

**World Forest Week Item 7a: Progress, including reports from Regional Forestry
Committees, SILVAMED, IPC, ACPWP**

Wednesday, 26 Sept. (Red Room, 14:30 – 16:00, in first part of the session)

STATEMENT BY THE ACPWP CHAIRMAN MR. MICHAEL PETER

Thank you Chairperson

Your Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

After having accepted the pleasure of the rotating Chairmanship of the Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products (ACPWP) in 2012, this year has marked the start of a dynamic renewal of the Committee, through which the FAO Secretariat and the members are raising the capacity and relevance of the Committee to new levels.

As one of the oldest Committees of FAO, it has clearly served an important function over the years, but just as FAO has gone through a re-alignment process to ensure its relevance to the changing challenges facing the world, so must FAO's machinery be re-tooled to support these new objectives.

The ACPWP is no exception and even within the forestry sector there are new challenges and new opportunities, which necessitate a review of the committee's composition and functions.

For the private forest growers and for the forest industry more broadly, the ACPWP, as a Statutory Body of FAO, provides an extremely important vehicle to benefit from FAO's broad range of technical and normative work, and also to advise the FAO Forestry Department in managing the dynamic changes confronting the sector.

The multiple challenges are around us: climate change, competing land uses, water, energy security and fair and sustainable use of natural resources, to name a few.

Maintaining the resilience of forest ecosystems and their capacity to provide existing and new goods and services to cater for the needs of the growing population, requires new kinds of public-private partnerships.

We can no longer view challenges in isolation as there are strong linkages between food, fibre, animal feed, fuel and forest conservation. Often the very people whom we represent in our respective countries are already engaged in several of these management objectives and even on the same parcel of land.

I am pleased therefore to share some of the ACPWP highlights which will illustrate how the ACPWP can provide a powerful platform for such joint effective responses between FAO and the private sector.

In February this year the ACPWP Working Meeting, drew the attention of the FAO Director-General to the growing importance of the diversification of the forest-based industry to respond more comprehensively to the global challenges on sustainable development, food security, and opening pathways to the bio-economy with new product streams and innovations.

We also promised to put up a good show in Rio+20 – in order to demonstrate the forestry sector’s ability to meet these global challenges in discussing “The Future We Want” – which was the overall theme of the UNCSD in Rio.

We fulfilled that promise on 18th June with a strong lineup of private sector experts and the highest level policy makers put into action in the Rio+20 side event **“Forests: the Heart of a Green Economy”**.

This 300-strong meeting was jointly organized by FAO, the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA) and a leading ACPWP member – namely the Brazilian Pulp and Paper Association (BRACELPA). The event hit the media through outreach campaigns and two videos.

The Government of Finland and the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan co-sponsored the event, for which we are most grateful.

On our way to Rio, we also held the 53rd session of the ACPWP in India in May, 2012, where we gave a strong message of support to the FAO renewal process.

We communicated at that time our great satisfaction on the current and potential contribution of forest industries in

fulfilling **FAO's Constitutional Objectives relating to forestry and forest products. We were also pleased to note that FAO's new proposed Strategic Objectives will be well served by our industry.**

1. Eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
2. Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, fisheries and forestry in a sustainable manner
3. Rural poverty reduction
4. Enable more inclusive and efficient food and agricultural systems at local, national and international levels
5. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

As an example, in many countries, forestry contributes immensely to fighting hunger, through providing access for people to a vibrant industry in deep rural areas.

Just as cotton, wool, sugar cane, grape, cork, rattan and flower production, provide food security, not through the crop itself but rather the income and employment these provide, so forestry supports the food security, poverty reduction and resilience in the livelihoods of rural communities. We like to think of forestry as the central bank of rural economies with its unique ability to mitigate against fluctuations in markets, climates and changing global needs.

You can see therefore how forestry and forest-based industries already contribute immensely to addressing all of the these new Strategic Objectives, but we see an increasing role for the ACPWP members, in further collaborating through FAO's Private Sector Partnership Committee, for example.

On a more technical level, we decided to start a new work stream with FAO on the efficiency of planted forests in water use and in generating added value vis-à-vis agricultural crops.

Secondly, we commissioned a study on the future needs for a better trained workforce in the forest sector, which speaks directly to the new FAO strategic objectives of improving the provision of goods and services and increasing efficiency in forestry, agriculture and fisheries.

Having now gone through some of the highlights of the ACPWP in 2012 to date, I want to come back to the renewal of the Committee. This item is thoroughly explained in the Annex II of the COFO Document **COFO/2012/9.3**

Recommendations of the Regional Forestry Commissions for FAO, and it will be on the COFO Plenary Programme for decisions tomorrow.

This change process is very timely – not only because it is given on the eve of the new FAO Strategic Framework – but also because it would greatly enhance inputs to and implementing of the priorities of the FAO Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) in forestry, and strengthen with our well-established critical mass, the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector.

As the Chairman of the ACPWP I hope that this Committee on Forestry (COFO), meeting for its 21st Session here in Rome, will recommend and support the revision of the Statutes of the Committee including its mandate, name, and membership.

Let me now share with you some of the changes we propose:

1. The **mandate** of the Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products (ACPWP) will be expanded into sustainable production and consumption of forest industry products, and on consistent support on related policy work and regulatory matters.
2. A **new name** for the Committee will be the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSF).
3. A maximum of **30 members** will be nominated, based on the Committee's proposal, to serve at their own expense and reflecting more broadly the interests of all sub-sectors and regions of the industry, including private forest owners.
4. Committee reports on its work and in particular on the views of the private sector at each session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO).

We stand united with the Forestry Department behind these and the other amendments to the Statutes of the Committee. We hope that COFO decides to recommend and authorize the Director-General to endorse these changes in accordance with the FAO procedures on Statutory Bodies.

For us, from the private sector forestry and forest products industries, this Committee is the key arena for making our collaboration with FAO fully empowered, and for promoting more intensively sustainable development in around the world's forests.

Thank you for your continuous support to this mission.