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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman,

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**.

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

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 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 ministers,

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**:

1. **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 ;
2. **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;
3. **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);
4. **Developing and implementing environmentally and socially responsible purchasing and consumption policies** for a) wood and paper products, b) bio-energy and c) food;
5. **Define responsible lending policies** for key industry sectors and support financial institutions that implement them;
6. **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;
7. **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;
8. **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 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.

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),”

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:

1. What are the critical next steps you will take in order to implement previous commitments on a national level?
2. 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?
3. 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.