luxembourg 66
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 219 02 31
Fax: + 32 2 219 21 91
E-mail: erik.kosenkranius@eustafor.eu

FAO



Mr. Jan Heino

Assistant Director-General
Forestry Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel: + 39 6 57 05 58 79
Fax: + 39 6 57 05 21 51
E-mail: jan.heino@fao.org

Ms. Tiina Vähänen

Forestry Officer
Forestry Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel: + 39 06 57 05 37 43
Fax: + 39 06 57 05 21 51
E-mail: tiina.vahanen@fao.org

FECOF



Mr. Pierre Grandadam
President
Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières
Mairie de Plaine
Rue de l'Eglise
67420 Plaine, France
Tel: + 33 608 26 56 46
Fax: + 33 479 33 49 52
E-mail: pgrandadam@wanadoo.fr

Ms. Elena Mosca
Researcher
Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières
AQA-Federforeste
Via E. Mach 1
38010 S. Michele all'Adige, Italy
Tel: + 39 04 61615278
Fax: + 39 04 61615267
E-mail: elena.mosca@iasma.it

Mr. Heribert Gisch
General Secretary
Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières
Untertürkheimer straÙe 21
66117 Staarbrücken, Germany
Tel: + 49 151 174 05609
Fax: + 49 681 500 0208
E-mail: heribert.gisch@entsorgungsverband.de

GREENPEACE INTERNATIONAL



Mr. Martin Kaiser
Political Advisor
Greenpeace International
GroÙe ElbstraÙe 39
Hamburg, Germany
Tel: + 49 40 30618 321
Fax: + 49 40 30031 121
E-mail: martin.kaiser@greenpeace.de

IFSA



Ms. Olga Pentelkina
Student
International Forestry Students' Association
Tennenbacher 4
79106 Freiburg, Germany
Tel: + 49 761 203 38 01
Fax: + 49 761 203 38 19
E-mail: pentelkina@gmail.com

Mr. Adrian Valerius
Student
International Forestry Students' Association
Tennenbacher 4
79106 Freiburg, Germany
Tel: + 49 761 203 38 01
Fax: + 49 761 203 38 19
E-mail: adrian.valerius@mail.ru

IIASA



Mr. Sten Nilsson
Deputy Director and Leader
Forestry Program
International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
Schlossplatz 1
2361 Laxenburg, Austria
Tel: + 43 2236 807229
Fax: + 43 2236 807599
E-mail: nilsson@iiasa.ac.at

IUCN



Ms. Julia Marton-Lefèvre
Director General
The World Conservation Union
Rue Mauverney 28
1196 Gland, Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 999 02 96
Fax: + 41 22 999 00 29
E-mail: jml@iucn.org

Mr. Tamas Marghescu
Regional Director
The World Conservation Union
Boulevard Louis Schmidt 64
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 739 03 13
Fax: + 32 2 732 94 99
E-mail: europe@iucn.org

Ms. Aleksandra Nesic
Communications Officer
The World Conservation Union
Dr. Ivana Ribara 91
11070 Belgrade, Serbia
Tel: + 381 11 227 24 11
Fax: + 381 11 227 25 31
E-mail: aleksandra.nesic@iucn.org

Mr. Tomasz Pezold
Project Officer
The World Conservation Union
Dr. Ivana Ribara 91
11070 Belgrade, Serbia
Tel: + 381 11 227 24 11
Fax: + 381 11 227 25 31
E-mail: tomasz.pezold@iucn.org

IUFRO



Mr. Niels Elers Koch
IUFRO Vice President
Danish Centre for Forest, Landscape and Planning
Hoersholm Kongevei 11
2970 Horsholm, Denmark
Tel: + 45 3533 1515
Fax: + 45 3533 1517
E-mail: nek@life.ku.dk

Mr. Peter Mayer
Executive Director
International Union of Forest Research Organizations
Hauptstrasse 7
1140 Vienna, Austria
Tel: + 43 1 8770151 ext. 12
Fax: + 43 1 8770151 ext. 50
E-mail: mayer@iufro.org

MONTREAL PROCESS

Mr. Yuichi Sato
Senior Policy Advisor
International Cooperation Office
Forestry Agency
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku
100-8952 Tokyo, Japan
Tel: + 81 3 3591 8449
Fax: + 81 3 3593 9565
E-mail: yuuichi_satou@nm.maff.go.jp

PEFC



Mr. Ben Gunneberg
Secretary General
Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
Rue des Girondins 17
1626 Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Tel: + 352 26 25 90 59
Fax: + 352 26 25 92 58
E-mail: info@pefc.org

Ms. Ana Belen Noriega
Secretary General, PEFC Spain
Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
Villamiel de Caceres 3
28010 Madrid, Spain
Tel: + 34 9159 10088
Fax: + 34 9159 10087
E-mail: ananoriega@pefc.es

UEF



Mr. Håkan Nystrand
President
Union of European Foresters
Hietalahdenkatu 8 a
00180 Helsinki, Finland
Tel: + 358 40 76 151 76
Fax: + 358 9 6126 5530
E-mail: hakan.nystrand@meto-ry.fi

Mr. Piotr Grygier
Vice President
Union of European Foresters
Pozdawnicka 1
60-187 Poznań, Poland
Tel: +48 61 847 48 18
E-mail: piotr.grygier@poznan.lasy.gov.pl

UNECE



Mr. Marek Belka
Executive Secretary
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
8-11 Avenue de la Paix
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 917 26 94
E-mail: marek.belka@unece.org

Ms. Virginia Cram Martos

Director
Trade and Timber Division
United Nations Economic Commission
for Europe

8-11 Avenue de la Paix
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 917 27 45
Fax: + 41 22 917 00 37
E-mail: virginia.cram-martos@unece.org

Mr. Christopher Prins

Chief UNECE/FAO Timber Section
UN Economic Commission for Europe

8-11 Avenue de la Paix, Palais des
Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 917 28 74
Fax: + 41 22 917 00 41
E-mail: christopher.prins@unece.org

UNEP



Ms. Ivonne Higuero

UNEP Coordinator for the PEBLDS Joint
Secretariat
UNEP Regional Office for Europe

Chemin des Anémones 15
1219 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 917 87 71
Fax: + 41 22 797 34 20
E-mail: ivonne.higuero@unep.ch

UNFF



Mr. Pekka Patosaari

Director
United Nations Forum on Forests
Secretariat

One UN Plaza, DC 1- Room 1252
10017 New York, U.S.A.
Tel: + 1 212 963 3160
Fax: + 1 917 367 3186
E-mail: patosaari@un.org

Ms. J. Catalina Santamaria

Forest Policy Affairs Expert
United Nations Forum on Forests
Secretariat
Department of Economic and Social
Affairs

One UN Plaza DC1-Room 1246
10017 New York, U.S.A.
Tel: + 1 212 963 4703
Fax: + 1 917 367 3186
E-mail: santamaria@un.org

UNU



Mr. Libor Jansky

Senior Academic Programme Officer
United Nations University

Hermann Ehlers 10
53113 Bonn, Germany
Tel: + 49 228 815 0274
Fax: + 49 228 815 0299
E-mail: jansky@vie.unu.edu

USSE



Mr. Oscar Barreiro Mouriz

Director
Union of Foresters of Southern Europe

Larrauri 1B – 6° Piso
48160 DERIO (Vizcaya), Spain
Tel: + 34 94 474 78 26
Fax: + 34 94 476 37 15
E-mail: obarreiro@usse.es

Ms. Cristina Montiel

Forestry Advisor
Union of Foresters of Southern Europe

Larrauri 1B – 6° Piso
48160 DERIO (Vizcaya), Spain
Tel: + 34 94 474 78 26
E-mail: crismont@ghis.ucm.es

WORLD BANK



Mr. Andrey Kushlin

Senior Forestry Specialist
The World Bank

1818 H Street N.W.
20433 Washington DC, U.S.A.
Tel: + 1 202 458 7268
Fax: + 1 202 614 0005
E-mail: akushlin@worldbank.org

WWF



Mr. Gerald Steindlegger

Manager Forest Programme
WWF International

Ottakringerstraße 114-116
1160 Vienna, Austria
Tel: + 43 1 488 17 216
Fax: + 43 1 488 17 44
E-mail: gerald.steindlegger@wwf.at

Mr. Laszlo Mathe

Forest and Bioenergy Officer
WWF International

Little Dunkeld
PH8 0AD Dunkeld, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1350728200
E-mail: lmathe@wwfscotland.org.uk

Ms. Anke Schulmeister

WWF EU Forest Policy Officer
WWF International

Avenue de Tervurenlaan 36
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 740 09 22
E-mail: aschulmeister@wwfepo.org

INVITED GUESTS

Mr. Hosny El Lakany

Professor of Forestry
University of British Columbia

2424 Main Mall
V6T 1Z4 Vancouver BC, Canada
Tel: + 1 604 822 6921
Fax: + 1 604 822 9106
E-mail: hosny.ellakany@ubc.ca

Mr. Ewald Rametsteiner

Director
Boku University

Feistmantelstr. 4
1180 Vienna, Austria
Tel: + 43 1 47 654 4418
Fax: + 43 1 47 654 4417
E-mail: ewald.rametsteiner@boku.ac.at

Mr. Michael Köhl

Head of the Institute
Department of Wood Science
World Forestry Section
University of Hamburg

Leuschnerstr. 91
21031 Hamburg, Germany
Tel: + 49 40 73962 100
Fax: + 49 40 73962 199
E-mail: weltforst@holz.uni-hamburg.de

IISD REPORTING SERVICES

Mr. Joe Nyangon

Digital Editor
IISD Reporting Services

300 East 56th St. Apt 11A
10022 New York, U.S.A.
Tel: + 1 646 536 7556
Fax: + 1 646 219 0955
E-mail: joe@iisd.org

Ms. Reem Hajjar

Team Leader
IISD Reporting Services

300 East 56th St. Apt 11A
10022 New York, U.S.A.
Tel: +1 646 219 0955
E-mail: reem@iisd.org

Mr. Andrey Vavilov

Writer
IISD Reporting Services

300 East 56th St. Apt 11A
10022 New York, U.S.A.
Tel: + 1 646 536 7556
Fax: + 1 646 219 0955
E-mail: andrey@iisd.org

LIAISON UNIT WARSAW

Mr. Piotr Borkowski

Head of the Liaison Unit Warsaw
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: p.borkowski@lu-warsaw.pl

Ms. Małgorzata Buszko-Briggs

Forest Biodiversity Conservation
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: m.buszko-briggs@lu-warsaw.pl

Ms. Marta Gaworska

PR & Socio-Cultural Aspects of SFM
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: m.gaworska@lu-warsaw.pl

Mr. Tomasz Juszczak

Cross-sectoral Links & NFPs
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: t.juszczak@lu-warsaw.pl

Ms. Bożena Kornatowska

Communication & Organisation
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: b.kornatowska@lu-warsaw.pl

Mr. Roman Michalak

Forest Resources, Economics & Climate
Change
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: r.michalak@lu-warsaw.pl

Ms. Zuzanna Rykowska

Logistics and Coordination
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: z.rykowska@lu-warsaw.pl

Ms. Agnieszka Szymańska

Logistic and Administration
MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw

Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. 3
00-973 Warsaw, Poland
Tel: + 48 22 331 70 31
Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32
E-mail: a.szymanska@lu-warsaw.pl

Annex 3. Overview of the Signatories
of the Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon,
Vienna and Warsaw Documents

| Country | S1 | S2 | S3 | S4 | S5 | S6 | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | L1 | L2 | VD | V1 | V2 | V3 | V4 | V5 | WD | W1 | W2 |
|------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Albania | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| Andorra | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Austria | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Belarus | | x | | | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Belgium | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x |
| Bulgaria | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Croatia | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Cyprus | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Czech Republic | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Denmark | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| Estonia | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| European Community | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Finland | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| France | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Georgia | | | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| Germany | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Greece | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Holy See | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hungary | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Iceland | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Ireland | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Italy | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x |
| Latvia | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

| Country | S1 | S2 | S3 | S4 | S5 | S6 | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | L1 | L2 | VD | V1 | V2 | V3 | V4 | V5 | WD | W1 | W2 |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Liechtenstein | x | x | | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Lithuania | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Luxembourg | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Malta | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| Monaco | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| Montenegro | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x |
| Netherlands | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Norway | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Poland | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Portugal | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Republic of Moldova | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | x | x | x |
| Romania | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Russian Federation | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Serbia | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Slovakia | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Slovenia | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Spain | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Sweden | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Switzerland | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkey | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Ukraine | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| United Kingdom | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

Annex 4. MCPFE Participants

| Signatory countries and European Community | | |
|--|---------------|---|
| Albania | Germany | Poland |
| Andorra | Greece | Portugal |
| Austria | Holy See | Republic of Moldova |
| Belarus | Hungary | Romania |
| Belgium | Iceland | Russian Federation |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Ireland | Serbia |
| Bulgaria | Italy | Slovak Republic |
| Croatia | Latvia | Slovenia |
| Cyprus | Liechtenstein | Spain |
| Czech Republic | Lithuania | Sweden |
| Denmark | Luxembourg | Switzerland |
| Estonia | Malta | The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| European Community | Monaco | |
| Finland | Montenegro | Turkey |
| France | Netherlands | Ukraine |
| Georgia | Norway | United Kingdom |

| Observer countries | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Australia | China | Malaysia |
| Brazil | Ghana | Morocco |
| Cameroon | India | New Zealand |
| Canada | Japan | USA |
| Chile | Korea (Republic) | |

| Observer organisations | |
|------------------------|---|
| | Bioversity International |
| BWI | Building and Wood Workers' International |
| CEI – Bois | European Confederation of Woodworking Industries |
| CEPF | Confederation of European Forest Owners |
| COPA – COGECA | Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the EU and General Confederation of Agricultural |
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| EFI | European Forest Institute |
| ELO | European Landowners' Organization |
| ENFE | European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs |
| EOMF | European Observatory of Mountain Forests |
| EUSTAFOR | European State Forest Association |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| FECOF | Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières Greenpeace International |
| IFSA | International Forestry Students' Association |
| IIASA | International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| ITTO | International Tropical Timber Organization |
| IUCN | The World Conservation Union |
| IUFRO | International Union of Forest Research Organizations Montreal Process |
| PEFC | Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification |
| UEF | Union of European Foresters |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNECE | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNFF | United Nations Forum on Forests |
| UNU | United Nations University |
| USSE | Union of Foresters of Southern Europe |
| WWF International | World Wide Fund for Nature International |





