

CSAG
Meeting 9am-12, 7/21/04
Interlaken
Minutes

Participants: Mubariq Ahmad (WWF-Indonesia), Aditya Bayunanda (LEI), Stewart Maginnis (IUCN), Yati Bun (FPCD) (and alternate co-chair of CSAG), Chen Hin Keong (TRAFFIC), Cleto Ndikumagenge (IUCN-CEFDAC), Hildebrando Ruffner Sebastian (COICAP), Alejandra Martin (Forest Trends), Alberto Chinchilla (ACICAFOC) (and co-chair of CSAG), David Young (Global Witness), Yam Malla (RECOFTC), Andy White (Forest Trends) (and co-chair of CSAG)

Agenda:

1. discuss, and revise if necessary, the CSAG position statement on the ITTA
2. discuss and clarify the organization of CSAG;

Discussion:

Point 1

- Stewart: CSAG an official, advisory body to the ITTC, created by the ITTA to advise Council on issues from civil society perspectives – and thus tone of position statement be strong yet constructive. CSAG should avoid a ‘shrill’ tone – would undermine effectiveness. All groups encouraged to be ‘advocates’ outside of CSAG - advancing their own perspectives individually with the ITTC – but CSAG should remain critically constructive (Yam, Chen, others, general agreement)
- David Young: stated that GW not a ‘member’ of CSAG, generally supported the position but felt that statements should be more strident for CSAG to remain credible beyond engaged NGOs;
- AW: Clarification: CSAG not a ‘membership’ organization in the conventional sense; rather a group of civil society organizations committed to constructive engagement. This the first time that NGOs have ‘signed onto’ the position statement – since press and delegations would want to know which organizations supported the position. There is wide respect for NGOs that do not see it in their interest to formally associate with CSAG – a completely legitimate and understandable perspective;
- Yam: highlighted the great power of CSAG advancing the common interests of the wide range of civil society groups: Indigenous Peoples groups, community organizations and environmental groups – should focus on where there is consensus.
- Alberto: indicated that his biggest concern was whether the Council was taking CSAG seriously, most importantly indicated by funding for projects consistent with CSAG recommendations.
- Modifications to statement were agreed: (1) regarding first recommendation – referring to the ‘primacy’ of focus on natural forests as relate to plantations – proposed by Mubariq; (2) adding a sentence identifying some of the positive things that ITTO had done – proposed by Stewart; (3) minor editing – removing confusions; and (4) regarding the way in which supporting organizations are identified.
- Agreed that position statement would identify the organizations who participated in the preparation of the position and supported it. WWF-I, LEI, TRAFFIC, RECOFTC asked to be included in the list.

Point 2

- Andy: reported the existing governance structure set in November ’03, and explained in the CSAG Governance Note distributed by Arvind Khare:

- Andy co-chair rep consumer countries; Alberto co-chair rep producer countries; Yati alternate co-chair (chairs serve 2 year terms, Andy up in December '04)
- Yam and Chen focal points for E Asia
- Mimbimi and Cleto focal points for Africa
- Hildebrando focal point for Latin America
- Stewart: suggested criteria for 'membership': non-profit, non-governmental, from ITTO member countries, demonstrated commitment to constructively advancing CS interests in ITTO by attending at least one Council session and CSAG meeting – the meeting agreed.
- General agreement that CSAG organized adequately for now and that structure should evolve organically, as needed. Recommendations that we not respect term limits unless obvious problem. No clear discussion or agreement – so this will come up again in December.
- David suggested that the CSAG seek a more formal role in the governance of the Council, particularly in the Expert Review panel which selects projects for funding – the meeting agreed.