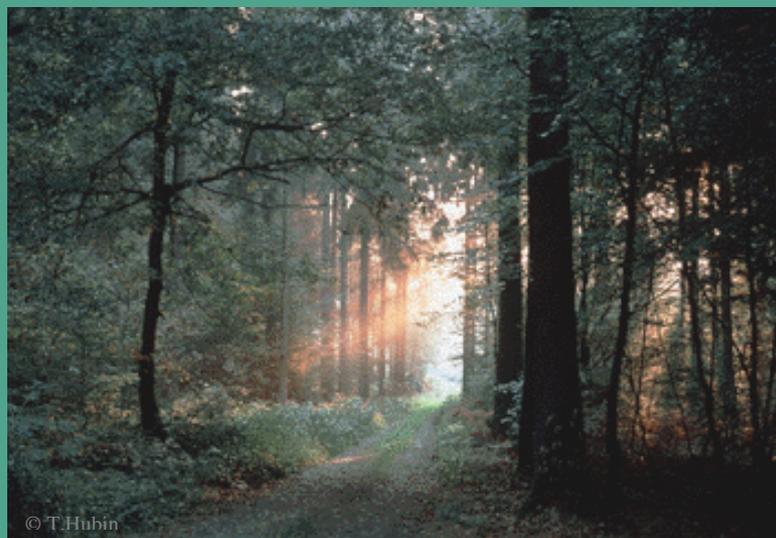


Forest Biological Diversity

Inventory of EU policy and EU positions in multilateral agreements

Information document prepared by the Belgian Presidency on behalf of the European Community and its Member States

Edited by
Anne Franklin, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Vicky Leentjes, Belgian Federal Department of the Environment



SEPTEMBER 2001

STUDIEDOCUMENTEN VAN HET VBD NATIONAAL KNOOPPUNT - NR. 1
DOCUMENTS DE TRAVAIL DU POINT FOCAL NATIONAL CBD - NO. 1

Redacting committee

The redaction of the present document was undertaken in cooperation with the contact group on forest biodiversity under the authority of the steering committee “Biodiversity Convention”. The steering committee is operating under the authority of the Coordinating Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP). The following persons participated to the redaction:

Jean-Yves André
Catholic University of Louvain (UCL)/
DGRNE

Etienne Branquart
Biodiversity Platform/CRNFB

Els Coart
Agricultural Research Centre Ghent

Han de Koeijer
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences

Carl De Schepper
AMINAL, Forests and Green Areas Division

Vincent Demoulin
University of Liège

Gaëtan du Bus de Warnaffe
Catholic University of Louvain (UCL)

Gommaar Dubois
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Anne Franklin
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences

Karin Goyvaerts
AMINAL, Forests and Green Areas Division

Christian Laurent
DGRNE, Nature and Forest Division

Vicky Leentjes
Federal Ministry of the Environment

Sébastien Patiny
Gembloux Agricultural University (FSAGx)

Jackie Van Goethem
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences

Chris Vanden Bilcke
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Elke Vanwildemeersch
AMINAL, Europe and the Environment Division

Jorge Ventocilla
Office of the Federal Minister of the Environment

Ines Verleye
Office of the Federal Minister of the Environment

*Continuity should be the basis of any forest action.
Perseverance is the most important quality of the forester.
It is also essential for all wood and environment professionals, associations
and institutions... defending the forest cause on a daily basis.
It should lastly inspire a commitment from European policy makers.
It is their responsibility to take sustained action so that this natural forest
heritage, one of the most valuable heritages of humanity, can be handed
down to future generations.
(Europe and the Forest, Volume 3, New 1997 Edition, DGIV)*

Table of contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity.....	4
3. Inventory of statement and positions.....	5
3.1. Assessment and Monitoring	5
3.1.1. Classification of Forest Resources	5
3.1.2. Criteria and Indicators for Forest Biological Diversity	5
3.1.3. Research Programmes on Forest Ecosystem Functioning.....	6
3.2. Conservation and Sustainable Use	7
3.2.1. Ecosystem Approach.....	8
3.2.2. In-Situ Conservation.....	8
3.2.3. Ex-Situ Conservation	9
3.2.4. Sustainable Management Practices	10
3.2.5. Forest Genetic Diversity.....	11
3.2.6. Causes of Forest Biological Diversity Loss	12
3.2.7. Restoration.....	16
3.2.8. Tropical Forests.....	16
3.2.9. Indigenous and Local Communities	18
3.3. Institutional and Socio-Economic Enabling Environment	19
3.3.1. Policies and Programmes	19
3.3.2. Supporting Research on Forest Biodiversity and Sustainable Management	21
3.3.3. Forest Laws and Planning	22
3.3.4. Trade and Related Issues	22
3.3.5. Awareness-Raising and Public Education.....	23
3.4. Participation in International Processes.....	24
3.5. Coordination and Integration.....	26
3.6. Financing International Cooperation.....	27
4. The framework for action.....	29
4.1. The EU internal context	29
4.1. Nature and biodiversity	29
4.2. Forests	31
4.3. Rural Development.....	32
4.4. Development Cooperation.....	33
4.5. Research	34
4.6. Climate change.....	35
4.2. The international context.....	35
4.2.1. The Convention on Biological Diversity.....	36
4.2.2. The Convention on Migratory Species.....	36
4.2.3. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora ..	37
4.2.4. The Convention on Climate Change	37
4.2.5. The Convention to Combat Desertification.....	38
4.2.6. The Bern Convention	38
4.2.7. The International Tropical Timber Agreement	38
4.2.8. The United Nations Forum on Forests	39
4.2.9. The Food and Agriculture Organisation.....	40
4.2.10. The World Trade Organisation.....	40
Annex: Acronyms used in the Report	41

1. Introduction

This working document has been written by the Belgian Presidency at the request of the Member States of the European Union.

Its purpose is to be used as a basis for discussions for a EU common position on forests, in view of the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity and subsequent meetings. The document is an inventory of relevant EU statements and positions taken from different EU and international negotiations and legislation on forest-related biodiversity issues. Therefore, it does not aim to address shortcomings of the existing policy framework nor to propose new actions to be taken at European level or by Europe at international level. It rather aims to ensure consistency in EU positions in multilateral fora and to make a more efficient contribution to the discussions.

The document is based on the structure of the Report of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Forest Biological Diversity (2001)¹, which enumerates different options and priority actions for the revision of the CBD work programme on forest biological diversity.

In order to ensure maximal objectivity, the EU statements and positions, within each paragraph, are presented by chronological order and not by order of importance.

In chapter 4, some explanatory information on the relevant fora in the EU internal and international policy context is given.

¹ Document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/6.

2. Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity

The CBD addresses forests directly through its work programme on forest biological diversity, adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) at its fourth meeting, in 1998. The work programme provides several elements of work including: approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, comprehensive analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest-management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences.

In 2000, COP-5 decided to consider expanding the focus of the work programme from research to practical action at its sixth meeting in 2002. Preparatory work has been carried out by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Forest Biological Diversity (AHTEG) and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).

The report of the AHTEG (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/6) contains:

- the main findings of a review of available information on the status and trends of, and major threats to, forest biological biodiversity, including significant gaps in that information;
- prioritized options for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity;
- advice on scientific programmes and international cooperation in research and development related to the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity; and
- information on innovative, efficient and state-of-the-art technologies and know-how relating to forest biodiversity, including ways and means of promoting the development and transfer of such technologies.

The draft revised expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity is presented in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/8. It is structured along three main programme elements: assessment and monitoring, conservation and sustainable use, institutional and socio-economic environment.

3. Inventory of statement and positions

3.1. Assessment and Monitoring

3.1.1. Classification of Forest Resources

The EU commits itself to engage efforts with other international and regional processes and initiatives, FAO, UNEP and other relevant international organisations as well as conventions, to further elaborate common definition of key terms and concepts, as well as methodologies for data collection, storage and dissemination in order to enhance comparability of the different sets of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. *Resolution L2 of the Lisbon Conference - MCPFE, June 1998.*

Inventory and mapping of forest resources should be established and maintained, adequate to the local and national conditions, and in correspondence with the topics described in the Guidelines of Forest Management Planning. [...] Forest management planning and terrestrial inventory and mapping of forest resources should include ecologically important forest biotopes, taking into account protected, rare, sensitive or representative forest ecosystems such as riparian areas and wetland biotopes, areas containing endemic species and habitats of threatened species, as defined in recognised reference lists, as well as endangered or protected genetic in situ resources. *Annex 2 of Resolution L2 of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

3.1.2. Criteria and Indicators for Forest Biological Diversity

The Signatory States and the European Community commit themselves to promote the development and implementation of national criteria and indicators using the Pan-European criteria and indicators as a reference framework, and taking into account specific country conditions and integrate them into national forest programmes or other relevant policy frameworks. They also commit themselves to use to the extent possible the criteria and indicators in international reporting on the status and conditions of European forests. *Resolution L2 of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

The Signatory States and the European Community commit themselves to encourage national and international research institutes to evaluate the consistency, relevance and cost effectiveness of indicators in assessing sustainable forest management, as well as availability of national data. *Resolution L2 of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

The EU considers the development of adequate indicators to be an important key to the implementation of the Convention. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

The EU confirmed in its 6th *Environment Action Programme* (2001) that there is need for research and a clear and consistent definition of sets of indicators, which gauge progress against identified targets, including indicators of the monetary value of the impacts of environmental degradation. Indicators also can play an important role in raising awareness of both decision-makers and the general public as to the state and trends of different issues.

To ensure that the potential of indicators is realized, a number of key actions need to be undertaken. These involve, for example, to further improve the existing indicators, to extend the set of indicators to cover all aspects of sustainable development and to establish a strategy on data collection. *Annex to the EU Council Conclusions on the integration of environmental concerns and sustainable development in the Common Agricultural Policy, April 2001.*

The Global Forest Resources Assessment Programme [of the FAO] and existing regional and international processes for criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management could be components of the monitoring and reporting system. *EU Statement – FAO – 120th session of the Council, June 2001.*

3.1.3. Research Programmes on Forest Ecosystem Functioning

Biodiversity in general is within the Fifth Research Framework Programme of the EU one of the key actions within the theme “Environment and Sustainable Development”. The aim of this key action is to develop the scientific and technological basis and tools necessary to underpin implementation of EU policies, notably the Environmental Action Programmes and the Biodiversity Strategy, and to support the research obligations stemming from international treaties and conventions signed by the European Union and its Member States. Overall, the key action seeks to increase understanding in these areas in order to help deliver the goal of sustainable development, where possible in interaction with industry. *EU Council Conclusions on the Fifth RTD Programmes, December 1998.*

In the Fifth Research Framework Programme, the EU confirms also the importance of sustainable forestry by making it a key action within the theme of “Improving the quality of life and management of living resources”. The aim is to develop the knowledge and technologies needed for the production and exploitation of living resources, including forests, covering the whole production chain, adapted to recent adjustments in the common agricultural and fisheries policies, whilst also providing the scientific basis for Community regulations and standards. Similarly, the aim is to promote the multi-purpose role of forests and the sustainable management and utilization of forest resources as an integral factor of rural development. *EU Council Conclusions on the Fifth RTD Programmes, December 1998.*

a. Data and Information Management

The EU confirmed in its 6th *Environment Action Programme* (2001) that with good data, more useful indicator sets can be developed to explain the trends and their causes to policy-makers and the wider public. Work is already underway with agriculture and environment indicators to define the indicators and corresponding data needs.

b. Reporting

The Signatory States and the European Community commit themselves to improve the quality and promote the necessary adaptations of national data collection systems, to fulfill the needs of information for national and international reporting on sustainable forest management recognising the need for continuity of terms and definitions. *Resolution L2 of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

The EU regards national reporting as a vitally important process in helping to ensure the implementation of the Convention, and in building a comprehensive picture of the collective impact of each Party’s efforts. In this respect the Council recognises the importance of the link between the reporting process and indicators. *EU Council Conclusions, CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

Monitoring, assessment and reporting is one of the key functions of the UNFF. Reporting from countries, regions, organisations or processes should take place at each UNFF session. *EU Statement – UNFF-1, June 2001.*

The EU underlines the importance to include the effects on biodiversity in all the reports and reviews referred to in the Council conclusions on environmental integration and sustainable development in the Common Agricultural Policy. [...] The EU stresses the importance for the Member States to identify the obstacles to improve the biodiversity in agriculture in the framework of the foreseen mid-term evaluation reports on their rural development programmes before the end of 2003. *EU Council Conclusions – Biodiversity Action Plan for Agriculture, June 2001.*

c. Environmental Impact Assessment

The EU recognises that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), as an important tool for decision-making, should be initiated in the early stages of project design and take into account provisions under Article 7 of the Convention.[...] The EU affirms that the Strategic Environmental Assessment, by integrating environmental, economic and social concerns into the context of decision-making at the programme and plan levels, and achieving a broader approach (including the cumulative, synergetic and induced impacts through feed-back on IA and project appraisal) will promote sustainable development and thus the Convention goals. [...] The EU supports the further development by SBSTTA, in collaboration with relevant organisations (e.g. IAIA, IUCN) as well as the private sector, of guidelines on the incorporation of biodiversity related issues into legislation and/or procedures on EIA to be submitted to the 6th Conference of the Parties. *EU Council Conclusions, CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

Furthermore, the EU urges the Commission to use and develop further the performance criteria presented in its working document, inter alia, on the use of the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) Help Desk, training programmes, adequate environmental integration into the country programmes, terms of reference, the screening and follow-up of SEA and EIA, as well as feed-back of the results of project evaluation. *EU Council Conclusions – Strategy for the integration of environmental considerations into development policy to promote sustainable development, May/June 2001.*

The EU proposes that SBSTA recommends to the CoP to stress the importance of implementing relevant policy tools such as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Assessment, when assessing activities undertaken within the framework of the UNFCCC and the CBD. [...] The EU proposes that SBSTA recommend to the CoP to recognise that, when carrying out impact assessments, the consequences for biodiversity and the interrelated socio-economic, cultural, and human health aspects relevant to biological diversity should be fully taken into account. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

3.2. Conservation and Sustainable Use

The EU affirms the importance to the implementation of the CBD of the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, given the crucial role that all types of forests play in conserving global biological diversity, and the extent of the threats forests, and particularly natural forests, are facing. *Council Conclusions CBD – COP-4, March 1998.*

3.2.1. Ecosystem Approach

The EU recognises that the ecosystem approach should be used by all Parties and Governments in particular regarding the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention. It should also be implemented through all the relevant work programmes of the Convention. This implementation should be supported by a set of voluntary guidelines and suggestions for action, drawing on regional workshops. [...] The EU considers of great importance that the 5th Conference of the Parties sends out a clear message to UN bodies and relevant international and regional organisations and donor agencies to incorporate the ecosystem approach in their policies, programmes and projects. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

The EU proposes that SBSTA recommend to the CoP to recognise the importance of the ecosystem approach, as defined in the CBD, in taking into account the ecological and socio-economic aspects and using the ecosystem functions in order to adapt to or mitigate climate change. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

3.2.2. In-Situ Conservation

a. Protected Areas

In order to ensure the restoration or maintenance of natural habitats and species of Community interest at a favourable conservation status, it is necessary to designate special areas of conservation in order to create a coherent European ecological network according to a specified timetable. *Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, May 1992.*

The EU believes that forest ecosystems are amongst the most threatened ecosystems in the world in most need of action, whether it is the tropical forest, the temperate, the mediterranean or the boreal forest. Action for the conservation and sustainable use of forest all over the world is therefore desirable. [...] The EU sees the fulfillment of the obligations in Article 8 by all Parties as crucial to the implementation of the Convention. In this respect, the Council reaffirms the importance it attaches to the establishment of a system of protected areas, as stated in Article 8(a), of which Natura 2000 will be an example in the Community, and the implementation of Article 8(j) as indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles play an important role for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-2, October 1995.*

Pan-European objectives include the conservation of adequate areas to secure the conservation of all types of forests in Europe, and specifically prioritize conservation efforts towards protection of 100 per cent of the remaining alluvial and virgin forests, the majority of the remaining ancient secondary woodland, and remaining riparian forest corridors, taking into account considerations of indigenous and local peoples. *Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy – Pan-European Ministerial Conference ‘Environment for Europe’, October 1995.*

For the purpose of nature conservation, important habitats have been and should continue to be identified, designated and maintained to protect flora and fauna, which are adapted to traditional agricultural environments. In regard to the planned conservation area network Natura 2000 now being harmonised throughout Europe the application of good agricultural practices and agri-environmental measures beneficial to nature conservation should also be promoted. *EU Strategy on Environmental Integration and Sustainable Development in the Common Agricultural Policy established by the Agricultural Council, November 1999.*

In its Biodiversity Action Plans, the EU confirmed that conservation requires action beyond the 10-20% of the world's territory that could potentially be designated as protected areas. *Biodiversity Action Plan – Introduction, 2001.*

b. Protected Areas Networks

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. *Resolution H2 of the Helsinki Conference - MCPFE, June 1993.*

The EU calls upon its Member States to give high priority to the full implementation of environmental legislation regarding, in particular, EU NATURA 2000 network and the Water Framework Directive. *EU Draft Council Conclusions BAP Natural Resources, July 2001.*

c. Outside Protected Areas

The EU stresses that, in order to conserve and restore natural resources, actions are required not only within designated areas, but should be taken across the whole territory. *EU Draft Council Conclusions, BAP Natural Resources, July 2001.*

The EU should explore the possibilities of initiatives that enhance the conservation of biodiversity in urban non protected areas, through inter alia the preservation and creation of green corridors or greenways in urban or suburban areas. *Biodiversity Action Plan on Natural Resources, 2001.*

d. Rare and Threatened Species and Habitats

In the European territory of the Member States, natural habitats are continuing to deteriorate and an increasing number of wild species are seriously threatened; whereas given that the threatened habitats and species form part of the Community's natural heritage and the threats to them are often of a transboundary nature, it is necessary to take measures at Community level in order to conserve them. [...] In view of the threats to certain types of natural habitat and certain species, it is necessary to define them as having priority in order to favour the early implementation of measures to conserve them. *Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, May 1992.*

Infrastructure should be planned and constructed in a way that minimises damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves, and that takes threatened or other key species - in particular their migration patterns - into consideration. *Annex 2 of the L2 Resolution of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

The EU stresses that action in-situ should consider the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in sustainable management systems for all forests to ensure that forest species are able to survive under natural conditions and are able to maintain or recover vigorous populations over their distribution area. *EC Forestry Strategy, November 1998.*

3.2.3. Ex-Situ Conservation

The EU confirmed in its *Community Biodiversity Strategy* (COM98 (42), 1998) that gene banks and botanical gardens can play a very valuable role if their activities are integrated in the framework of co-ordinated re-introduction or integrated conservation schemes.

The EU should (*EU Biodiversity Strategy, COM98 (42), 1998*):

- encourage within and outside the EU adequate ex-situ conservation of both wild species and genetic resources of wild crop relatives, wild plants and domestic animal breeds useful for food production, whenever they cannot be conserved in situ or whose conservation in situ is under serious threat.
- encourage zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, gene banks and collections to keep species, crop varieties and domestic animal breeds, under satisfactory standards that guarantee their conservation and integrate their work in co-ordinated action plans which aim at the restoration of the species to a satisfactory in-situ conservation status.

Ex-situ conservation is recognised as one of the most important roles of botanic gardens in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Their ex-situ collections provide material for integrated conservation (involving a combination of ex situ and in situ conservation techniques). Their activities are relevant, inter alia, for reintroduction of species into damaged habitats and to enhance populations as part of ecosystem management, for research and education, for selecting material for introduction into the nursery trade as well as pharmaceutical and crop protection industries, local agriculture, amenity planting and local forestry. Ex situ conservation can include the maintenance of samples of whole individuals, as well as seed, pollen, vegetative propagules and tissue or cell cultures. *Biodiversity Action Plan on Natural Resources, 2001*.

3.2.4. Sustainable Management Practices

Sustainable management means the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems. *Resolution H1 of the Helsinki Conference - MCPFE, June 1993*.

The Signatory States and the European Community have decided to endorse the “Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management” (Annex 2) as a framework of recommendations for sustainable forest management for practical use on a voluntary basis. *Resolution L2 of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, 1998*.

Forest managers need to take into account guidelines for, inter alia appropriate ecological site adaptation measures through diverse silvicultural techniques combined with accessory measures (e.g. respecting dead wood and other key micro-habitats present in forests). Particular emphasis should be given to regeneration methods, such as natural regeneration, to preserve the local genetic pools; tree species and varieties that are planted should be native or well suited to local conditions and ecosystems. *EC Forestry Strategy, November 1998*.

The degrading physical, chemical and biological pressure of agriculture on the soil should be reduced at least to levels compatible with sustainability. In order to maintain soil quality certain farming systems, e.g. managed grazing, the presence of hedges and trees, should be promoted. Also, measures to guard against erosion and fire risk are needed as well as afforestation to make an important contribution to reducing soil erosion. *EU Strategy on Environmental Integration and Sustainable Development in the Common Agricultural Policy established by the Agricultural Council, November 1999*.

The EU emphasises that any decision on definitions, methodologies and accounting rules should be consistent with sustainable forest management, including the conservation of biological diversity. *EU Council Conclusions – Community Strategy on Climate Change, June 2000*.

According to the Declaration of Rio in 1992 and Agenda 21, the concept of sustainability embraces three dimensions, i.e. the ecological, social and economic dimensions. To reach sustainability, these three dimensions must be taken into account simultaneously. *Annex to the EU Council Conclusions – Integration of environmental concerns and sustainable development in the Common Agricultural Policy, April 2001.*

The EU reiterates that sustainable forest management is an integral part of sustainable development. Sustainable forest management requires a long-term commitment together with adequate arrangements for the global forest policy dialogue and for facilitating and promoting the implementation of all forest related agreements and programmes of the international forest regime, as well as co-operation at global, regional and national levels. *EU Council Conclusions, UNFF-1, April 2001.*

The EU reaffirms that sustainable forest management is an integral part of sustainable development. The EU remains committed to the implementation of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles and reiterates its support for promoting the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. *EU Statement – UNFF-1, June 2001.*

The EU proposes that SBSTA recommends to emphasise that any forest related decisions on definitions, methodologies and accounting rules for LULUCF activities under the Kyoto Protocol should be consistent with sustainable forest management including the conservation of biological diversity. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001*

3.2.5. Forest Genetic Diversity

Above and beyond the conservation of forest species, the essential objective is the conservation of the genetic diversity of these species, which are an essential part of mankind's heritage. [...] The Signatory States and International Institutions commit themselves to implement in their own countries, using whatever methods seem most appropriate, a policy for the conservation of forest genetic resources. *Resolution S2 of the Strasbourg Conference – MCPFE, 1990.*

The conservation of the genetic diversity of forest species that are currently of secondary importance should, initially, and as a general rule, be assured by preserving forest ecosystems and rare forest species. [...] Recommendations may cover, for example, protection against contamination or dilution of genetic resources within zones identified as being of special interest, the maintenance of sufficient diversity in the choice of afforestation and restocking species, the keeping - at least for public forests - of records covering the exact identity of the reproduction materials used for planting and regeneration, etc. *Resolution S2 of the Strasbourg Conference – MCPFE, 1990.*

The EU confirmed in its *Community Biodiversity Strategy* (COM98 (42), 1998) that, for crop species and varieties, including plants used for forestry there is a need to avoid genetic erosion and maintain a diverse genetic pool to ensure the future viability and improvement of the qualities of the varieties and breeds involved.

The EU invites the Commission to adopt implementing rules as envisaged in Directive 98/95/EC concerning the marketing of seed of landraces and varieties which are naturally adapted to the local and regional conditions and threatened by genetic erosion and to prepare criteria for identifying the appropriate varieties for this purpose. *EU Council Conclusions – Biodiversity Action Plan for Agriculture, June 2001.*

3.2.6. Causes of Forest Biological Diversity Loss

One of the priorities of the 6th Environmental Action Programme should be addressing new and emerging issues and issues where existing policy has failed to adequately reverse negative trends and break the link between economic growth and negative environmental impacts. This includes, inter alia, climate change, biodiversity, efficient use and management of natural resource, waste management, environmental safety/reducing the environment and health risks caused by chemicals and GMOs, soil degradation and desertification. *EU Council Conclusions, Communication from the Commission: "Europe's Environment: What directions for the future? The Global Assessment of the European Community Programme of Policy and Action in relation to the environment and sustainable development, "Towards Sustainability", April 2000.*

It is also important to combat environmental threats to sustainable development, in particular, drought and desertification, rapid decline of biological diversity, degradation and pollution of land and soil, aquatic resources exhaustion due to over-fishing or by deterioration of spawning grounds, inequitable access to and overuse and pollution of freshwater and marine resources and the adverse effects of climate change. *EU Preparation for the 3rd United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, January 2001.*

a. Unsustainable Management and Harvesting of Timber and Non-Timber Forest Resources

Where possible, the size and degree of utilisation of forest compartments and other basic management units should take account of the scale of variation of the site, in order to better conserve and manage the diversity of habitats. Where possible the establishment of taxa 1 which are naturally associated with those that occur most frequently in the forest should be encouraged, and a variety of structure within stands should be favoured, where the natural dynamics of such associations permit. *Resolution H2 of the Helsinki Conference – MCPFE, 1993.*

Forest management practices should safeguard the quantity and quality of the forest resources in the medium and long term by balancing harvesting and growth rates, and by preferring techniques that minimise direct or indirect damage to forest, soil or water resources. *Annex 2 of the L2 Resolution of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

Regeneration, tending and harvesting operations should be carried out in time, and in a way that does not reduce the productive capacity of the site, for example by avoiding damage to retained stands and trees as well as to the forest soil, and by using appropriate systems. [...] Harvesting levels of both wood and non-wood forest products should not exceed a rate that can be sustained in the long term, and optimum use should be made of the harvested forest products, with due regard to nutrient offtake. [...] Tending and harvesting operations should be conducted in a way that do not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. Wherever possible, practical measures should be taken to improve or maintain biological diversity. *Annex 2 of the L2 Resolution of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

While recognising the importance of reforestation schemes to increase the forest cover, measures should be taken in relation to the afforestation or reforestation of areas to avoid endangering important and/or valuable ecosystems (e.g. wetlands, steppes, heathlands, etc) or the use of inappropriate tree species. *EC Biodiversity Strategy, February 1998.*

Forest managers need to take into account guidelines for improving harvesting techniques to keep related damages as limited as possible. They also need to conduct afforestation measures in a manner that does not negatively affect ecologically interesting or noteworthy sites, habitats and ecosystems landscapes. *EC Forestry Strategy, November 1998.*

The improvement of sustainability will involve the improvement of the economic, ecological and social sustainability of the production of timber, fuelwood, as well as non-wood forest products as

well as improving existing or developing new financial mechanisms for forest management. *Forests and Development: the EC approach, November 1999.*

Developed countries should show real commitment to changing their unsustainable production and consumption patterns. *Council conclusions – Preparation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, September 2002.*

The establishment of a work group which should elaborate on a plan of action on “Bush meat” (the increase and commercialisation of trade in meat of wild animals, in particular in Africa) is supported by the European Union.

b. Deforestation

A major concern in relation to forests is the protection of forests against deforestation. *EC Forestry Strategy, November 1998.*

The EU recognises that a wide range of underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation reflect the different social, economic, political, cultural and environmental realities of the countries and considers sustainable development as the overall objective [...] As it is widely recognised, macro-economic policy options for the development that do not adequately consider the need for the sustainable management of forest resources are the major causes of forest loss and degradation. Poverty and demographic expansion guide policy priorities, but options to overcome them have not always been the best, and policies in areas such as land use, agriculture, energy and infrastructure often conflict with forest policies. *EU-statement on IFF Programme element IId(1), IFF3, May 1999.*

The persistent high rate of deforestation and forest degradation calls for urgent and concrete actions and the EU advocated concrete results and action-oriented solutions during the IPF/IFF process. *EU Council Conclusions – UNFF-1, April 2000.*

c. Alien Invasive Species

Native species and local provenances should be preferred where appropriate. The use of species, provenances, varieties or ecotypes outside their natural range should be discouraged where their introduction would endanger important/valuable indigenous ecosystems, flora and fauna. Introduced species may be used when their potential negative impacts have been assessed and evaluated over sufficient time, and where they provide more benefits than do indigenous ones in terms of wood production and other functions. Whenever introduced species are used to replace local ecosystems, sufficient action should be taken at the same time to conserve native flora and fauna. *Resolution H1 of the Helsinki Conference - MCPFE, June 1993.*

The EU reiterates the view that introduction of alien species is a priority issue requiring, as appropriate, national, transboundary and international action, and stresses the importance to prevent such introduction, by adopting proactive measures in addition to reactive ones. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

In its *6th Environmental Action Programme (January 2001)*, the EU sets as a priority area for action the halting of biodiversity decline with the aim to reach this objective by 2010, including the prevention and mitigation of impacts of invasive alien species and genotypes.

d. GMO's

The precautionary principle should be carefully taken into account in the adoption processes of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The risks and benefits depend primarily on the actual trait. The risk of adverse effects on human and animal health and the environment should be scientifically assessed on a case by case basis. *EU Strategy on Environmental Integration and Sustainable Development in the Common Agricultural Policy established by the Agricultural Council, November 1999.*

The IPPC can play an important role in the pest risk assessment of some GMO's; Pest risk analyses should be reviewed in order to allow for specific risk management options in accordance with GMO's characteristics. Standards taking into account specific problems raised by some GMO's, such as fields monitoring of GMO's, detection of undesirable effects on plants, risk management of dissemination of exotic genes to wild species and management of resistance development, have to be established under the IPPC and in collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity. *Preparation of ICPM-3 – Working Document, May 2000.*

e. Impacts of Climate Change

According to the Resolution on European Forestry Strategy, the role of forests as carbon sinks and reservoirs within the Union can be best ensured through sustainable forest management and can be achieved through the protection and enhancement of existing carbon stocks, the establishment of new carbon stocks and encouraging the use of biomass and wood based products. *EU Strategy on Environmental Integration and Sustainable Development in the Common Agricultural Policy established by the Agricultural Council, November 1999.*

The EU reaffirms its willingness to continue to work with other Parties to clarify the treatment of sinks in the Kyoto Protocol. The EU reaffirms that the inclusion of sinks activities should not undermine incentives for emissions reductions nor the conservation of biological diversity. The EU has serious concerns about the scale and the scientific and other uncertainties and risks associated with sinks. The EU therefore takes the position that a decision on the inclusion of defined and limited activities associated with further sources and sinks (Article 3.4) shall not apply in the first commitment period, except if these concerns are met. Criteria will be needed to develop modalities, rules and guidelines for the application of Art. 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol before quantified objectives are fixed for the second commitment period.[...] These considerations apply even more strongly to sinks in the CDM, and the EU therefore believes these should not be included, in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol. However, there is a need for substantive discussion of the IPCC Special Report on Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry. The EU also emphasises that any decision on definitions, methodologies and accounting rules should be consistent with sustainable forest management, including the conservation of biological diversity. *EU Council Conclusions – Community Strategy on Climate Change, June 2000.*

The EU believes that the proper implementation of the CBD and other related conventions will help both to mitigate and adapt to climate change and equally the proper implementation of the UNFCCC is necessary to reduce stresses on biodiversity. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

f. Impacts of Desertification

The EU notes that it is important to support actions in some specific sectors, like combating desertification and land degradation and protection, conservation and sustainable management of forests, which contributes to policies directed to poverty alleviation and are at the same time ways to address climate change. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001 / EU Council Conclusions on assisting developing country partners to address the challenges of climate change, November 1999.*

In its 6th *Environmental Programme* (2001), the EU sets as a priority action the promotion of a sustainable use of the soil, with particular attention to preventing erosion, deterioration, contamination and desertification.

g. Impacts of Pollution

High ammonia emissions lead to soil and water acidification and eutrophication and contribute to damage to forests through acidity in rainfall. Agriculture should aim to decrease ammonia emissions by developing good agricultural practices, applying proven and cost-effective techniques and reducing if necessary the amount of animals in areas with high animal density. *EU Strategy on Environmental Integration and Sustainable Development in the Common Agricultural Policy established by the Agricultural Council, November 1999.*

The objective of the Regulation (EEC) N°3528/86 on the protection of the Community's forests against atmospheric pollution is to continue intensive monitoring schemes in order to maintain fundamental ecological balances and conserve forest ecosystems. *EU Council conclusions – Council Regulation (EEC) N°3528/86, February 2001.*

The EU confirmed in its *6th Environmental Action Programme (January 2001)* that a priority action was to protect and appropriately restore nature and biodiversity from damaging pollution.

h. Impacts of Fire

The objective of the amended Regulation (EEC) N° 2158/92 on the protection of the Community's forests against fire is to strengthen the consistency of forest measures, reinforce the fight against the causes of fires and improve prevention and monitoring systems. *EU Council conclusions – Amendment Council Regulation (EEC) N°2158/92, February 2001.*

i. Impacts of Tourism

The EU accepts the invitation to participate in the international work programme on sustainable tourism development under the CSD process with regard to biological diversity, in particular with a view to contributing to international guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems and habitats of major importance for biological diversity and protected areas, including fragile mountain systems. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

The EU confirmed in its *6th Environmental Action Programme (January 2001)* that a priority action was to promote the integration of conservation and restoration of the landscape values into other policies, including tourism.

j. Other impacts

The EU welcomes the Commission's initiative to improve the integration of biodiversity considerations into policy making and activities which may have an effect on natural resources such as in Agriculture, Fisheries, Economic and Development Co-operation, Infrastructure, Urban Environment, Industry, Trade, Energy, Transport, Research and Tourism. *EU Draft Council Conclusions – BAP on Natural Resources, July 2001.*

3.2.7. Restoration

Forest managers need to take into account guidelines for conducting afforestation measures in a manner that does not negatively affect ecologically interesting or noteworthy sites, habitats and ecosystems landscapes (e.g. the chosen tree species should be well suited to local conditions and ecosystems; native species or local provenances should be preferred; whenever introduced species are used, sufficient attention should be taken to ensure the conservation of native flora and fauna). *EC Forestry Strategy, November 1998.*

The EU confirms in its Rural Development regulation 1257/1999 (Title II Chapter VIII) the importance of activities such as the restoration of damaged forests, maintaining and improving their ecological stability, the preservation and enhancement of their ecological values and the afforestation of agricultural land. The promotion of specific nature-oriented forest management techniques (such as restoration of damaged forests or native forests ecosystems) is the most effective tool to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in European forests. *EU Biodiversity Action Plan on Natural Resources, 2001.*

3.2.8. Tropical Forests

The EU will provide financial support or technical expertise for operations which support and encourage the efforts of developing countries and their regional organizations to conserve and sustainably manage their tropical forests, in the context of the sustainable development of those countries and regions. The recipients of aid and partners in cooperation may include not only states, regions and overseas countries and territories but also decentralized authorities, regional organizations, public bodies, local or traditional communities, private industries and operators, including cooperatives and nongovernmental organizations and representative associations of forest peoples, which include the conservation of tropical forests among their stated objectives or regular activities. Special consideration will be given to operations in support of the conservation of forests, as regards both quality and quantity, which are considered to be of importance for local effects such as the protection of hydrographic basins and biotopes, the prevention of soil erosion and the restoration of degraded areas, and for global effects, such as climate change and loss of biological diversity. Particular consideration will be given to operations that promote the following:

- (a) Conservation of primary tropical forests and their biodiversity and renewal of tropical forests which have been damaged, supported by analysis of the underlying causes of deforestation and taking into account differences between countries and regions and measures to address them;
- (b) Sustainable management of forests designated for the production of timber and other products, but excluding commercial logging operations in primary tropical forests, except those which are community-based, on a small scale, sustainable, environmentally sound and implementing sustainable forest management;
- (c) The definition and development of certification systems, combined with independent assessment systems, for timber produced from tropical forests according to sustainable forest management principles as part of internationally harmonized certification systems envisaged for all kinds of timber and timber products;
- (d) Provision of prior information to forest peoples, followed by their support for the identification, planning and implementation of actions;
- (e) Capacity building to address the needs for training schemes for local populations, forest managers and researchers, for legislation, for increased political and social support and institutional strengthening and for organizations and associations active in forest conservation;
- (f) A strategic and adapted research policy aimed at supplying the knowledge required for the conservation and sustainable management of forests and also for the implementation of research monitoring activities in the framework of projects and programmes;

(g) Development of buffer zones to assist the conservation or regeneration of tropical forests, as part of a broader land utilization plan;

Development and implementation of forest management plans aimed at conserving tropical forests and promoting sustainable exploitation of timber and other forest products. *EU Council Decision on operations to promote tropical forests – December 1995.*

In sustainable forest management, forest conservation with a special emphasis on primary forests and biodiversity protection play an important role. *EU Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

The improvement of the efficiency of utilisation and processing of wood and non-wood forest products, through equitable and comprehensive approaches, allying economic development and people's interests will be achieved by:

- Developing markets for existing and potential NWFP, and for lesser known timber species (LKS);
- Facilitating transfer of environmentally sound technologies to the private sector;
- Promoting local processing initiatives, based on timber and other forest products from sustainable sources, with a view to stimulating local employment generation and export earnings. *Forests and Development: the EC approach, November 1999.*

Examples of actions to be supported, according to country specific context, consist of:

- Upgrading product chains, industrial and processing operations by introducing modern techniques and appropriate technology for timber conversion, drying, grading, storage, quality control, energy efficiency, waste utilisation, chain of custody, marketing of products;
- Establishing private entrepreneurship, especially small-scale and community based, in the various forest-related branches - forest management, farm forestry, nurseries and wood industry, in the wider context of private sector development;
- Improving marketing and enhancing trade of wood and non-wood forest products from sustainable sources, using lesser known timbers, secondary forests, certification mechanisms and development of local/regional product brands, quality standards and labels. *Forests and Development: the EC approach, November 1999.*

The EU welcomes the decision on cooperation between ITTO and FAO on the development of guidelines for the management of secondary tropical forests and rehabilitation of degraded forestlands. (*EU Statement - ITTA*)

The EU stresses that activities to be carried out under Regulation No 2494/2000 shall aim at:

- Raising the status of forests in national policies and integrating forest policies based on sustainable forest management in development planning;
- Promoting the production and use of wood and non-wood forest products from sustainably managed resources;
- Contributing to the adequate valuation of forest resources and services;
- ensuring active participation of forest-dependent people and local communities in the development of national forest policies and in development planning;
- Improving coordination and the flow of information between Commission and Member State projects so as to put in place coherent actions in that area.

Regulation (EC) No 2494/2000 on measures to promote the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries, November 2000.

The activities to be carried out under this Regulation shall address in particular:

- (a) development of appropriate national and international forest policy frameworks based on realistic valuation of forests, which include land use planning, equitable trade in sustainably produced forest products, legal and fiscal measures, institution building, support to the private sector and support to self-development of forest-dependent people to shape their own social, economic and

cultural development. These shall take into account other sectoral policies which have an impact on forests and the interests and customary rights of forest-dependent people;

- (b) conservation and restoration of forests which are considered to be of importance due to their high ecological value, in particular their value for the preservation of biodiversity, or due to their local and global impacts, such as the protection of hydrographic basins, the prevention of soil erosion, or of climate change;
- (c) sustainable forest management and utilization, to provide economic, social and environmental benefits and including, inter alia, forest certification - taking account of the different management conditions for small and large forest areas - and environmentally sound harvesting of both wood and non-wood forest products and natural and assisted forest regeneration;
- (d) economic viability of sustainable forest management through more efficient utilisation of forest products and technical improvements of downstream activities related to the forest sector such as small and medium scale processing and marketing of wood and nonwood forest products, the sustainable use of wood as an energy source and the promotion of alternatives to agricultural practices based on forest clearing;
- (e) knowledge and information generation and management concerning forest services and products, in order to provide a sound scientific basis for the activities listed under (a) to (d). *Regulation (EC) No 2494/2000 on measures to promote the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries, November 2000.*

The EU recognises in its Biodiversity Action Plan for Economic and Development Cooperation that habitats that are particularly rich in biodiversity include tropical forests, wetlands, coastal zones (including coral reefs) and mountains. A representative sample of protected areas in all these habitats will maintain global genetic resources, and merits international funding as a contribution towards this global benefit. [...] Continued funding is necessary through the Environment and Tropical Forest budget lines, and others that pilot new procedures or give guidance on how best to integrate environmental/biodiversity issues into economic and development co-operation. *BAP Economic and Development Cooperation, 2001.*

3.2.9. Indigenous and Local Communities

The EU also takes note of the international instruments addressing indigenous peoples, in particular the UN Resolution on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the 1992 Rio Declaration, together with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and the ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. These call for the International Community to ensure the economic, social and cultural well-being of indigenous peoples, their enjoyment of the fruits of sustainable development and their full and free participation in all aspects of society. Many indigenous peoples inhabit areas crucial for the conservation of biodiversity, and maintain social and cultural practices by way of which indigenous peoples have a special role in maintaining and enhancing biological diversity and in providing unique sustainable development models. The EU reiterates the political will to participate actively in the initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity for supporting local and indigenous peoples in their contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The EU recognises that cooperation with and support for the establishment of partnerships with indigenous peoples is essential for the objectives of poverty elimination, sustainable development of natural resources, the observance of human rights and the development of democracy. The EU notes in particular:

- The key role played by indigenous peoples in the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources;
- The positive contribution of indigenous peoples in the development process;
- The vulnerability of indigenous peoples, and the risk that development programmes may disadvantage them;
- That indigenous peoples have the same rights as everybody else to a secure livelihood, and the lifestyle of their choice, and should be treated equally in the legal framework; they should also

have access, on a non-discriminatory basis, to the opportunities and natural resources required to achieve these aspirations, as well as multilingual education and health services;

- That indigenous peoples have the right to choose their own development paths, which includes the right to object to projects, in particular in their traditional areas. This includes compensation where projects negatively affect the livelihoods of indigenous peoples. *EU Council Resolution on Indigenous People within the framework of the development cooperation of the Community and the Member States, November 1998.*

The EU agrees that TFRK (Traditional Forest Related Knowledge) can be seen as a subset of aspects related to knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities dealt with under the CBD. Vice versa, the related decisions under the CBD as well as relevant case studies and the collection of information will be highly relevant for implementing the IPF proposals for action. This also applies for the further clarification of cross-relationships between decisions under the WIPO and the CBD. The EU welcomes efforts to enhance cooperation between these two organisations *EU declaration on IFF Programme element IId(2), IFF3, May 1999.*

The CBD should invite the WTO to acknowledge relevant CBD provisions and take into account the fact that the TRIPs provisions and the objectives of the CBD are interrelated, and to give special attention to the protection of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with the CBD and other relevant agreements. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, June 1999.*

The role of the local communities including women and indigenous peoples is vital in forest management. They along with other stakeholders must be involved in all decision-making processes concerning sustainable use of forest resources. *EU Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

The EU reaffirms the importance of increased support to safeguard the rights of local and indigenous communities and to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices. It is also important to assist partner countries in their development of policies for co-management and decentralised decision-making based on well-defined and fair ownership and access rights to land and natural resources. The Council underlines the importance of increasing local communities' awareness of the economic value of biodiversity in order to create incentives for the sustainable use and effective conservation of biological resources. *Council Conclusions – BAP Dev. Cooperation, 2001.*

The EU proposes that SBSTA recommends to the CoP to recognise the importance of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and access to genetic resources. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

3.3. Institutional and Socio-Economic Enabling Environment

3.3.1. Policies and Programmes

a. Global Forest Policy

Building on the Forest Principles, a legally binding instrument in the form of a convention should ensure such an approach and would further contribute to the implementation of those principles and to the implementation of the proposals for action in the IPF report. In the desire to establish sustainable forest management worldwide, the EU therefore continues its efforts to reach consensus on a global forest convention. A forest convention will represent a new type of international agreement on sectoral resource management, integrating environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects. A convention

needs to be comprehensive and balanced, covering all environmental, economic and social issues as well as means of implementation. *EU Council Conclusions, May 1997.*

As set out by the Council in May 1997, the EU has always advocated the necessity of establishing a clear political and legislative basis, which the EU has always believed could best be achieved through negotiating a legally binding instrument. Considering the results of IPF/IFF processes and taking into account the need for consensus, the EU will work within the proposed International Arrangement on Forests to achieve the objectives and fulfil the functions as outlined in the IFF report. The EU attaches importance to the assessment and monitoring of this process within five years with a view to considering the possibility of recommending the parameters for a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. The Council considers that the proposed International Arrangement on Forests constitutes a step towards the necessary commitment to change and strengthen national forest policies and international co-ordination and co-operation and notes that its effectiveness should be reviewed in five years. *EU Council Conclusions – UNFF-1, April 2000.*

b. Work Programme

The EU asks for COP-4 of the CBD to endorse a rolling three-year work programme on forest biological diversity which takes account of proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, as endorsed by the UNGA Special Session, and is complementary to work underway in the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. Noting that the conservation of forests cannot be isolated from the conservation of nature in general, this work programme should inter alia,

- aim to identify, on a scientific basis, the relationship between the conservation and sustainable use of forests and biodiversity and the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and decline in forests, taking account of the research priorities identified by SBSTTA, and
- promote and integrate biodiversity objectives in measures needed for the sustainable management of forests at the national, regional and global levels, and in other forestry policy frameworks.

The EU considers that the 5th Conference of the Parties should establish an ad hoc technical expert group on forest biological diversity on the basis of recommendation V/7 of the SBSTTA, taking also into account the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), the outcome of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) and CSD8. *Council Conclusions CBD – COP-4, March 1998.*

The EU affirms the need of making progress in the implementation of the programme of work on forest biological diversity. The work on status and trends and identification of options for conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity (Decision IV/7 of the Conference of the Parties) should be completed in time for the 7th meeting of SBSTTA in 2001, and before the 6th meeting of Conference of the Parties in 2002. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

c. Regional Forest Programmes

The EU emphasises the importance of collaboration and coherent action at the global, regional and national levels on forest-related issues, for example along the lines of work being undertaken within the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, and the Ministerial Process on the protection on forests in Europe. *Council Conclusions CBD – COP-4.*

d. National Forest Programmes and National Biodiversity Programmes

The EU stresses the importance of national forest programmes as a central coordinating instrument for all stakeholders involved in the process. *EU Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

The EU recognises that the ecosystem approach should be used by all Parties and Governments in particular regarding the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention. It should also be implemented through all the relevant work programmes of the Convention. This implementation should be

supported by a set of voluntary guidelines and suggestions for action, drawing on regional workshops. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

The EU underlines that the prime responsibility for sustainable forest management rests with individual countries. National forest programmes are the essential building block to that end. All EU Member States have already their national forest programmes. The EU considers that the United Nations Forum on Forests as proposed by the IFF Report, should represent an international arrangement for resource management, integrating environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects, that should facilitate and promote implementation of management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests at all levels. *EU Council Conclusions – UNFF-1, April 2001.*

The EU Member States are already committed to developing national forest programmes to strengthen sustainable forest management in Europe. *EU Council Conclusions, UNFF-1, May 2001.*

At the national level, sustainable development strategies will, among others, be a key mechanism by improving complementarity and consistency as well as filling gaps between existing strategies and programmes in a participatory manner. *EU Council Conclusions – Preparation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, May/June 2001.*

The EU agrees with the statement by the Secretary General's report in the summary para 3 that, at national level, countries will need to identify and set their own priorities, through national forest programmes. The UNFF Plan of Action should facilitate such national programmes, as well as assist in the identification of priority actions at the regional and global levels. *EU Statement – UNFF-1, June 2001.*

The EU reiterates its commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and to support the developing countries efforts to effectively implement it, through the development and implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. *Council Conclusions – BAP Cooperation Development, July 2001.*

3.3.2. Supporting Research on Forest Biodiversity and Sustainable Management

(See also Assessment and Monitoring)

a. Improving the Understanding of Causes of Forest Biodiversity Losses

The Signatory States and the European Community will develop a coherent and responsible approach to the conservation and appropriate enhancement of biodiversity in forests through the development of national or regional guidelines with the aim, inter alia, of:

- obtaining sufficient knowledge about the ecosystem functions and services derived from European forests,
- obtaining sufficient knowledge of the status and requirements for management of the endangered, rare or representative biotic elements of the forests, and
- achieving adequate forecasting, monitoring and evaluation of the consequences for biodiversity of different silvicultural techniques. *Resolution H2 of the Helsinki Conference, MCPFE, 1993.*

b. Sustainable Forest Management Practices

Objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy are

to promote the development of specific, practical, cost effective and efficient biodiversity appraisal systems and methods for evaluating the impact on biodiversity of chosen forest development and management techniques

to promote international research into the impact of possible climate change on forest ecosystems, the possible adaptation of forest ecosystems to climate change and the mitigation of adverse effects of climate change by forest ecosystems as detailed in Resolution n°4 of the Helsinki Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. *EC Biodiversity Strategy, February 1998.*

3.3.3. Forest Laws and Planning

Forest management planning should aim to maintain or increase forest and other wooded area, and enhance the quality of the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources, including soil and water. This should be done by making full use of related services such as land-use planning and nature conservation. Monitoring of the forest resources and evaluation of their management should be periodically performed, and their results should be fed back into the planning process. Forest management plans or their equivalents should specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation of and damages to forest ecosystems. Forest management planning should make use of those policy instruments set up to support these activities. *Annex 2 of the L2 Resolution of the Lisbon Conference – MCPFE, June 1998.*

3.3.4. Trade and Related Issues

Sustainable use of forests resources requires the development of trade policies and market based instruments based on sustainable forest management. *EU Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

a. Illegal Logging

The EU is however disappointed that consensus could not be achieved on the issue of illegal logging, despite the tremendous efforts. The EU promised to provide positive inputs in any future dialogue on the issue. Furthermore, the EU is willing to contribute to any clarifications in trade data. *EU Statement – ITTA.*

In its *6th Environmental Action Programme (January 2001)*, the EU stresses that one of its priorities for forests is to take active measures to prevent and combat trade of illegally harvested wood.

b. Economic Failures and Distortions

It is essential to make markets work effectively for sustainable development. In this context the international trading system, including the WTO, has to play an effective role in contributing to sustainable development and to ensure that the WTO and multilateral environment agreements are mutually reinforcing. Further efforts are needed to eliminate environmentally damaging subsidies and promote market access for developing countries, especially for goods produced by small producers in the poorest countries. Increased use of sustainability impact assessments should be encouraged as a tool for maximising the benefits and minimising the potential negative impacts of trade and investment on sustainable development. *EU Council Conclusions – Preparation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, May/June 2001.*

c. Forest Certification

One of the forestry priorities of the EU's *6th Environmental Action Programme (January 2001)* is to stimulate the increase of the market share for sustainably produced wood inter alia through encouraging certification for sustainable forest management and encouraging labelling of related products.

Forest certification schemes may complement the eco-labelling instruments. Existing eco-labelling criteria for forest products, such as paper, mandate that wood fibres used in these products originate from sustainable managed forests; hence they encompass biodiversity conservation. Forest certification is a voluntary procedure where an independent certifier confirms that a forest is managed according to modern sustainability standards, including the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Forest certification aims to show consumers that wood or wood products come from forests where commercial exploitation is sustainable and follows good environmental practice. Credible forest certification schemes should be encouraged in consultation with stakeholders. *Biodiversity Action Plan – Natural Resources, 2001.*

The EU proposes that SBSTA recommend to the CoP to acknowledge that voluntary forest certification, as a market driven tool, may help ensure that establishment and management of forest carbon sinks meets criteria, indicators and standards of sustainable forest management and thereby help demonstrate that forest products are derived from sustainable managed forests. These standards would include relevant social, economic and environmental aspects and focus on biodiversity. *EU Proposal, UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

3.3.5. Awareness-Raising and Public Education

The Signatory States and the European Community will establish educational and public awareness programmes on the conservation of biodiversity emphasising, inter alia, the positive aspects of sustainable management of forests on the conservation of biodiversity. These programmes should be aimed, inter alia, at enabling effective participation by local communities, forest owners and Non-Governmental Organisations in the conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity *Resolution H2 of the Helsinki Conference – MCPFE, 1993.*

The EU recognises that primary responsibility for improving public education and awareness rests with Parties, who are best placed to take into account the particular levels of knowledge, institutional arrangements, and other approaches which characterise their national situation. It will be important to learn any relevant lessons from national reports to the CBD, and to consider how to organise assistance for Parties who may be keen to develop public awareness and education strategies but lack the ability to do so. *EU Council Conclusions, CBD COP-4, March 1998.*

The EU addresses the need to raise public awareness on the Convention and its objectives and recognises the possible role that the Clearing-House Mechanism can play in this field and in the greater involvement of the public in the discussions on the Convention and its future development; The EU emphasises the role of the Clearing-House Mechanism as the Convention's information and communication system for promoting and facilitating technical and scientific cooperation on biodiversity related issues. *EU Council Conclusions, CBD COP-5, March 2000.*

The EU draws attention to the significance and importance of active public participation and access to information to achieve the objectives of the action plan. This should include general awareness raising through traditional education systems and all relevant media tools as well as specific information and training for decision-makers and managers. *EU Draft Council Conclusions BAP Natural Resources, July 2001.*

3.4. Participation in International Processes

The EU welcomes the work taking place under the IPF and recalls the statement from COP-2 on biological diversity and forest from the CBD to the IPF and further considers that a constructive dialogue between the COP and the IPF or any successor process would be highly desirable, including biodiversity and forests, the relationship between indigenous and local communities and forests and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of forests genetic resources. *EU Council Conclusions – CBD COP-3, October 1996.*

The EU urges all partners to show a sustained commitment to the implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action. The EU Member States are already committed to developing national forest programmes to strengthen sustainable forest management in Europe. As the group of donors providing the largest volume of grant funds for forests the EU is ready to take a leading role, internationally, in the implementation process. *EU Council Conclusions – UNFF-1, May 2001.*

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) is a vital part of the new international arrangement on forests. The EU wants to stress the two main tasks of the CPF that are underlined in the ECOSOC resolution; to support the UNFF and contribute to its MYPOW and to enhance cooperation among its organisations. The CPF should collaborate in an open, transparent and flexible manner, based on a lead-agency approach with cooperation both among CPF members and between the CPF and other partners. The EU invites the UNFF Secretariat to undertake frequent consultations with these other fora e.g. the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity. *EU Statement – UNFF-1, June 2001.*

The EU is of the firm opinion that UNFF and CBD have mutually supportive roles, and should cooperate closely. The CPF forms an excellent platform for such cooperation. Of the most important aspects for successful cooperation is coordinated participation by governments/Parties. *Draft EU Presidency speaking notes on relations between UNFF and CBD, June 2001.*

The EU considers that the Plan of Action of UNFF should be seen as a process to support implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, which are to be carried out at the national, regional and global levels. It is urgent to define the Plan. The Plan of Action should build on the IFF Final Report, which outlines how implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action should be undertaken. Since the UNFF is a facilitating rather than an operational body, its Plan of Action will have to work through existing instruments by giving guidance for more effective and coherent support for the implementation at all levels of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action. *EU Statement – UNFF-1, June 2001.*

Many of the IPF/IFF proposals for action are directed towards international organisations and instruments, and there is significant unrealised potential for further strengthening and mobilising the capacity of existing international and regional organisations and instruments to support and promote the goal of management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Therefore, the EU will work towards the development by April 2002 of a CBD work programme on forest biological diversity that will, inter alia, effectively help implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity. [...] The inclusion of all relevant IPF/IFF proposals for action in the CBD work programme on forest biological diversity will also enable GEF, as the financial mechanism for CBD, to provide support for their implementation. It should also be noted that the GEF has been invited as a member organisation in CPF, which would

further facilitate cooperation. [...] The EU further stresses the importance of the CBD COP decision IV/7, in which the CBD establishes a work programme for forest biological diversity, and also states the important role of FAO in monitoring and reporting of all aspects of forests, including forest biological diversity. [...] For the successful work of UNFF as well as CBD it is particularly important that monitoring and reporting of all aspects of forests are co-ordinated by CPF, to avoid duplication of work and to facilitate reporting procedures for countries/ governments. It is thus important that UNFF/ MYPOW and CBD use the same format for monitoring and reporting. Both bodies presently seem to work with the presumption that FAO should have an organising role. Genetic resources and traditional knowledge are complicated issues dealt with by many fora, including UNFF, CBD, WIPO and FAO. In CBD, WIPO and FAO negotiations on most aspects of genetic resources and traditional knowledge already are ongoing. The EU therefore believes that UNFF and its MYPOW would benefit from not considering general aspects of these issues. UNFF should only focus on aspects related to forests. CPF could be used for facilitating cooperation with other bodies in this, as well as other, aspects. [...] The EU also recognises the need to develop close cooperation between UNFF and other organisations than CBD. *Presidency speaking notes on relations between UNFF and CBD, June 2001.*

The Committee on Forestry (COFO) strongly encouraged the Secretariat to ensure the Organization's lead role in the newly established Collaborative Partnership on Forestry (CPF), established by the UN Forum on Forests, in order to speed up implementation of the IPF/IFF recommendations. In line with this the CPF members have agreed on the lead role of the FAO in this matter. COFO further requested that FAO work with the other CPF members to establish an internal CPF work programme to support the UNFF including its future Multi Year Programme of work and its plan of action. We would also like to highlight the COFO request to FAO, in collaboration with other CPF members, to assist UNFF in its work related to monitoring assessment and reporting on progress towards implementing the International Panel of Forests (IPF) and International Forest Forum (IFF) proposals for action, using existing channels and streamlining the reporting processes to the extent possible. FAO should also continue to support countries in their implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action including capacity building and related technical and financial assistance to countries to develop and implement effective national policy frameworks and national forest programmes. We also would like to underline the significant potential and capacity of the Regional Forestry Commission (RFCs) to identify emerging and important regional forestry issues. COFO urged the FAO Secretariat to continue to strengthen the capacity and roles of the RFCs. The private sector and non-governmental organizations in forestry need to be more involved in the work of the Commissions as their participation could greatly enhance the RFCs. *EU Statement – FAO: 120th session of the Council, June 2001.*

The EU firmly believes that the necessity for climate change mitigation and adaptation gives new urgency for implementing the CBD and related international agreements or recommendations, such as those of the CBD and UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum of Forests (IFF) and UNFF for sustainable forest management. Stressing their implementation would create synergies and help to underline mutual supportiveness of the major global environmental agreements. [...] The EU proposes that SBSTA recommend to the CoP to instruct the SBSTA to consider the impact of climate change on forest biological diversity, in collaboration with the SBSTTA of the CBD and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), as appropriate and where feasible. *EU Proposal, UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

This suggests the need for better and continued dialogue and closer co-operation between UNFCCC and CBD, as well as other fora, such as the United Nations Forest Forum (UNFF) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD). Stressing their implementation would create synergies and help to underline mutual supportiveness of the major global environmental agreements. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

The EU hopes that ITTO can play an important role in the UNFF and become a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, which would coordinate the different actions of all international organisations involved in forests. *EU Statement – ITTA.*

3.5. Coordination and Integration

In the dialogue that the international community has conducted for the past years several major concerns have emerged. They are for instance underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, trade-related issues, traditional forest-related knowledge, forest conservation, financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technology as well as formulation and implementation of national forest programmes. They are cross-cutting in nature requiring co-ordinated national and international action and special attention in our future work. *EU Submission on possible functions, elements and options for international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, September 1999.*

The interlinkages between forestry and other sectors of the economy are important and there is a need for coherence between activities undertaken in all relevant sectors and financed under the different instruments of the Community. [...] The EU stresses the need for coordination, coherence and complementarity of forest related interventions by the international community in general and in particular in the formulation and implementation of national forest programmes. *EU Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

The EU recalls the Conclusions of the Cardiff and the Vienna European Councils on environment and sustainable development and reiterates the request to integrate environmental issues into all community policies, of which sustainable use of forests offers a concrete example. *EU Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

There is a clear overlapping between the activities developed by IPPC and by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the biosafety protocol in particular. The IPPC is competent for phytosanitary risk related to some GMO's. As a consequence, the IPPC has to take part, within its competence fields, in risk management. A link has to be established between the secretariat of the Biodiversity Convention and the IPPC to identify collaboration and complementarity between the two institutions. The objective is to avoid duplication of work and non-compatible recommendations. *Preparation of ICPM-3 – Working Document, May 2000.*

The EU stresses the importance it places on the appropriate participation of all relevant organisations, instruments, institutions, regional processes as well as the private sector, NGOs and other major groups as defined in Agenda 21 in the work of the UNFF. *EU Council Conclusions – UNFF-1, May 2001.*

The EU calls on the Commission to promote the mainstreaming of environment into sectoral programmes on integrated rural development. These provide important opportunities to reverse the loss of the productive base for rural and urban livelihoods caused by inter alia deforestation, unsustainable water use, desertification and soil fertility loss. *EU Council Conclusions – Strategy for the integration of environmental considerations into development policy to promote sustainable development, May/June 2001.*

The private sector plays a key role and should be part of the efforts to achieve sustainable development, also through foreign direct investment. Commitments by the business community to corporate responsibility, environmental accountability and exchange of best practices and technology transfer could be parts of "a global pact", which would include public-private partnerships as well as an increased North-South co-operation. The EU welcomes an early dialogue with partners in the private sector to explore mechanisms for joint commitments to be taken by Governments and the private sector at the Summit, in order to promote sustainable development and give concrete meaning to an ethics of global responsibility. *EU Council Conclusions – Preparation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, May/June 2001.*

The EU finds the multi-stakeholder dialogues important to provide opportunities for the private sector and other major groups to give meaningful inputs to the intergovernmental forest policy dialogue and the Plan of Action. Multi-stakeholder dialogues should take place at each of the future UNFF sessions and should be organised at the beginning of each session. This, of course, should not prevent active participation of the stakeholders during and between the UNFF sessions. *EU Statement – UNFF-1, June 2001.*

The EU underlines the need to continue to improve the integration of biodiversity in the implementation and in future development of the Common Agricultural Policy. *EU Council Conclusions – Biodiversity Action Plan for Agriculture, June 2001.*

The EU acknowledges the need for co-ordination and integration with existing initiatives in international fora to identify interactions and synergies with the Convention on Biological Diversity and activities under other existing international agreements. *EU Draft Council Conclusions, BAP Chapeau, July 2001.*

The EU proposes that SBSTA recommend to the CoP to stress the need for coordination of policy development also at the national level. *EU Proposal – UNFCCC: SBSTA-14, July 2001.*

The EU confirmed in its 6th *Environment Action Programme* (2001) the importance of integration since that Programme shall facilitate the full integration of environmental protection requirements into other Community policies while, at the same time, ensuring that measures proposed and adopted in favour of the environment take account of the objectives of the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development, full consideration of all options and instruments, as well as being based on extensive dialogue and sound science.

3.6. Financing International Cooperation

The EU reaffirms that policies which promote sustainable forest management have the potential to contribute significantly to the Community's broader development objectives, including the campaign against poverty. They take into account the multifunctional roles of forests while promoting efficient utilisation, processing and trade of wood and non-wood forest products. Sustainable management, conservation and protection of forest resources contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems. Forests and in particular tropical forests play an important role in the mitigation of climate change. [...] The interlinkages between forestry and other sectors of the economy are important and there is a need for coherence between activities undertaken in all relevant sectors and financed under the different instruments of the Community. In this context the Council attaches special importance to EC development policies regarding environment, poverty, private sector and gender. *Council Resolution on Forests and Development, November 1999.*

The Community shall provide financial assistance and appropriate expertise to promote the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries, so as to meet the economic, social and environmental demands placed on forests at local, national and global levels. The assistance and expertise provided under this Regulation shall complement and reinforce that provided through other instruments of development cooperation. [...] Activities eligible for financing shall include pilot projects in the field, innovative programmes, studies and research, the results of which will, in addition to their specific objectives, contribute to the development, adjustment and better implementation of forestry policies of the Community and of partner countries. Particular attention shall be given to:

- encouraging environmentally and socially responsible private entrepreneurship in the forest products processing and marketing chain, in the context of agreed policies for private sector development and taking into account existing social systems and community-based economic activities;

- encouraging the direct participation of cooperation partners in the developing countries, and at the same time ensuring an appropriate scale of interventions and adaptation of administrative procedures to local management capacity;
- providing prior information and ensuring the participation of forest-dependent people and local communities in activities carried out under this Regulation, taking into account their development priorities and economic, social and cultural rights, inter alia, through capacity building, in order to ensure their full participation in all decision-making processes;
- the sustainability of any proposed activity, social, economic as well as environmental;
- proper coordination and information flows between the Commission and the Member States in order to ensure coherence of activities in the regions concerned;
- gender-specific roles, knowledge, perspectives and contributions of women/girls and men/boys in the management and use of forests.

Regulation (EC) No 2494/2000 on measures to promote the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries, November 2000.

Improved management of natural resources is, in many cases, the most cost-effective short and medium-term measure to increase incomes, food security and health for the majority of the poor in LDCs. Inadequate responses to the current negative environmental trends will also undermine prospects for long-term economic growth. The OECD/DAC members are committed to assist LDCs so that these negative trends can be reversed by 2015. [...] The impact of climate change varies widely by country but LDCs play an important role in the conservation and sustainable management of global commons, in particular biological diversity that generate significant benefits and wealth for the global community. It is important that the costs for the preservation of these resources are shared with the LDCs as agreed in the Convention on Biological Diversity. *EU Preparation for the 3rd United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, January 2001.*

One of the main challenges to achieving sustainable forest management is to make it self-financing in the long run. Public, private, domestic and international sources have complementary roles to play in achieving this goal. Sustainable forest management is important in meeting human needs and alleviating poverty. In this context, there is a continuing need for Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows – especially to the poorest countries – in support of national forest programmes, including national financing strategies, and for capacity building. The EU remains fully committed to development cooperation, including to reaching the ODA target of 0,7 % of GNP by all donor countries as soon as possible. Innovative work is also required on financial instruments, which will capture the full value of services provided by forests. [...] The EU also welcomes the proposed collaborative action in support of national forest programmes through the NFP Implementation Facility and UNDP Programme on Forests (PROFOR). The EU has a key role to play in making both initiatives successful. [...] The EU will continue to assist developing countries to develop and implement national forest programmes in so far as the countries concerned request such assistance in their bilateral negotiations with donors within existing development programmes. *EU Council Conclusions, UNFF-I, May 2001.*

4. The framework for action

4.1. The EU internal context

The EU has a total forest area of 130 million ha, accounting for about one third of its total territory. Some 87 million ha are considered exploitable forests (managed for wood production and non-wood goods and services). Less than 2% of the forest cover is considered original, old growth forest.

There is no common EU forest policy and, in application of the principle of subsidiarity, responsibility lies with the Member States. Nevertheless, there is a large body of EU and international legislation and measures relating to the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable management of forests.

4.1. *Nature and biodiversity*

4.1.1. The Habitats Directive and Natura 2000²

The Habitats Directive has for objectives to maintain biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States. The Directive's main lines of action are the creation of a coherent European ecological network of representative sites, known as Natura 2000, and the protection of a number of fauna and flora species. The Natura 2000 network consists of a series of Special Areas of Conservation which protect habitats and species of Community interest. Areas classified as Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive are also part of Natura 2000.

The Habitats Directive is a key tool to ensure protection of forests in Europe. It lists "Natural Habitat Types of Community interest whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)" in Annex I. This contains nine habitat types, including forests. Forests are divided into: i) forests of Boreal Europe, ii) forests of Temperate Europe, iii) Mediterranean deciduous forests, iv) Mediterranean sclerophyllous forests, v) Temperate mountainous coniferous forests, vi) Mediterranean and Macaronesian mountainous coniferous forests.

Within these subcategories a number of forest types are identified as "priority habitat types", such as Caledonian forests and Mediterranean pine forests with endemic Black Pine. Such priority forests will automatically qualify as Sites of Community Importance if they have been included on a national list of candidate sites.

The **Wild Birds Directive**³ seeks to protect all species of birds and their habitats in the Member States. It requires that a sufficient habitat diversity and territory be maintained, which can include forests, taking into account economic and recreational requirement. Certain listed species are subject to special habitat protection.

² Directive 92/43/EEC, 21/05/1992

³ Directive 79/409/EEC, 2/04/1979

4.1.2. The EC Biodiversity Strategy⁴

In 1998 the European Community adopted a Communication on a European Biodiversity Strategy, as required by the ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This strategy defines a framework for actions to achieve integration of biodiversity concerns in relevant Community policy areas.

The Strategy is conceived as a ‘matrix’ of five major themes (biodiversity conservation; sustainable use; sharing of benefits; research; and education) relevant to seven different policy areas (including forests, nature conservation, agriculture and development).

It acknowledges that forests “contain the greatest proportion of biological diversity in terms of species, genetic material and ecological processes and have an intrinsic value for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Furthermore, forests are important to combat climate change and minimise its impact on the conservation of other ecosystems”.

Proposals for the sustainable management of forests include halting and reversing the current trends of destruction of tropical and temperate forests, the implementation of EC and national policies and initiatives such as restoration and regeneration of deforested areas, afforestation, protection against fire and pollution, etc.

Besides those proposals, the Strategy points out the need to avoid genetic erosion and maintain a diverse genetic pool to ensure the future viability and improvement of the qualities of the varieties and breeds involved. Ex-situ conservation, such as gene banks and botanical gardens can play, a very valuable role if their activities are integrated in the framework of coordinated re-introduction or integrated conservation schemes.

4.1.3. The Biodiversity Action Plans⁵

As a response to the Biodiversity Strategy, the European Commission proposed in 2001 a series of action plans to integrate the protection of biodiversity into EU agricultural, fishery, environment and development and co-operation policies. The aim of the action plans is to stop losses in wildlife, ecosystems, varieties of crops, domestic animals and fish. The plans define concrete actions and measures and specify measurable targets to ensure a reversal of the current trend.

Forests receive little special attention in the Biodiversity Action Plans, as it was judged that the issue was addressed through the EC Forestry Strategy. However, the BAP for natural resources lists several forest-specific action points, including encouraging credible forest certification schemes. One of the objectives of the BAP for development co-operation is to support sustainable use of natural resources, particularly in relation to forests. It supports secure ownership of, and access to, land and natural resources for local people, including forested lands and forest-related products and acknowledges the multifunctional nature of landscapes, particularly forests.

4.1.4. The Sixth Environmental Action Programme⁶

The four priority areas for the sixth Environmental Action Programme are climate change, nature and biodiversity, health and environment, and natural resources and waste.

Forests are referred to in Article 5, paragraph h of the programme, on the “Objectives and priority areas for action on nature and bio-diversity”. These objectives are to develop initiatives to promote the protection of forests and the implementation of sustainable forest policies, in line with the EC Forestry

⁴ COM(1998) 42, 04/02/1998

⁵ COM (2001) 162, 27/03/2001

⁶ COM (2001) 31, 24/01/2001

Strategy, including the improvement of Community measures, a better co-ordination of efforts by all policy sectors and stakeholders, and the consideration of climate change effects in forestry.

4.2. Forests

4.2.1. The EC Forestry Strategy⁷

The European Commission proposed in 1998, a few months after the Biodiversity Strategy, a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on a Forestry Strategy for the European Union.

The Strategy emphasises the multifunctional role of forests, states that the rules of the market economy should apply to them and that, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, the Strategy should be implemented at the lowest possible level. It urges the Community to take part in the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe and IPF/IFF.

The Strategy recommends that actions for the conservation of forest biodiversity should be taken both at the in-situ and ex-situ levels. Sustainably managed forested areas should be complemented by the establishment of specially managed protected zones. Ex-situ conservation should include measures related to the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in forestry.

It further addresses the problems of climate change, forest certification and the use of wood as an energy source.

4.2.2. Forest-related regulations

The Regulation on the **Protection of Community forests against fires**⁸ has for objectives to find ways to reduce the outbreak of forest fires and the total area burned, in view of the maintenance and monitoring of forest ecosystems to safeguard the multiple functions of forests for the benefit of rural areas. This Regulation is in the process of being amended.

The Regulation on the **Protection of the Community's forests against atmospheric pollution**⁹ has for objectives to provide for increased protection of forests in the Community. It envisages a periodic inventory of damage causes to forests, a network of permanent observation plots required for intensive, continuous surveillance. It is in the process of being amended.

The **Eco-label** Regulation¹⁰ aims at promoting products that have the potential to reduce negative environmental impacts. To date, the only product group that relates to forests to which an Eco-label has been granted is tissue paper. One other product, furniture, is under consideration for the moment.

The **Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)** Regulation¹¹ establishes a voluntary environmental management scheme, with a view to promoting continuous environmental performance improvements. The Regulation will allow a wide range of industrial and service sectors to apply, including forest industries.

⁷ COM (1998) 649, 03/11/1998

⁸ Council Regulation 2158/1992, 23/07/1992

⁹ Council Regulation 3528/86, 17/11/1986

¹⁰ Council Regulation 1980/2000

¹¹ Council Regulation xxxx/2001 – yet to be published in the Official Journal

- The Regulation on the **European Forestry Information and Communication System (EfICS)**¹² aims at obtaining information and improving communication concerning forest inventories and forest databases.

4.2.3. Pan-European processes

The **Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE)** is an initiative for co-operation between nearly 40 European countries and the European Community to address common threats and opportunities related to forests and forestry. One of the activities of the MCPFE is the development of general guidelines for the sustainable management of forests in Europe.

The intention to implement the forest related results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which took place in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, led to the Second Ministerial Conference, held in 1993 in Helsinki. There the international debate on forests was continued, bringing together not only the countries and their respective ministries responsible for forestry affairs, but also the private sector, international forest community and environmental NGOs. Thirty-seven states and the European Community signed four resolutions, and for the first time a common definition of Sustainable Forest Management was agreed upon.

General, non-binding, guidelines for the conservation of the biodiversity of European forests are defined in Resolution H2 of the Second Ministerial Conference (Helsinki, 1993) while resolution H1 sets out guidelines for the sustainable management of forests and also makes reference to conservation of biodiversity. The Strasbourg S2 Resolution (1990) addresses the conservation of forest genetic resources.

In 1995, the European Community endorsed the **Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy**, which was developed in the ministerial process “Environment for Europe”. The priorities for actions for forestry are to better integrate the strategic principles into forest management, and thus further enhance indigenous tree species, set aside forest areas to develop naturally, harmonize afforestation policies with nature conservation and landscape policies, and allow the wise use of fertilizers and pesticides where appropriate.

The “Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000” is a joint initiative of the MCPFE and the pan-European Ministerial Process “Environment for Europe”. It defines important objectives and actions in the field of biological diversity as an essential element of sustainable forest management.

4.3. Rural Development

4.3.1. The Rural Development Regulation¹³

In the context of the 1999 reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (Agenda 2000), the Regulation establishes the framework for Community support for sustainable rural development.

The forestry chapter of the Regulation places emphasis on the multi-functional role of agriculture and forestry. Biodiversity aspects of the Regulation include management plans and investment measures to improve the biological value of forests, the development of criteria for sustainable management, the preservation of forests and the protection of forests against air pollution and fire. Afforestation of

¹² Council Regulation (EEC) No 1615/89, 15/06/1989

¹³ Council Regulation 1257/1999, 17/05/1999

farmland encourages forms of countryside management that are more compatible with the environment, combating the greenhouse effect and absorbing carbon dioxide.

In this context, financial support may be granted to private forest owners and municipalities for the management and the sustainable development of forestry, the preservation of resources and the extension of woodland areas, with a view to maintaining the economic, ecological and social functions of woodland in rural areas. Such aid may contribute to improving non-farm land, afforestation of farm land and preserving woodlands.

4.3.2. Pre-accession measures for agricultural and rural development

This Regulation “Pre-accession measures for agricultural and rural development in the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe”¹⁴ establishes the framework for support for sustainable agriculture and rural development for the pre-accession period for applicant countries. Forest-related measures eligible for financing are forestry, including afforestation of agricultural areas, investments in forest holdings owned by private owners and processing and marketing of forest products.

4.4. Development Cooperation

4.4.1. The Strategy on Forest Development Cooperation

This Strategy is currently under development and is the follow-up of the Communication “Forests and Development, the EC approach”. It is based on this Communication and the related Council Resolution. The Strategy aims at the reconsideration of development policies and activities in light of the outcome of the IFF process.

The Strategy is based on the overall development policy of the EC and consists of a two sided approach where governance issues and knowledge/information are of key relevance: support to establishment of enabling conditions for SFM at the macro-level in non-forest sectors (improved governance, cross-sectoral policy co-ordination, land use, etc.), support provided within the forest sector (SFM through national forest programmes, support to forest related poverty reduction)

4.4.2 The EC approach to forests and development

In 1999, the EC produced a Communication to the Council and Parliament on Forestry Development Cooperation, “Forests and Development, the EC approach”¹⁵. In the face of increasing deforestation and degradation, the overall goal of this non-binding instrument is to promote sustainable forest management in developing countries as a contribution to sustainable development globally. This goal is to be pursued in accordance with the legal and political commitments arising from various international fora and agreements.

However, the document notes the weakness of the institutional set-up of the forest sector in tropical countries, the lack of adequate information on forest resources and the damage caused to the forest sector by other economic sectors. At international level, the communication calls for better coordination between forest conservation and development policies, incentives, adequate aid for donors and internationalisation of the functions and values of forests to ensure sustainable forest management. At Community level, it calls for development cooperation policy to help reduce deforestation and forest degradation, increase revenue from forest products, maintain genetic resources and biodiversity, create institutional structures and develop research. To achieve these objectives it proposes implementation of a forest policy framework, sustainable interventions in forest conservation

¹⁴ Council Regulation 1268/1999, 21/06/1999

¹⁵ COM (99) 554, 4/11/1999

and use, and efficient utilisation and processing of forest products. It also proposes the development of research and information and technology transfers, taking into account multisectoral aspects, donor coherence and certain regional priorities in forestry.

Actions will have to recognise the role of forests in economic and social development, the promotion of equitable revenue sharing, technology transfer, the reduction of deforestation and the conservation of biodiversity, the issues of forest fires, desertification and climate change and the safeguarding of natural habitats and their ecological functions.

4.4.3. Other measures

The **Cotonou Agreement**¹⁶ (for ACP Countries) and its compendium on forests. The agreement seeks to build a partnership for poverty alleviation and the promotion of social, environmental and economic sustainability. Forest-related measures aim to promote the prevention of desertification, drought and deforestation, sustainable tropical forest management, sustainable rural and urban development, sustainable tourism, etc. Forest biodiversity and genetic resources are to be conserved or regenerated, forest-related knowledge spread and revenue from forest products shared in an equitable manner.

Measures to promote the **conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries**¹⁷. This Regulation complements the Cotonou Agreement and extends to all countries that receive assistance from the EU. It seeks to ensure better co-ordination between Member States and Community action by setting common standards for development cooperation. The EC is to promote the use of wood and non-wood forest products from sustainably managed sources, to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable forestry and adopt a participatory approach to development planning. The Regulation envisages the development of appropriate policy frameworks, the conservation of forest biodiversity, sustainable forest management including forest certification, environmentally sound harvesting methods, the application of improved technology and knowledge generation.

4.5. Research

The fifth framework programme (1998-2002) for research and technological development (RTD) includes forest key actions in two thematic programmes entitled “Quality of life and management of living resources” and “Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (EESD)”:

- **Quality of life - Sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and forestry, and integrated development of rural areas including mountains areas.** This key action aims at supporting innovative approaches to production and exploitation within the general framework of both competitiveness and sustainable development. It involves (1) **multifunctional management ensuring proper levels of biodiversity**, what's require to improve our understanding of the interaction between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and to define criteria and indicators for forest sustainable management and (2) **protection, conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems**.
- **EESD - Global change, climate and biodiversity.** This key action aims to develop the scientific basis necessary to underpin implementation of Community policies and to help deliver the Community goal of sustainable development. Supported research activities include interactions between ecosystems and the carbon and nitrogen cycles, assessing and conserving biodiversity, adaptation to climate change, combating land degradation and desertification and reconciling biodiversity conservation with potentially conflicting human activities.

¹⁶ ACP-EU Partnership Agreement 2000/483/EC, 23/06/2000

¹⁷ Parliament and Council Regulation 2494/2000, 07/11/2000

The Commission's proposal for a new framework programme (2002-2006)¹⁸ is under evaluation. One of the priority thematic areas put forward in the proposal is "Sustainable development and global change", with emphasis on technologies for sustainable development and climate change (this latter area includes biodiversity).

4.6. Climate change

"Preparing for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol"¹⁹. The present Communication does not address the issues related to greenhouse gas removals by sinks resulting from direct human-induced land-use change and forestry activities. However, as stressed in its Communication on a Forestry Strategy for the EU, the Commission believes this matter is of prime importance for the EU, in particular as regards forestry activities, and continues to participate in the ongoing discussions in this field.

The **EC Biodiversity Strategy** points out that the impact of climate change on some sensitive ecosystems and crop varieties as well as the effects of some actions to combat climate change for example can be relevant to the objectives of the CBD and therefore should these reforestation and afforestation initiatives incorporate measures that ensure additional benefits for biodiversity.

4.2. The international context

The European Community is a Party to the several multilateral international environmental agreements, which are in a way or another related to forests: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought, the International Tropical Timber Agreement, the Convention on Migratory Species and the Bern Convention. These treaties are "mixed treaties", in that neither the European Community nor its Member States are exclusively competent for their conclusion or implementation.

Although the European Community is not a signatory Party to other forest-related multilateral agreements such as Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Ramsar Convention and the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, it does follow the processes actively and it does take action to implement those treaties. For example, it has been fully implementing CITES since 1984.

The European Union participated actively in the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and UN Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), which led to the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The UN ECOSOC decided that the UNFF can recommend the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests.

The European Union is also a member of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. The FAO cooperates with the CBD Secretariat in work related to agricultural biodiversity, where it plays a leading role, as well as work related to the biological diversity of forests, inland waters and marine and coastal ecosystems.

The European Member States are members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

¹⁸ COM (2001) 94, 21/02/2001

¹⁹ COM (1999) 230, 19/02/1999

4.2.1. The Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) seeks to achieve the following objectives: (a) the conservation of biological diversity, (b) the sustainable use of its components, and (c) the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from access to genetic resources.

Although there are no provisions that explicitly mention forests, it is nonetheless apparent that the subject matter of many of the CBD's provisions apply to forests, as for example Articles 6 (General measures), 7 (Identification and monitoring), 8 (In-situ conservation), 9 (Ex-situ conservation), 10 (Sustainable use of components), 15 (Access to genetic resources), etc.

The forest is a favoured field of application for different protective measures which could be put in place as part of this impetus:

the establishment of strict nature reserves;

the establishment of specially managed protected zones;

specific regulations for the preservation and/or management of certain components of biological diversity;

the necessity of evaluating the impact of certain projects likely to harm biological diversity and the establishment of compensatory measures.

Forests are also at the heart of the commercial potential of biodiversity. The Convention actually affirms national sovereignty over genetic resources and makes access to them subject to payment or technology transfers. Far from being elevated to the status of a global heritage, as some wanted, biodiversity is becoming a commercial product. It so happens that a large proportion of the molecules of potential use to the pharmaceutical, cosmetics or biotechnological industries are found in tropical forests. Although clandestine access to genetic resources could be made increasingly difficult, the mechanisms which will apply the principles of the Convention have to be invented (access to financial and genetic resources, fair and equitable sharing of the benefits, scientific and technical cooperation, transfer of ecologically sound technologies...) while preserving the interests of the users and the possessors of this resource.

In 1998, the Conference of the Parties (COP-4) adopted a Work Programme on Forest Biodiversity. However, the implementation of the work programme has been pending while waiting the results of an ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Forest Biological Diversity. It will be revised at COP-6 in 2002, in the view of expanding its focus from research to practical action.

4.2.2. The Convention on Migratory Species

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) is the only global UN-based intergovernmental organisation which is established exclusively for the conservation and management of migratory species. The CMS recognises that States must be the protectors of migratory species that live within or pass through their national jurisdictional boundaries and aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range.

The Convention constitutes a framework within which Parties may act to conserve migratory species and their habitat by: adopting strict protection measures for migratory species that have been characterized as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range (species listed in Appendix I); concluding agreements for the conservation and management of migratory species that have an unfavourable conservation status or would benefit significantly from international cooperation (species listed in Appendix II); and joint research and monitoring activities.

The Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals is relevant to forests as habitat of migratory species and as listing species that are transient components of forest biodiversity or rely on forest biodiversity along their migration routes.

4.2.3. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Signed in Washington in 1973, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) came into force on 1 July 1975. It is an international agreement between governments which aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. A check is enforced by the issue of import and export permits applicable to any animal or plant, whether alive or dead, and to any readily recognizable part or derivative of them. The conditions for the issue of the permits are fairly strict, depending on whether a species is listed in the CITES appendices.

The interaction of CITES with the wood trade has provoked fierce debate. In fact, under pressure from environmental protection NGOs, some developed countries proposed listing a number of tropical timber species, in which there is significant trade, in Appendix II. To date, about 15 'woody' species have been placed on CITES appendices. Some of these are commercially important, such as the Brazilian Rosewood (*Dalbergia nigra*), listed in Appendix I, and the African Teak (*Pericopsis elata*), listed in Appendix II. Some mahoganies are also included in the Appendices. Several non-woody species of forest areas are also protected by CITES.

Although the European Community is not a Party to CITES, it has fully implemented the Convention through Council Regulation 3626/82/EEC, which was later replaced by Council Regulation 338/97/EC. This Regulation controls import and export of some 30,000 wild plant and animal species and their products. An Annex bans import of a number of species identified as a threat to European Union ecosystems. The Regulation aims to improve application of CITES and wildlife trade regulations in the Member States, taking into account the present structure of wildlife trade and scientific knowledge.

At the same time, Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3418/83, containing detailed implementation provisions, particularly on the use of permits and certificates was replaced by Commission Regulation 939/97.

These two new Regulations not only fully implement the provisions of CITES, but also include provisions to implement the bulk of currently applicable recommendations of the Conference of the Parties on their interpretation and implementation. The Regulations go beyond CITES in many places.

4.2.4. The Convention on Climate Change

Initiated in 1990 at the 45th session of the UN, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was opened for signature at the Rio Conference in June 1992. The UNFCCC is the international response to climate change and it sets out a framework for action to control or cut greenhouse gas emissions. Its general objective is to achieve stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

A Protocol to the Convention was adopted in 1997 at the Third Conference of the Parties, held in Kyoto. Although it has yet to enter into force, the Kyoto Protocol commits industrialized countries to

achieve quantified targets for decreasing their emissions of greenhouse gases. A number of provisions of both the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol either refer directly to forests and forestry or are indirectly relevant to forest policies. In this context, the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol has important implications for biodiversity. The Biodiversity Strategy defines the policy of the Commission on this subject.

4.2.5. The Convention to Combat Desertification

Chapter 12 of Agenda 21 adopted in June 1992 develops principles of action, the activities and the necessary resources in six spheres of activity, including the fight against soil erosion (by intensifying forestation and afforestation). The UN Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCCD) was adopted on 17 June 1994. It came into effect on 26 December 1996 (90 days after the 50th ratification) and was signed by over 110 countries.

The Convention recognises the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of desertification, the importance of redirecting technology transfer so that it is demand-driven, and the involvement of local populations. The core of the CCD is the development of national and sub-regional and regional action programmes by national governments, in cooperation with donors, local populations and NGOs. It has the necessary holistic locally driven approach where the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources is seen as an integral part of measures to achieve sustainability.

4.2.6. The Bern Convention

The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (or Bern Convention) aims to ensure conservation of wild flora and fauna species and their habitats. Special attention is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species specified in appendices.

The signatory Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild flora and fauna species. Such measures should be included in the Parties planning and development policies and pollution control, with particular attention to the conservation of wild flora and fauna. The Parties undertake to promote education and disseminate general information concerning the need to conserve species of wild flora and fauna and their habitats.

4.2.7. The International Tropical Timber Agreement

The first International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) was signed in 1983 for a period of ten years and came into effect in April 1995. The renegotiation of this agreement took place at the beginning of 1994 and came into effect on 1 January 1997.

The International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), which creates the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), is primarily a commodity agreement, which aims to regulate the international trade in tropical timber between producer and consumer countries. ITTA seeks to balance both environmental and economic interests, which makes it different from other commodity agreements.

The mission of the ITTO is to facilitate discussion, consultation and international co-operation on issues relating to the international trade and utilization of tropical timber and the sustainable management of its resource base. The ITTO has 57 members as of July 2001, including the European

Community, which together represent 95 percent of world trade in tropical timber and 75 percent of the world's tropical forests.

The ITTO has adopted a number of policy guidance documents on sustainable forest management. Although the ITTO has no formal linkage with any international environmental agreement, the Guidelines on the Conservation of Biological Diversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests were meant to be consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity. In addition, concepts from the CBD have been included in the 1998 Criteria and Indicators.

In January 1994, when the text of the new agreement was adopted under the aegis of UNCTAD, the European Union abstained and issued a reservation. Besides the practical difficulties encountered by the delegations of members States in consulting their national authorities during the final phase of the negotiations, this reservation was based on two new policies of the ITTA:

enlarging the scope of the agreement to cover all wood types, including those from temperate or boreal forests;

extending the competence of the ITTO, to management of all types of forests in the world.

In 1995, the European Union announced an agreement to remove its reservation, while giving its interpretation of the terms of the agreement subject to examination. In 1996, the European Community and its Member States signed and notified provisional agreement on tropical wood, but appending an interpretative declaration which states that:

unless the scope of the Agreement is changed pursuant to Article 35 of the Agreement, the Agreement shall refer solely to tropical timber and tropical forests;

any financial contribution other than the contribution to the administrative budget provided for in Article 19 of the Agreement shall be entirely voluntary.

The commitment entered into in 1990 by the members of the ITTO specified that by the year 2000, all exports of tropical timber producers should come from sustainably managed resources through international collaboration and national policies and programmes. This Year 2000 Objective is reinforced by the new reference at the Rio Conference and the texts which followed it: non-legally binding authoritative statement on principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests, Agenda 21, Convention on Biological Diversity and Framework Convention on Climate Change. In the preamble, Year 2000 Objective is linked with a principle of the Rio Declaration on forests, which states that new financial resources would have to be provided to the developing countries to allow them to strengthen the management, conservation and sustainable development of their forest resources.

4.2.8. The United Nations Forum on Forests

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted resolution E/2000/35, outlining an international arrangement on forests and establishing the UNFF as a subsidiary body of ECOSOC.

The main objective of the international arrangement on forests is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. Its purpose is to: promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests at the national, regional and global levels; provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development; and carry out principal functions, based on the Rio Declaration, the Forest Principles, Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and the outcomes of the IPF and the IFF, in a manner consistent with and complementary to existing international legally-binding instruments relevant to forests.

The European Union is committed to make the UNFF efficient and result-oriented, underscoring that the operational aims of this newly created subsidiary body should be a priority in the international agenda.

4.2.9. The Food and Agriculture Organisation

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) established the intergovernmental Commission on Plant Genetic Resources in 1983. Renamed the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) in 1995, the Commission currently comprises 160 countries and the European Community. The CGRFA coordinates, oversees and monitors the development of the Global System for the Conservation and Utilization of PGRFA, which is comprised of the Commission itself and the non-binding IU, the rolling Global Plan of Action (GPA), the International Fund for Plant Genetic Resources, the World Information and Early Warning System, Codes of Conduct and Guidelines for the Collection and Transfer of Germplasm, the International Network of Ex Situ Collections under the auspices of FAO, and the international network of in situ conservation areas and crop-related networks.

The European Community participated in the Leipzig Conference on Plant Genetic Resources in June 1996 which adopted a Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. It is also participating in ongoing work aimed at revising the FAO's International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources in the light of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Commission has collaborated, and is collaborating with the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), Rome, on databases of European collections of plant genetic resources, and on crop plant descriptors.

4.2.10. The World Trade Organisation

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. The WTO came into being in 1995. One of the youngest of the international organizations, the WTO is the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) established in the wake of the Second World War. At the heart of the system — known as the multilateral trading system — are the WTO's agreements, negotiated and signed by a large majority of the world's trading nations, and ratified in their parliaments. These agreements are the legal ground-rules for international commerce. Essentially, they are contracts, guaranteeing member countries important trade rights. They also bind governments to keep their trade policies within agreed limits to everybody's benefit. The agreements were negotiated and signed by governments. But their purpose is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business.

One of the main results of the Uruguay Round negotiations concluded in 1994, with the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), was a comprehensive international agreement on intellectual property rights (IPRs). The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (the TRIPs Agreement) is the most far-reaching international instrument ever negotiated on intellectual property rights. It establishes minimum universal standards concerning patents, copyrights, trademarks, industrial designs, geographical indications, integrated circuits and undisclosed information (trade secrets), supplementing with additional obligations the previously established Paris, Berne, Rome and Washington conventions in their respective fields. This means that the obligations set forth in these conventions apply not only to countries parties to them but to any country which is or becomes a party to the TRIPs Agreement. Under the new rules, therefore, most developing countries are bound to amend their legislation in order to introduce higher standards of protection for intellectual property or extend protection to new areas, including the protection of some living forms.

Annex: Acronyms used in the Report

AHTEG	Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Forest Biological Diversity
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CHM	Clearing-House Mechanism
COFO	Committee on Forestry
COP	Conference of the Parties
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
ICPM	Interim Commission for Phytosanitary Measures
IFF	International Forum on Forests
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPF	Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LULUCF	Land use, Land use change and Forestry
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MCPFE	Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
MYPOW	Multi-Year Programme of Work
NFP	National Forest Programme
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (UNFCCC)
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SCBD	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
TRIPs	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
WTO	World Trade Organization