



PRESS RELEASE

FAO Committee on Forestry Calls for Collaboration on Biodiversity Mainstreaming in the Lead up to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

Montreal/Rome, 9 August 2016 – The 23rd session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO23), which took place in Rome, Italy 18-22 July 2016, took an effective approach that focused on the interlinkages between forest and other sectors and issues, including biodiversity and climate change.

COFO23 helped to showcase how countries have been devising forest policies which provide mutual benefits for the forestry sector as well as for agriculture, watershed management, biodiversity, recreation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and sustainable development. Major steps are being taken to integrate different policy agendas through a comprehensive and coordinated land use management perspective.

Among the key outcomes of COFO23 was a decision requesting the FAO to collaborate with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and with the ministries responsible for forests and the forest sector to support the preparations for COP13.

A dialogue event was organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the Government of Mexico, at which representatives from the Committee on Forestry, FAO Permanent Representatives, representatives from other Departments of FAO, World Resources Institute (WRI), other organizations and stakeholders exchanged experiences on the mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the forest sector, one of the key topics to be discussed at the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP13) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its High-Level Segment (HLS), to be held in Cancun, Mexico, 2 - 17 December 2016.

“One of the main areas of focus for COP13, and its High-Level Segment, will be on the need to enhance efforts to mainstream biodiversity in four key sectors - Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Tourism. The fact that the forestry sector is already demonstrating its recognition of these linkages is a significant sign that we are on the right path”, said Mr. Alberto Glender, Special Adviser of Mexico for COP13.

One of the key outcomes of the High-Level Segment, taking place prior to the opening of COP13, from 2 to 3 December 2016, is the Ministerial Declaration that will emphasize the need for increased action to mainstream conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, plans and programs. The Zero Draft of the Declaration was circulated by Mexico through official channels in July, and replicated by a notification of the Executive Secretary of the CBD around the time of the COFO23 meeting.

Discussion during the dialogue session noted shifts in the perception of forests and on the pivotal role of the forest sector for advancing other policy agendas. The importance of land use planning and policies, as well as governments role in creating an enabling environment for community and private sector involvement, through the role of economic instruments and measures to better value biodiversity and their impacts to other sectors, were factored in by several participants throughout the discussion. Moreover,



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220 Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



efforts taken to integrate conservation and sustainable use practices into commodity supply chains at different scales were also mentioned.

In closing the dialogue event, Mr. Rene Castro, Assistant Director General, Forestry Department of FAO, noted, that "the discussions that took place at this Committee on Forestry and the technical support that FAO can provide are highly relevant to the biodiversity community". FAO has prepared a variety of tools which can assist Parties to the CBD in meeting their national biodiversity commitments and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets and the SDGs. He also stated, that "one recent example is FAO's new partnership with Google Earth for more frequent updates of tree cover and other land use elements that will enable FAO and the public to monitor earth ecosystems almost in real time."

Furthermore, Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Diaz, General Director of International Cooperation and implementation, CONABIO-Mexico, stated that "Governments around the world have recognized the essential role that biodiversity plays in achieving sustainable development, human well-being, and prosperity in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The discussions at COFO23 provided a major contribution from the forest sector towards coherence between agendas, and we look forward to continuing our close collaboration with the CBD Secretariat and FAO to achieve results for our common objectives at COP13."

"Momentum towards a successful COP13 is building," noted Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. "Clearly this event shows that the future of our forests can continue to provide multiple benefits for biodiversity, people and sustainable development, if we ensure that they are safeguarded and managed sustainably. As we head into COP13, we will be counting on the forestry community to underscore the benefits that biodiversity and ecosystem services provide to the sector and the verse how the sector can ensure viable productivity without depleting the natural capital that biodiversity underpins", he added. Similarly, the interlinkages between the biodiversity and the fisheries agendas were discussed in the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) meeting in July 2016 in Rome.

To enhance further engagement and interaction with other sectors, a similar dialogue event will be convened during the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), in September 2016, in Rome, Italy to address the links between biodiversity, agriculture, food security and rural livelihoods.

NOTE TO EDITORS

The thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and its High-Level Segment, will take place in Cancun, Mexico, from 2 – 17 December 2016. For more information, please see Mexico's COP 13 Portal: www.mexicop13.bio

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties so far, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 170 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 78 Parties. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

For additional information, please contact:

For the CBD Secretariat: David Ainsworth: david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund johan.hedlund@cbd.int;

For the Government of Mexico: Hesiquio Benitez: conabio_cop13@conabio.gob.mx;

For FAO: Irene Hoffman: Irene.Hoffmann@fao.org