



Report from the Secretariat of the Intergroup

**Subgroup “Forestry”  
Meeting between Mr Franco and stakeholders**

**Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> January (3.00-5.00pm)  
Maison de la Forêt, Brussels**

The meeting with M. Franco, Chairman of the subgroup “Forestry”, gave the stakeholders the opportunity to present the topics they would like to see tackled by this sub-group in 2010 and during the legislature.

The list of selected themes, based on this preliminary discussion, sets up an essential basis on which to draw up the agenda. The Bureau of the Intergroup, represented by its Chairman and Vice-Chairs, will then discuss the issues and adopt the agenda for 2010 during the meeting taking place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2010.

**1. State of play of the Intergroup « Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development » - EBCD – European Bureau for Conservation and Development – IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature**

The Intergroup « Sustainable Development » was created in 1994 following the setting up of the Intergroup dealing with animal welfare. This cross-party and cross-committee forum of discussion changed its name in 2009 in order to focus its activities on the themes of climate change and biodiversity.

During the 1990s, a proliferation of Intergroups led the European Parliament to set up some regulatory rules. Since then, in order to be created or renewed after each European election, the Intergroups must satisfy one condition: to get the support of at least 3 political groups. In spite of an unprecedented competition – 200 proposals for only 29 approved Intergroups – the Intergroup « Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development » remains the most important of them with having gathered support from the three main political groups at the Parliament : the Socialists, the Liberals and the EPP (European People’s Party), as well as ECR (European Conservatives and Reformists).

Mr. Stevenson (GB) was re-elected unanimously for the post of Chairman of the Intergroup. The Bureau of the Intergroup is composed of the Chairman and the Chairs of the various sub-groups.

The Secretariat of the Intergroup is provided by EBCD in cooperation with IUCN. For each Intergroup meeting – open to all Members of the European Parliament – the agenda is established jointly with the MEPs and stakeholders. A press release and a report are then produced. These documents, together with the minutes of the discussion, help the MEPs make up their opinion and feed into their reports.

Mr Broekhoven (IUCN) insisted on the desire of IUCN to broaden and go more in depth into the discussions within the subgroup “Forestry”. The Intergroup constitutes a necessary complement to other meeting and discussion modalities promoting the sharing of ideas and helping the progress of files.

## ***2. Presentation by each stakeholder of issues of interest for 2010 and the new legislature***

### *Presentation of Mr. Franco*

Mr. Franco was elected Mayor of a little town neighboring the city of Nice in the south of France, which has 60% of its territory covered by forests. Mr. Franco is also Chairman of the Association of the forested towns of the Alpes-Maritimes.

The promotion of the « wood » resource as well as its marketing are two problems for which solutions are needed, according to Mr. Franco who has worked extensively on the themes of **wood-energy** and **biomass**.

He regrets the fact that European policy on Forests is so poorly legible and integrated. The level of importance granted by each State to the question of forests is too often marginal. Furthermore, existing legislation often suffers from **implementation** problems.

Mr. Franco added that **deforestation** is a major problem that must be addressed by the Intergroup. In this respect, financial measures aiming at stimulating a better management of forests from States should be taken. The hearing of experts having led partnerships that could be used as an inspiration for Europe is desired in the framework of the sub-group. Besides, countries in southern Europe, in particular Mediterranean countries, are confronted to devastating **fires**. Field trip could be envisaged.

Mr. Franco expressed his determination to energize and give more content to the « Forestry » sub-group.

Mrs. Schulmeister (WWF) identified two priorities:

- **Illegal logging of wood:** the text of the proposed Due Diligence regulation is currently in second reading. Discussion on public procurement initiated two years ago has failed to show real progress.
- Impact assessment of the Directive on **biomass with sustainability criteria**. It is important to see what the European Commission will propose.

Mr. Jossart (AEBIOM) has pointed out the need to double the quantity of biomass on the market in order to meet the objectives set by the Directive on “Renewable Energies”. Solutions are to be found in forests, agriculture and waste. In regards to forests, actions such

as stump reuse or clearance of forests to avoid fires are put in place. Nevertheless, there is the need for greater **mobilization of biomass**. Mr. Jossart agrees with Mrs. Schulmeister on the importance of tackling **biomass sustainability criteria**. AEBIOM is in favour of biomass sustainable development. Guaranties in the European market should be put in place as it would certainly bring added-value and anticipate critics addressed by the populations on the sustainability of biomass. In this regard, costs, administrative burden and existing systems have to be taken into account. Mr. Jossart pointed to the fact that sustainability criteria for biofuels are different and therefore the criteria used for the latter should be different.

The priority for the Union of forest owners in the South-West of Europe is **forest protection against calamities**, in particular the reinforcement of **fire prevention** and **financing of this prevention**. Besides, she explained that wood logging would not generate CO2 emissions; however it does not allow the forest to fulfill its role of “carbon sink”. Finally, Ms. Pradeau asked the question on **how to organise the payment related to carbon fixation**.

Ms. Gaworska (European Confederation of forest owners – CEPF) drew the attention on various questions:

- **Biomass durability:** small forest owners’ role is central.
- **Forest fires:** a prevention mechanism is necessary, this type of mechanism being fundamental for natural disasters in general.
- **The implementation of the Natura 2000 Legislation:** Ms. Gaworska deplores the fact that forest owners are left on their own. Their role is not recognized for its own worth.
- **Objectives linked to biodiversity beyond 2010.**
- **Climate change:** the implication of International negotiations and European commitments in relation to forest owners should be discussed.
- **Renewable energies:** EU members are expected to present their own Action Plan. Forest owners wish to participate in this process.

Ms. Gaworska concluded by emphasising the need for treating questions on forests in an integrated manner.

Ms Gorostiza (CEI-Bois) identified **illegal logging** of wood as one of utmost importance. CEI-Bois is disappointed with the first report produced by the European Parliament on this matter. She warned on the fact that unless the proposal is changed, it will create administrative and financial burden.

Mr. Broekhoven (IUCN) listed the following issues:

- Illegal logging

Three measures are being promoted by the European Commission in order to fight **illegal logging**:

- The Due diligence regulation;
- Public procurement policy; and
- **Voluntary partnership agreements (VPA)** with timber producing countries.

The Lisbon Treaty allows the EP to be involved in approval process of the voluntary partnership agreements. The VPA with the Republic of Congo is the first ever piece of legislation that has to follow this new procedures. Mr. Broekhoven hopes that

unfamiliarity and uncertainty about the new procedure won't delay the approval process. Finally, capacity building in timber producing countries, including of civil society, notably in regards to improvement in transparency, will help to improve the governance arrangements that prevent illegal logging. This needs to get higher priority in EU actions.

- Mr. Broekhoven also pointed out that the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity and the **2011 International Year of Forest** represent two ideal occasions to approach the question on the importance of forest for biodiversity conservation and on the post-2010 targets. Maybe an event towards the end of 2010 could make the 'bridge' between the two.
- **Climate change** Mr. Broekhoven highlighted the debate on **Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD)** for which a consensus is within reach and which needs an extra push from the EP.
- Finally, the importance of forests for **rural development** must be emphasized in the discussions with regards to the rural development regulation.

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#### **FERN contribution**

FERN wishes to see the following themes tackled:

- **Biomass;**
- **EU forest protection;**
- **Forest and Climate;**
- **Rural development and discussions on the new regulation;**
- **EU's report on biodiversity and the post-2010 targets;**
- **Forest law enforcement, Governance and Trade, due diligence regulation;**
- **Green public procurement for timber and timber related products.**

## LIST OF IDENTIFIED ISSUES

- Management and protection of forests (overall topic)
- Illegal logging
- Renewable energies/Wood-Energy
- Biomass : mobilisation and sustainability criteria
- Forest protection against calamities (prevention of fires, financing etc)
- Climate change (REDD etc)
- Biodiversity and post-2010 targets
- Implementation of legislation (Natura 2000, legislation in relation to forests, governance, trade and so on)
- Payments in relation to carbon fixation
- Rural development
- Green public procurement

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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