

The Secretariat for International Forestry Issues



SIFI strengthens Sweden's commitment in international forestry issues

Forest Day 5. UNFCCC Secretary General Christiana Figueres in the pulpit. Sitting: Francine Seymour CIFOR (Forest Day General) and Eduardo Rojas General Director of FAO's Forest Department. Photo: Lennart Ackzell.

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EDITORIAL



THE PHENOMENON OF ACQUIRING large pieces of land is not new. Though in its modern form, it is known as “land grabs”, an emotive term which reflects the concern the issue has raised; or “farm-land investments” for more informed audiences. The United Nations chose 31 October 2011 as the symbolic date for when the world’s population would reach 7 billion. By 2050 the population will reach 9 billion resulting in demand for food growing by 70%. Against this backdrop KSLA organised two related seminars during the autumn of 2011 on the need for food, fibre and fuel, a joint undertaking by all sections at the academy. Land acquisition is also the theme of this issue of the newsletter.

Several distinguished international names and Swedes with broad experience in the field came together to highlight the challenges and solutions.

The moderator Ambassador Lennart Båge stressed that there is no silver bullet or one factor solution. Statistics over available land are at best unreliable and a broad holistic approach is necessary in order to understand the future development of land use. Agroforestry was put forward as a key for integrating smallholders in the growing markets.

As the International Year of Forests comes to an end we can summarise a successful year in which forestry really has been put on the international agenda. SIFI is also happy to announce that we will expand in 2012 thanks to the support of SLU, the Government Offices, WWF and KSLA. Finally, the Secretariat for International Forestry issues would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Fredrik Ingemarson, editor

Land acquisition – to set the scene:

The earth’s total land area is some 13 billion hectares, of which some 4.1 billion hectares (or 31 percent) is considered forested land (of which 7 percent is planted forests), around 1.5 billion hectares (or 12 percent) is currently under crop cultivation, and 3.4 billion hectares (26 percent) are used for pasture.

WWF’s Living Forests Report

WWF INTERNATIONAL, PRESS RELEASE NOV 27, 2011

According to the latest chapter of WWF’s Living Forests Report, “Forests and Climate”, the world stands to lose 55 million hectares of forest between now and 2020, even if we take urgent action to reduce deforestation. If the world delays the necessary steps, we stand to lose 125 million hectares by 2030, according to the report.

The Living Forests Report uses the Living Forests Model, created in collaboration with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), to examine the emissions implications of two key WWF targets: reducing deforestation to near zero by 2020 and an associated emissions reductions target. Key findings include:

- The longer we wait the more forests we lose and the more CO₂ is emitted.
- Delaying action will create major increases in the total costs of mitigation and adaptation.
- We cannot plant our way out of the problem. The Living Forests Model projects a major expansion of short rotation plantations, but shows that new plantations would not begin to sequester enough carbon to offset emissions from deforestation until more than 30 years from now.

The report can be downloaded from:
www.panda.org/livingforests



The global need for food, fibre and fuel

The Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA) organised two well-attended seminars during the autumn of 2011 on the need to produce more food, bio-energy and wood fibre.

LISA HOLMGREN & FREDRIK INGEMARSON, SIFI

Competition for land – a challenge for the 21st century

The competition for land was aggravated by the financial and food price crises of 2007–2008. Some aspects of it are referred to as “land grabbing”, or as “farmland investment” in more formal contexts. Food-importing countries with constraints on land and water but rich in capital (such as the Gulf States), and countries with large populations, food security concerns and booming economies (such as China and India) are seeking access to land abroad for the purpose of production of food and biofuel crops.

The dramatic revaluation of land and water resources imposes both threats and opportunities of a complex nature, not all of which can be foreseen at present. What many foresee, however, is that the trend of increasing global land competition will continue. Recent projections indicate this:

- Global population will surpass 9 billion by 2050 and will have to be fed.
- Renewable energy sources will have to play a central role in a sustainable energy path.
- Demand for wood and fibre products will continue to increase.
- Climate change will reduce crop yields in many countries.
- Agricultural demand for water is expected to increase dramatically.

There is limited scope for large-scale area expansion. Researchers do not know with any certainty how much land is available for increasing production, although calculations suggest that about ten per cent of the total land area is available, mostly grass and degraded land.

Global demand and supply of food, fibre, and fuel in the next 20–40 years

Global food demand will increase by at least 70% between now and 2050 and by 50% between now and 2030. The trade system will have to accommodate a greater share of global food products being traded across borders. An open trading system which rules out export

bans is needed, as are adequate buffer stocks. There is widespread agreement that increasing yields on existing agricultural land, and especially on cropland, is a key component for minimising further expansion of agricultural land. The demand for animal protein is a crucial concern since livestock production is by far the most resource-consuming agricultural activity. A substantial reduction in negative impacts on the environment from agriculture would only be possible with a substantial worldwide diet change, away from animal products. The issue of waste is also a considerable challenge, because 30–40 per cent of crops are lost post-harvest.

There is a general consensus that global demand for wood and fibre will continue to increase faster than population growth, owing to growth in China and other emerging markets. It should be noted that three times Sweden’s current productive forest area with fast growing plantations would, in theory, suffice to meet predicted demands for wood products. The question is whether natural forest management will be competitive when compared with the fuel and food sectors? Although future supply and demand for bioenergy are harder to predict than for food and fibre, the growing demand for biofuels will accentuate the competition for land even though only 2% of global cropland is currently used to produce biofuels.

There was a general consensus that local solutions addressing the global challenges are the way forward. Globally there are about 500 million smallholders, with families constituting about a third of humanity and the vast majority of people living on less than one or two dollars per day. Secure tenure and access to financial services are the key to success when smallholders move from subsistence farming to market integration. This development indicates a need to take a broad holistic approach, integrating technical, social, political, economic and ecological dimensions of land use. This implies a need for institutional capacity building in research and on applying and enforcing guidelines. ○

Urbanization impact food consumption

Long term developments in food and agricultural markets are fundamentally driven by a few key variables. Population, income and urbanization are among the most important.

DOMINIQUE VAN DER MENSBRUGGHE, FAO

GDP will grow more rapidly in developing countries than in high-income countries, three times faster per year between 2005 and 2050. The world's population is expected to reach 9.3 billion in 2050, and then start stabilizing. By the end of the century, the only region where population will still be growing is sub-Saharan Africa.

However, despite general progress, some regions are lagging behind: sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia in particular. South Asia, among developing countries, is deeply influenced by what is happening in India. The recent evolution of food consumption in India shows a stagnant response to income growth and poverty reduction.

Projections for the coming decades indicate that about 67 percent of the world's population is expected

to be concentrated in urban areas by 2050. Urban dwellers, especially as their income improves, tend to buy more processing services compared to households in rural areas. Also, they usually tend to shift away from more traditional foods such as roots and tubers, as well as to shift towards protein-rich diets. This requires that more services be incorporated into foods in terms of packaging, storage, grading and transportation.

In the coming decades, changes in food consumption will reflect above all the rising consumption of developing countries. These changes will imply a switch towards energy-dense diets, high in saturated fat, sugar and salt, and low in unrefined carbohydrates. Combined with lifestyle changes driven by urbanization, such transitions are likely to be accompanied by increase in diet-related chronic Non-Communicable Diseases. ○

The key for assessing biofuels

The use of crops for biofuels must be assessed in an overall land-use perspective.

STEFAN BRINGEZU, WUPPERTAL INSTITUTE

Global cropland will most probably expand only to feed a growing world population with an increasing demand for more protein rich food from animals. Any additional demand for non-food biomass crops will add to the pressure of converting natural land. This imposes a high risk of more greenhouse gas emissions for the coming decades due to energy crop-based biofuels.

There is also an increasing demand for biomass from forest. Traditional use for timber products is competing with use for energy, and stationary uses for heat and power compete with conversion to liquid biofuels.

Sustaining the physical basis of economies and societies will require the pursuit of four key strategies: resource efficient and recycling based industries; steady stocks society; solarization of infrastructures; balanced bio-economy and bioniconomy. A review of available knowledge and recent findings lead to the following conclusions:

- 1st generation biofuels from energy crops impose a growing risk for world food supply and natural ecosystems;
- biofuels for transport increasingly compete with more efficient heat and power;
- use of 2nd generation biofuels from waste and residues has a certain sustainable potential, and may be an interim step towards carbon recycling regenerating base materials;
- Syndiesel and Syngas from wood have a certain, limited potential for transport, and
- the level of sustainable use of forest biomass in the world regions need to be determined.

Governments should fit biofuels into an overall resource strategy, covering energy, climate, land-use, water and agricultural issues, if their deployment is to benefit society, the economy and the environment as a whole. ○

Africa – land in abundance?



Mafa. E. Chipeta. Photo: Nils Lindstrand.

Food production generally involves the conversion of land under natural vegetation to cultivation or pasture. Therefore the lower the productivity of farming, the more land has to be denuded of natural vegetation (such as forest) to produce food. Many developing countries, especially in Africa, practice low-input/low-output agriculture and so cause far more forest degradation per unit of food than others. At present, cereal cultivation in Africa yields only 1.0–2.0 tonnes per hectare while the average for developing countries is some 3.5 tonnes/hectare; a realistic goal would be 5 tonnes per hectare. Obviously, with such low productivity of cereals, Africa may currently be deforesting at a rate that is three to five times as fast as it would be doing if agricultural productivity were higher.

Why did Africa welcome new investments?

The upsurge in investments is driven by the strong desire of investor countries to safeguard their food security; but there is a corresponding driving force in the recipients, many of them in Africa. In that hungry continent, which is increasingly dependent on food aid and commercial food imports that it can hardly afford, the promise of farm investment inflows is seen as a blessing and they welcomed it when the investment started.

The new investors enjoy all the benefits of foreign investors: low land prices, tax breaks, customs duty exemptions for machinery and main inputs, the right to import quality managers and technicians etc. Who can fail to be productive under such circumstances?

By contrast, local smallholders are given nothing like the same generous treatment: many can neither afford

The fact that the people of Africa generally have only informal title to their land and that their resource husbandry has a very light impact reinforces the feeling that this land is being wasted. Governments have not felt serious qualms about leasing or selling such land to those they believe can visibly farm it, produce food, fibre and fuel, and generate wealth and a prosperous Africa.

MAFA E. CHIPETA, FAO SUB-REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR EASTERN AFRICA

nor obtain good seeds or fertilisers; they have no access to equipment to increase the cultivable area; they rely on hand-tools rather than powered ones; they have no protection against falling prices if they have a good harvest. In short, locals are not given the same support to become productive.

International alarm offsets the impact of land deals

The spectacle of African countries that are short of food exporting to rich ones when they themselves still have to appeal for food aid has raised many moral questions. Soon, a loose coalition of NGOs, international organisations and some developed country governments warned of the possibility of situations arising in which poor developing countries could be locked into unfair land deals. They also strongly objected to seeing domestic starvation while food was being exported to feed the rich abroad.

It is in fact quite likely that the deals were not fair but the degree to which they were exploitative could not easily be determined. This lack of information led to assumptions of “worst-case scenarios” and so drove further panic. The campaigners sought strong land deal guidelines, to be based on the strict application of the “precautionary principle”. This international reaction surprised (and offended) many governments that benefited from investments, governments which were afraid it would frighten off investments that had so far generally eluded them.

Being besieged by unceasing condemnation, some poor-country governments now appear to have a siege mentality; it is also suspected that they are becoming

more secretive about the land deals. If so, the good intentions of campaigners may be worsening rather than improving the impact of land deals. Furthermore, the perfection activists are looking for may be unnecessarily also scaring off worthwhile investments, especially from Africa.

The real problem for Africa is its failure to cultivate

The real problem for Africa is that its failure to cultivate (owing to poor technology) leaves much land appear-

rently unused and it is this land that is being leased out or sold in large parcels. The local authorities need help to analyse the utility of various investments. The fear, about which politicians and campaign organisations are fanning public passions, is that one day when Africans have the capacity to cultivate more of their own land they will awaken to find that their land has all have gone to foreign investors. Then the real problems will start, including the possibility of major conflicts. ○

Main Areas of Interest and Origin of Large-Scale Land Investments

Tanzania is a case of a country where land is being allocated far faster than the rate at which investors actually develop the land – in that country, of some 4 million hectares requested, only 641,000 hectares have been allocated, while the acreage actually developed is far less. In *Zambia*, similar ratios apply but most disturbing there is the fact that there is no record of registration at the Ministry of Lands, even for the land where development has started. In both Tanzania and Zambia, the *leading investors* are from America and Europe; from the Tanzania report, we can see the following typology of interest areas:

- Tourism – unclear
- Biofuels – European and American investors
- Food Security – Asian and Middle Eastern countries
- Speculation – various.

Selected Cases – Large Scale Land Investments and Forests

Mozambique: proposals are being pursued to convert Niassa province into the largest area of pine plantations in the world. One proposal has been defeated by local people in the community of Chimbulila but many more are being pursued.

Uganda: New Forests Company, a UK undertaking has led to the eviction of some 25,000 Ugandans from their land with only nominal compensation to make way for plantation forests. Authorisation was given by the National Forest Authority and funding is coming inter alia from the International Finance Corporation. It appears that these people are being moved from settled land so planted bananas and cassava will be among the crops cleared to make room for trees.

The challenges of future wood supply

JAN WINTZELL, PÖYRY FOREST INDUSTRY CONSULTING AB

The challenges to future wood supply are many. It is also clear that this means increasing pressure on land since the growth in demand comes mainly from Asia, particularly China, and the developing world where land is, or is becoming, a scarce resource. Therefore, industrial plantations are becoming more important for securing future wood supplies in a sustainable and ethical manner. Fast growing plantations hold a great production potential and may give the opportunity not only to increase supply of wood fibre, but also to enhance the economy of the forest sector. This in turn may enhance forest conservation and also provide opportunities for combined land utilization, in the form of for example of agro-forestry, to meet different and growing demands. However, prospects for increasing the area of planted forests vary widely worldwide. As an example, Africa is standing out as having great prospects with good bio-

logical and land potential and is now also consequently attaining increasing commercial interest.

When talking about global demand for wood fibre in a land use perspective, it should first of all be kept in mind that the largest share of wood harvested globally is still used for non-industrial purposes, as fuelwood used inefficiently. This picture is likely to prevail for the coming decades.

Translating the increase in demand for wood-based products into round wood equivalents, we expect a total increase of 700 million solid m³ from 2010 to 2030. The question in a land use perspective is naturally where the wood fibre to supply increased demand will come from. There are plenty of theoretical resources. However, in practice the resources are not so plentiful. We also see continuing deforestation that further reduces forest resources. ○



*Eucalyptus plantation in Brazil: 50-60 m³/ha*yr (Acrisols). Photo: Mats Olsson.*

Soil requirements – the basis for land use

World-wide there are more than 30 major soil units. Each one of them provides unique properties with specific prerequisites for biomass production, agricultural crops, energy crops, range land and forestry. The soil properties are determined by the combination of geology, climate, topography, land-use and soil age. Thus, each soil type has its own ability and capacity to produce biomass. A system analysis perspective is needed for the comparison and evaluation of different options.

MATS OLSSON, SLU

About 10% of the globally available 15,300 million hectares of land are located in mountainous areas and are characterised by very *thin soils* (Leptosols) as a result of heavy erosion. These soils are not suitable for intense biomass production and should be preserved by keeping a permanent vegetation cover. Potential land uses are forestry, preferably uneven aged forestry with a continuous tree cover, or extensive grazing. Another 12% of the land is located in cold climates with *permafrost*. Low temperatures and frozen ground make intense biomass production impossible, though extensive grazing is possible. No less than 23% of the world land area consists of soil types characterised by *limited availability of water*, either owing to drought, groundwater levels that are too deep for roots and/or low water retention capacity in the soil. Many of these soils are rich in nutrients but need substantial irrigation to sustain high yields. The potential for irrigation and agricultural production will most likely be even more limited in the future because of declining water resources and competing water use caused by urbanisation. Furthermore, the climate where these soils occur is often expected to become even drier.

In about 10% of the world soils the *water content is too high* for intense biomass production. Some of these soils are very fertile and may after some water regulation provide excellent agricultural conditions. However some

soils have dense subsoil and drainage has to be combined with deep ploughing and even fertilisation. Some of these wet soils should also be preserved because of their high biodiversity value and water quality issues. About 25% of the land area consists of soil types that, on account of *poor mineralogy* and/or intense weathering, have a low nutrient content. Many of these soils occur in tropical conditions and are characterised by excellent structure, but in particular by limited phosphorus availability. The production of agricultural crops could be doubled or tripled by the application of commercial fertilisers or compost and manure. An alternative land use would be forestry or rotating cultivation.

Finally, almost 20% of the land area consists of *naturally fertile soils* with respect to nutrient levels, texture and climate. Nonetheless, these soils are frequently fertilised with nitrogen and phosphorus. It should be stressed that, owing to high application rates, the marginal effect of changes in application might be rather small.

A re-allocation of fertilisers from countries where application rates are at present high to countries with low application rates could be beneficial when it comes to yields and effective use of resources. On the other hand, in many of the countries with low application rates water availability is low, and, at the same time, demand for water per unit of produced crop is high. ○

The 47th session of the International Tropical Timber Council

The 47th session of the International Tropical Timber Council was held in Guatemala 14–19 November 2011 and interesting discussions among producer and consumer countries took place.

BJÖRN MERKELL, SWEDISH FOREST AGENCY/SIFI

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) was established in 1986 and brings together countries which produce and consume tropical timber to discuss and exchange information and develop policies on all aspects of the global tropical timber economy. The ITTO has its headquarters in Yokohama, Japan and has 60 members, including the European Community, which together represent about 90 percent of world trade in tropical timber and 80 percent of the world's tropical forests.

During ITTO's 47th Council session a number of interesting issues were discussed. Entry into force of the International Tropical Timber Agreement 2006 was intensively discussed.

The Council agreed on a biennial working program, which includes activities like continued ITTO cooperation with CITES and CBD and review of the ITTO guidelines for planted tropical forest as well as tropical forest fires. There was also an agreement to carry out a study how the economic crisis will impact on the trade in tropical forest products.

During the deliberations it became clear that trade in products from tropical forests have suffered extensively due to the economic crisis but have to some extent started to recover during 2011. The main importers of tropical timber are China and India.

In December 7, 2011, the ITTO announced the entry into force of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 (ITTA, 2006). ○



*One of the Council sessions were held in one of the many colonial churches in Antigua.
Photo: Björn Merzell.*

Lessons from Vietnam

The bare hills around Bai Bang are now covered with forests

There is now much discussion about restoration of degraded forests. Such work has gone on for a long time but has met with many difficulties. This concerns both intensive industrial plantations and small-scale farm forestry. If programmes for restoration are to succeed on a large scale we must try to learn from both successes and failures.

REIDAR PERSSON, SIFI

Many argue that the plantations established around the Swedish-supported Bai Bang pulp and paper mill in Vietnam would appear to be a great success. In the early 1980s there was much talk about a coming wood shortage at Bai

Bang. The plantations established on good soil in the forest areas were after exploitation often turned into agricultural land, and the plantations established on degraded soil close to the pulp mill were producing very little. More or less in →

The Swedish Minister for Rural Affairs visit to Canada

The Swedish Minister for Rural Affairs Mr. Erlandsson visited Canada in October, 2011. The Minister was especially keen on a visit this year, given that 2011 is the International Year of Forests.

MARCUS ÖHMAN, MINISTRY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS

Boreal collaboration was an issue that was discussed during the visit and efforts to collaborate further were made. Wood can be used for a range of different products and Canada is investing heavily in these new developments. Products include such different things as clothing, bioactive papers, bulletproof vests, food additives, airplane wings, tyres, bioplastics and bioenergy systems. Swedish companies and researchers are working along the same lines.

Sweden and Canada have many similarities but there are also dissimilarities. About three quarters of the forest area in Sweden is privately owned whilst in Canada the opposite is the case – around 90 % is publically owned. In addition, Canada's provinces and territories have their own laws and regulations. This has major implications for how forests are managed. An interesting concept is the establishment of so-called Model Forests, also adopted in Sweden. The Minister visited the Limerick Forest in Ontario, which is part of the International Model Forest Network. The main objective is to create

new jobs related to forests and to help economic development, especially in rural areas.

Minister Erlandsson was extremely satisfied with the trip, which will result in further collaboration. A delegation from Canada will soon visit Sweden and on 28th May SIFI will arrange a seminar to discuss developments in Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Embassy. ○



*Minister Erlandsson on a nature trail in Ottawa.
Photo: Anna-Karin Nyman.*

desperation a trial with intensive cultivation of Eucalyptus of the "Brazilian type" was carried out on degraded soil close to Bai Bang. The trial was very successful, considering the circumstances, and a propaganda tree grew. Nine metres in 18 months, for example. The interest in establishing plantations increased dramatically. The bare hills around Bai Bang that looked like a desert in the 1980s are now covered with forests.

The first plantations were established by state enterprises and co-operatives, but after the economic reforms in 1986 (Doi Moi) farmers started to plant trees as a commercial crop. Today it is reported that more or less all wood for Bai Bang is directly or indirectly produced by farmers. It is interesting to note that the farmers seem to have adjusted the

original "intensive" method to suit their own conditions. The open landscape around Bai Bang has been changed into forest, but in spite of this there is no talk of conflict. Is this because more or less everybody has got something positive out of the plantations and accepts certain negative aspects?

This sounds like a song of joy, but I fear that there is much we don't understand in the development. For example, how important is it that Vietnam is a strong one-party state influenced by Confucius? Was the establishment of a reliable market the main reason for the success? How important is it that land was allocated to farmers? Some foresters in Sweden who have worked in Bai Bang have now started a project to see if lessons of general value can be drawn from Bai Bang, see www.sifi.se. ○

Durban agreement on climate change

HANS NILSAGÅRD, MINISTRY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS/SIFI

The 2011 summit under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was prolonged one day in order to secure a package of agreements, moving the world one step forward in struggle to combat climate change. The main features of the package were that the EU signed up for a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol while the large emitters outside the protocol, viz. the USA, Japan, Russia, India and China, all agreed on a new legal agreement to be signed in 2015. The summit resulted in a number of decisions of which at least three addressed the forest resource.

Two decisions regarding the REDD+ mechanism, addressing forestry in the developing world were

agreed. One covered the application of safeguards of forest values other than climate change mitigation as well as how to set national reference levels and how to monitor, report and verify results. The second decision dealt with the difficult issue of how the developed countries would finance REDD+ activities carried out in developing countries. Both decisions should be seen merely as a first result of discussions initiated at last year's meeting in Cancun and will result in more substantive decisions in the years to come.

The third decision dealt with accounting rules for forestry and agriculture in the developed world. This decision brings to an end several years of negotiations and the result

is an update of modalities for use by those developed countries that take on a commitment during the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period from 2013 and onwards. It should be noted that neither Canada nor Russia with their vast forest resources support a commitment. The major change to be introduced pursuant to the decision is the introduction of projected reference levels, which will increase the incentives for countries to manage the forest sink. Other important changes include the introduction of modalities to exclude emissions related to extreme events such as wildfires, and the accounting of changes in the harvested wood products pool.

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Forest Day 5

In every Climate change COP meeting a Forest Day is arranged with high level speakers from policy and research, this time with over 1200 participants.

LENNART ACKZELL, THE FEDERATION OF SWEDISH FAMILY FOREST OWNERS/SIFI

THE INTERACTION BETWEEN people and forest and also forest and agriculture became evident. The charismatic South African Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson cited Nelson Mandela in her opening speech and emphasized that forest is much more than CO₂ and that people are dependent on the forest from various functions such as food, medicine, energy, building material, culture and better livelihoods. This human oriented approach was very welcome and in contrast to those who want to deny peoples' use of the forests.

During the plenary session a tribute was made to the Noble Prize laureate Wangari Maathai, who deceased earlier this autumn. Her Green Belt Movement is about involving local people in managing the forest resources, including planting and the right to the tree value. REDD+ with a big + was evidently supported.

Among the researchers, Bob Scholes from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa, underlined that agriculture needs a sustainable intensification if people are to be fed and deforestation to be halted. In 14 years there will be another billion people on earth.

FAO's Assistant Director General Eduardo Rojas, stressed the importance of forest in the Green Economy and this was sent as an important message for Rio+20. A Country Led Initiative (CLI) in Bonn added to this a sensible five point program about the contributions of forests to the green economy.

The Forest Day was closed by the UNFCCC General Secretary Christiana Figueres. She concluded that even though slow progress was made a new element was added to the negotiations. Better livelihoods and poverty eradication was added as a third leg to mitigation and adaptation.

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Understanding the European policy game

PETER EDWARDS, SLU

A research project at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) is currently unpacking the different dimensions of European forest policy processes. The major focus of this project is the Forest Europe process to develop a Legally Binding Agreement, which started just over three years ago and culminated in a Ministerial mandate to start negotiations on a pan-European Forest Convention this year. There have since been several areas of conflict arising between parties involved, however the negotiations

look set to tentatively start in early 2012.

Against this backdrop, there are several other forest policy initiatives that have been quietly working their way through the EU machinery of government. Most notably, the EU Green Paper on the Protection of Forests and Forest Information has spawned a new process – a review of the EU Forest Strategy, where Green Paper submissions on forest protection and production issues will be considered. The forest information dimension of the Green Paper is now

in the hands of a working group to determine the next steps. Ongoing analysis will attempt to shed some light on the interests behind each of these policy processes as well as those within each of the different policy processes. Outputs from this research will assist countries in better understanding how they may “play the policy game” in light of the multitude of competing interests in forest policy. SIFI will arrange a seminar about the European forest policy processes in the early spring.



Forest Europe Update

Rocky start for LBA negotiations

INGEBORG BROMÉE, MINISTRY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS

SIX MONTHS AGO Forest Europe's sixth Ministerial Conference gave green light to the start of negotiations on a Legally Binding Agreement (LBA) in Europe. During this autumn, however, the preparations of the first negotiating round in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) have experienced a lot of turbulence. Due to unresolved matters that are partly of technical nature, partly of political nature, different signatories and parties invited to service the process did not manage to find a solution in the end. In a nutshell, the status of the INC was called into question. Some argued it should be seen as an independent body, while others insisted the INC, while working inde-

pendently, is to be seen as mandated by Forest Europe signatories and expected to work in accordance with the Oslo Ministerial Mandate. The latter is the viewpoint taken by the EU and its Member States. Another issue arose, namely the interrelationship between the Rules of Procedure, decided and annexed to the Oslo Mandate, and the UN rules and principles.

Based on the lack of progress to resolve the outstanding issues the INC Chair, Mr. Jan Heino, had ultimately to postpone the first INC until further notice. Current state of play is that the UNECE and UNEP Secretariats do not find themselves in a position to respond favourably to the invitation by

signatories to service the process. The FAO, Liaison Unit Madrid and European Forest Institute have however reconfirmed their readiness to carry on preparations and the INC Bureau requested them to prepare a proposal for a first negotiating round to be scheduled for early February 2012.

At this stage the full ramifications of the unresolved matters are still unclear. Sweden believes the Oslo Ministerial Mandate should be fully respected and, in the continued process towards INC1, will listen to all parties' concerns in order to as far as possible make the LBA negotiations truly inclusive, allowing all signatories and invited secretariats to participate.



Calendar 2012



January

10–13 January	A pathway to a green economy	UNFF Hanoi, Vietnam
12–13 January	Workshop: International competence in Sweden and Finland	KSLA Stockholm, Sweden
26–30 January	Quebec's Minister of Natural Resources visiting Stockholm	Embassy of Canada Stockholm, Sweden

February

2–3 February	21 st Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions	Silva Mediterranea Antalya, Turkey
16 February	Committee of International Forestry Issues (KIS)	KSLA Stockholm, Sweden

March

17–26 March	Field trip to Canada for SIFI	FPAC Ottawa, Canada
30 March	The Forestry policy processes in Europe	KSLA Stockholm, Sweden

More activities at www.sifi.se/kalendarium.

Winter activities at SIFI

2012 begins with a workshop together with the Finnish Ministry of Forestry and Agriculture. This will result in a report summarising recent collaboration to consider the need for international professional competence in Sweden and Finland. Furthermore, we will have a dialogue with various stakeholders to discuss future developments in the sector. In addition a detailed report will be published in February, summarising the two seminars examining the question of land acquisition.

In mid-February SIFI's steering group, the Committee for International Forestry Issues (KIS), will have its first meeting of the year. Topics for discussion will include a Swedish application for the IUFRO Forestry Congress 2019.

A seminar on the European forest policy process is planned for late March. The focus is on the driving forces and the future processes. Our next newsletter will concentrate on these processes.

Next seminar will be held on 28 May, entitled: "The Transformation of the Canadian Forest Sector in light of two initiatives: Biopathways and the Boreal Forest agreement." The goal is to launch a discussion regarding the possibility of a similar development in Sweden.

During the winter the discussions with the Swedish Forest Agency will continue. They will take up Sweden in the world as one part of "the Forest Kingdom" (Skogsriket), a national initiative taken by Minister Erlandsson. The think tank will also have a dialogue with the World Resources Institute and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences to consider a joint pilot study on the restoration of degraded land.

Please visit our website, where you also can subscribe to the newsletter, for more information.

Our goal is that the newsletter, along with the website, should serve as a forum for discussions about the development of the Swedish forest sector, in the spirit of the Academy.



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KORT OM SIFI

Tankesmedjan för Internationella Skogsfrågor (SIFI) består av kommittén (KIS) och ett stödjande sekretariat. Vård för SIFI är Kungl. Skogs- och Lantbruksakademien (KSLA). Stygrupp för arbetet är KIS och i tankesmedjan finns även en funktion för resursbasutveckling med representanter från olika delar av den svenska skogssektorn.

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