

# Forest Cover

A Global Forest Coalition Newsletter on International Forest Policy

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## About Forest Cover

Welcome to the sixteenth issue of *Forest Cover*, the newsletter of the Global Forest Coalition (GFC). The GFC was established by a group of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) to facilitate the informed participation of NGOs and IPOs in intergovernmental meetings related to forests. *Forest Cover* is published four times a year. It features reports on important intergovernmental meetings by different NGOs and IPOs and a calendar of future meetings. The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Global Forest Coalition, its founding members or the editors. For free subscriptions, please contact Simone Lovera at: [lovera1@conexion.com.py](mailto:lovera1@conexion.com.py)

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## Ex Silvis: Bad Movie, Terrible Sequel

By Miguel Lovera, coordinator, Global Forest Coalition

I'm sure you can guess what happened at UNFF-5, in just the same way that you could predict the contents of 'Terminator' two. Remember "*Hasta la vista, baby*"? Correct, a terrible sequel!

The storyline of UNFF 5 had the same nightmarish qualities. Governments told each other fairy-tales about an illusory agreement, with targets, time-lines and funding. But, in the real world, we know none of this is likely to materialize.

The fact is that the developing countries, in which the targets need to be met, do not want to fall into the same old trap. They want to stop providing free rides for stowaways from the North. They know they won't be able to meet their developmental goals and debt burdens by tying their hands with conservation and management strings and they realize that exploiting their natural resources is the easiest option. That is understandable. No one would intentionally shoot himself in the foot.

We also know, however, that the real story is more complicated than this. Sustainability is not a priority for most governments. Forest destruction may be a rapid and reliable source of revenue, but in reality the conversion of forests to agricultural fields and urban areas provides less than expected for development and debt repayments. An overwhelming layer of corruption and mismanagement in developing countries and opportunistic and predatory behavior in developed countries, both contribute to the same unsustainable patterns of destruction.

This, lamentably, has been the state of play throughout the last ten painstaking years of international forest policy dialogue. If either side had any real interest in curbing deforestation and forest degradation, they would by now have

implemented at least some of the most obvious measures. There would have been numerous developments that would have helped Indigenous Peoples, communities and other rights owners to manage and protect their forests, and would have reduced wasteful consumption and started to phase out unsustainable production methods. The repayment of the ecological debt industrialized countries have accumulated through centuries of predatory timber trade and other forms of colonialism would have begun. Yet no measures of any real and lasting value have been put in place. Tokenism has replaced achievement of any sort.

Anyway, enough regrets, there is no more time to waste. Deforestation and forest degradation must be stopped and we have to look to the future. Is there still a role for international forest policy meetings and expert groups? Yes, but only if they turn over a new leaf and start curbing deforestation and forest degradation by setting targets that are meaningful, quantifiable and time-bound. A decade has elapsed since countries affirmed that they were willing to set those targets, at least at the national level. So please, it's time to get on with it! More than ten years has gone by since countries promised new and additional funding to help each other implement global agreements on forests. Donors, take out your check books and put your money where your mouths are!

The Convention on Biological Diversity's Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity is a legal reality. It is ready to be implemented now and there is no need for another sequel to the "Terminator" saga in February 2006. So set those targets, and cough up the money, today! What are we waiting for? Another bad movie?

### **UNFF5 Confirms the Worst Fears**

*By Lambert Okrah, Institute of Cultural Affairs, Ghana*

The fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF5), held in New York from the 16-27 of May this year, was a depressing experience. Even the delegates, gathering to conclude their work, were gloomy, unenthusiastic and willing to admit their uncertainty about the results they would be sending home. Unfortunately, the outcomes of UNFF5 completely justified those concerns. The UNFF will allow forest destruction and degradation to continue unabated. At the same time it has failed to address Indigenous Peoples' concerns or the plight of local communities. Instead, UNFF5 focused on moving the private

sector centre stage: it seems that governments are delegating their responsibilities to businesses in the forest sector.

All this is a far cry from the optimism of 1995, when the UNFF's precursor but one, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), was set up. The IPF was mandated to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests by generating consensus and coordinated proposals for action. Many believed this heralded the beginning of concerted action to stop forest destruction. And the IPF did indeed generate 139 proposals for action. Sadly, however, little action actually ensued. Rather than beginning to implement the IPF's action plan, governments chose to sidestep their responsibilities by launching a second talking shop. Welcome to the Intergovernmental *Forum* on Forests (IFF), which then took the forest negotiations through to February 2000.

An independent monitoring process undertaken by NGOs has shown that the two processes – that is, both the IPF and IFF – have resulted in very little change on the ground. In fact, the enduring theme of these negotiations has been business as usual. No strategies for implementation have been developed and no financial mechanisms established. Instead, governments elected to establish a new UN institution. Thus the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests morphed into the UN Forum on Forests. The UNFF was supposed to implement the Proposals for Action of IPF/IFF, complete work left pending and set up mechanisms to finance implementation, transfer technology and build capacity.

Throughout the UNFF's five year existence it was clear to all that forest degradation and deforestation continued to increase, while the condition of Indigenous Peoples and local communities that depend on forests continued to deteriorate. Even worse, forest activists are also still being murdered in some countries. Governments, meeting annually, have failed to do anything about this state of affairs. All they have done is increase the capacity of the secretariat and develop yet more themes for dialogue. They found themselves unable to resolve any of the matters left pending from the IPF/IFF and the only compromise has been to request that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) increase funding to forests already benefiting from the Facility. In effect then, they have avoided making any new decisions on financing implementation of the

Proposals for Action. All in all, it is difficult to see why government officials continue to claim they are making progress, especially given the acknowledgment by many during UNFF5, in statement after statement, that they have in fact failed. Why has it taken them 5 years to recognize this? I wonder.

From the first day of UNFF 5, it became clear that the only area where there was any consensus was around the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). Government after government lauded the progress made by the CPF. They even agreed to increase its funding without anyone blinking an eye. Curious...why should the CPF generate such high levels of support in the midst of chaos?

Well, the CPF consists of UN and a number of other intergovernmental agencies that consider themselves to be stakeholders. Significantly, it is chaired by the FAO, which is also known to have proposed and undertaken controversial forestry projects. Much of FAO's budget is devoted to producing reports on the state of the world's forests and the rate at which they are being destroyed. Rather than generating ideas about how to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, they have been instrumental in developing a broad definition of forests that includes pretty much any group of trees. This works to increase the area of land officially considered to be forested and works wonders for governments hoping to demonstrate that they are getting to grips with the problem. Hardly surprising then, that the FAO garners such support. Unfortunately all other matters pending since the beginning of forest negotiations remain pending. Furthermore, the number of NGOs following the process has dwindled and is becoming insignificant.

The UNFF has achieved virtually nothing. Those NGOs that still follow negotiations on forests have reluctantly concluded that the world is better off without the UNFF.

*For more information, please visit:*  
<http://www.un.org/esa/forests>

### **Continuing to Ignore the Peoples Who Live in the Forests**

*By Marcial Arias, International Alliance of Tribal and Indigenous Peoples of the Tropical Forest*

On its website, the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) claims that the "participation of a wide range of forest-related stakeholders is a key component of sustainable management of forests". This is a far

cry from the reality of the UNFF, in which governments are commercializing the lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples and effectively ignoring indigenous rights. Indeed, governments have been ganging up with forestry industries to usurp indigenous territories and establish monocultures. Little surprise then that Indigenous Peoples are deeply pessimistic about the UNFF process – how can what we have now possibly lead to an international agreement that recognizes the interests of all the sectors involved in forest issues?

The Indigenous delegates who intervened in the fourth session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII, May 2005) demanded that the UNFF change track and take indigenous participation into account in the implementation of its Proposals for Action relating to forests. They also repeated their call for the UNPFII to be invited to join the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which is intended to "foster increased cooperation and coordination on forests" and is at the core of the UNFF's decision-making process. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, president of the UNPFII, reiterated these demands during the UNFF High-level Segment, demanding that governments promote and respect human rights, including Indigenous Peoples' rights, in the implementation of the Proposals for Action and acknowledge the vital importance of traditional forest-related knowledge.

Governments' lack of interest in Indigenous Peoples' rights was also clearly demonstrated during a Panel organized by the International Alliance of Tribal and Indigenous Peoples of the Tropical Forests as a side event during the UNFF. Although governmental delegates could have attended with little difficulty, very few did. In this panel, Indigenous leaders explained their concerns about reforestation, deforestation and tree monocultures and the relationship between governments and forestry industries. They explained the critical social, cultural and economic impacts that monocultures have on their communities and the way in which these plantations change their traditional lifestyle, destroy water sources, and lead to the eviction of Indigenous Peoples from their territories. But it seems that these concerns are falling on deaf ears.

The international community must not undermine the rights of Peoples who live in the forests. Rather, these rights should form a fundamental part of all future international agreements. If they

are not taken into account, governments will find Indigenous Peoples in the vanguard, defending the few rights that they still have.

For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii> and  
<http://www.un.org/esa/forests>

## **Selling the Biodiversity Convention**

By Sandy Gauntlett, *Friends of the Earth Aotearoa/New Zealand*

The commercialization of the environment has been underway for many years now, but for it to have maximum impact the forces of evil have to infiltrate multilateral environmental agreements themselves and influence the decisions made by the Parties to the Conventions. Impossible, I hear you say? Well let's see. At the informal London workshop on Implementation and Effectiveness of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), organized by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Chatham House (11–13 May), one of the invited speakers focused on the need for changes in the CBD. Her speech was focused on the need to base decisions more fully on 'proper data' (for this, read 'Western Science') and engage industry in the mechanisms of the CBD itself. In complete contrast, there was not one mention of the need to recognize alternative systems of knowledge, nor of the need to protect biodiversity from privatization. Of course, I should emphasize that the organizers of the meeting were in no way responsible for the right-wing dribble that came out of this woman's mouth. She was challenged during the course of the workshop and left in no doubt as to the feelings of many present. I came away from the meeting disturbed, but satisfied that we had in fact addressed what I had seen as her naivety rather than deliberate forethought.

Then along came the meeting of the CBD's Ad Hoc Working Group on Protected Areas from 11 to 17 June in Montecatini, Italy. The background documents prepared by the secretariat staff reflected the conservative attitudes I thought had been naively presented in London. Perhaps, in fact, I was the one who was being naïve. Within the background documents there was little if any reference to the rights, knowledge systems or cultures of Indigenous Peoples. Bad enough in itself, but still possible to put down to oversight.

However, on top of that, the meeting's document on Marine Protected Areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction contained a paragraph calling for (*inter alia*) the maintenance of these protected

areas to be funded by the extractive industries. Surely, coincidence has its limits?

The Indigenous Forum worked every available hour that weekend checking the various documents and preparing insertions to correct these 'oversights'. In several paragraphs, we were successful in inserting text on consultation, prior and informed consent, and so on, although - thanks to Canada and New Zealand - these amendments were seriously weakened in the final session of the meeting. We also spoke out against the involvement of the extractive industries in Marine Protected Areas, as did Mexico and Guatemala. What stunned us at this first session was the lack of input from the major NGOs, although it is true that Greenpeace was later able to improve the offending text.

So, what was my overall impression from the two meetings? Well, I sense a definite move to the right from the CBD itself (or at least from some of its staff). We all know that the background documents prepared by secretariat staff have a huge impact on what Parties adopt in the final analysis and that they do in fact dictate the whole tone of the debate. We (civil society) have a lot of work to do in combating this latest trend and we need to do it where it will have maximum impact. In spite of this shift in the CBD Secretariat's attitude, it is the Parties that decide on what is passed and what is not and we need to focus primarily on them. In particular, we should focus on political parties with elections coming up. Nothing motivates a politician quite as much as the potential for losing their job. We need to organize a conference immediately before the next COP, focusing on the background documents and on those resolutions adopted at various meetings that indicate a swing to more right-wing, neo-liberal approaches to biodiversity conservation. We need to do this with the intent of capturing the attention of the world's media, and make sure that a strong message gets out about these trends. We need to make sure that the Parties feel under a great deal of pressure not to agree to resolutions and wording that will be seen as the Convention allowing industry to grab an even larger share of the cake than they have already. If we succeed in doing this, we also need to call for the resignation of the person or people preparing the more right-wing documents. We must insist on prior consultation with stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples.

Perhaps the problem lies partly with us and our own insecurities about our ability to 'sell the

Convention'. If this is the problem, let me assure you that industry will have no such qualms. They will certainly sell the Convention. Unfortunately they will also sell a great deal more of those resources the Convention purports to protect.

*For more information, please visit:*  
<http://www.biodiv.org/meeting>

### **COFO: Glancing through the Hole**

*By Miguel Lovera, Global Forest Coalition*

The seventeenth session of the FAO's Committee on Forestry (COFO XVII, 15-19 March, Rome) was something of a non-event. Many of the 300 or so participants had the impression that governments were putting everything on hold pending the outcome of UNFF5. In particular, donors were reluctant to commit any further resources without knowing what decisions might be taken in May.

Prior to COFO, the FAO's Forestry Department organized a consultation meeting with Major Groups. As usual, representatives were hand-picked by the FAO, with complete disregard for the autonomous self-selection mechanisms of the various groups. Dr Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and the Prime Minister of Finland, Matti Vanhanen, attended the opening session. Whilst Wangari urged governments to finance an anti-corruption fund, Matti focused on NGOs' overly critical approach and the benefits of the Finnish forestry model. So, no surprises here - we expected these differences.

The agenda continued with the presentation of the annual report on the State of the World's Forests (SOFO 2005). The FAO insists in presenting the misleading notion that the forest problem is receding. It exaggerates the possible economic benefits of carbon and environmental services markets. It also underplays the negative impacts forest privatization has on communities, as they watch the resources on which they depend being sold to corporate investors by governments.

A further key feature of SOFO 2005 is its endorsement of market mechanisms. It supports a focus on the tradable attributes of forests. If argues that if these can be put on the market, profits could be generated for the benefit of "all". There is a particularly strong emphasis on generating markets in environmental services and carbon sequestration, and it sees these as commercial opportunities for the poor can tap in to. But, as the findings presented in "The New Merchants: Life

as Commodity" (GFC, 2005) show, communities and small players seldom benefit from marketing their natural resources.

Regional forestry commissions also reported on their activities. Briefly, they requested more FAO intervention in relation to invasive species, forest fires, poverty alleviation and valuation and - not surprisingly - technical and financial assistance for the establishment of tree plantations. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were also on the agenda. The FAO prepared an overview of the potential contribution that forests could make to achieving the MDGs. This overview is quite interesting in terms of the prospective contributions that forests and forestry can indeed make, but falls short because it fails to explain the underlying causes preventing the implementation of recommended solutions.

One further issue that hit home was that of armed conflict and forests. The Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the European Tropical Forest Research Network prepared a particularly interesting seminar. Here at last we found people prepared to consider the underlying causes of these conflicts and acknowledge the importance of resolving them and leaving forest people in peace. This is a topic we should be looking at much more carefully.

*For more information, please visit:*  
<http://www.fao.org/forestry> and, for the material presented at the CIFOR seminar:  
<http://www.efrn.org>

### **Branching Out: Illegal does not always mean Destructive**, by Anatoly Lebedev,

*Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns – BROCC, Vladivostok, Russia*

Illegal logging is spreading rapidly, contributing to escalating social conflict and violence, especially in hot spots like Indonesia, Brazil, the Congo Basin, Papua New Guinea, Russia and Cambodia. It generally causes immense harm to forests and indigenous communities and costs governments billions of dollars in lost taxes. High volumes of illegally cut wood entering the global market also depress world prices for wood products, disadvantaging those companies that do respect environmental and social priorities. Governments have made important commitments to work together to combat illegal timber trading, but the companies involved in the forest products industry have not been very involved in these discussions so far. Some of them, however, have been taking

significant steps to ensure that their wood supplies come from responsibly-managed sources and properly authorized suppliers.

It is thus clear that business leaders could work more closely with scientists, environmentalists, communities and governments to address the illegal logging challenge and this was the purpose of The Forest Dialogue (TFD) which emerged in 1999 as a result of processes convened independently by the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, the World Bank and the World Resources Institute, supported by Yale University, USA.

During the Forest Dialogue on Illegal Logging in Hong Kong (7-10 March), there was a justifiable focus upon Indonesian issues. Illegal timber trading is virtually endemic in that region of the world, as was demonstrated in a shocking documentary by Telapak, which exposed illegal timber trading activities centered in Hong Kong and Indonesia, involving the Indonesian army and Chinese companies. Critically, this video (shot largely with a hidden camera) generated an immediate response from an official from the State Forestry Administration of China, who promised to start a prosecutor's investigation on the basis of the data presented.

Russia's involvement in the illegal timber trade is also significant. Russia's forests are extremely poorly managed. Indeed, in recent years, the Russian government seems to have done its best to destroy Russia's forest management system and related legislation. Furthermore, there have been virtually no authorized, properly-educated English-speaking Russian participants in recent international and regional intergovernmental discussions on forests and the timber business. This can make campaigning for change almost impossible.

Another aspect of illegal logging in the Russian Far East that warrants particular attention concerns related economic and social influences and impacts. In Russia, our campaign against illegal logging has come to understand that illegal logging is, for many forest communities, an expression of their low respect for and distrust of corrupt governments and legislatures, who collect taxes from them but do not return any benefits to the community-level. Yet these communities have a different approach to forestry: they take care of their community infrastructure, put the forest revenues to good use locally and, at the same time,

preserve the forest ecosystems with their selective techniques. Thus illegal logging at the level of poor villages in the Taiga is not an issue at all. It is the large-scale commercial operations that are destroying Russian forests through illegal logging.

It surprised me when I discovered that many of those representing EU and Asian timber businesses and related Associations at the TFD wanted to engage these smaller businesses in the Russian Far East whom we trust and work with, despite their involvement in illegal logging. It may be worth overlooking some of the social and environmental aspects in the short-term to save the forests in the long-term, especially since the global community has so far failed to find any efficient tools to cut illegal logging in hot spots like Indonesia. I think of it as being similar to the drugs trade. It's easy to make the mistake of channeling endless funds for monitoring and analysis but it can have the result that, despite all the hard work and efforts of governments and NGOs, it actually plays a part in perpetuating the problem.

The March TFD did successfully raise the awareness of business leaders and civil society concerning the gravity of illegal logging, presenting a detailed picture of the problem, its causes and its impacts, particularly in Asia. We also found at least some cost-effective, proven and practical solutions and ways of working together in the future.

*For more detailed information please check: <http://www.theforestdialogue.org>*

### **ENA-FLEG: Ministerial Preparations Off to a Good Start**

*by Andrey Laletin, Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia*

The Europe and North Asia (ENA) Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) Preparatory Conference held in Moscow, 6-8 June, brought together 130 participants from 32 countries, representing governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), industry and other international organizations. The main aim of the ENA-FLEG Preparatory Conference was to establish building blocks for the Ministerial Conference that will take place later this year in Saint Petersburg (22-25 November). Civil society participants were pleasantly surprised to find that the process for identifying and prioritizing issues was much more inclusive than most of them had initially expected. Many of us had just come from a disappointing fortnight in New York, where UNFF 5 had made very little headway. Here in

Moscow, however, there was a very different spirit, with both governments and civil society representatives working together cooperatively. There was none of the kind of discrimination between NGOs and other major groups that is common during UN meetings. In addition, excellent facilitation by Jurgen Blaser (Switzerland) and Jag Maini (Canada) also contributed to the final success of the meeting.

Civil society representatives were self-selected, with the help of IUCN-Russia. The civil society participants met beforehand specifically to consider the thematic issues that the ENA-FLEG International Steering Committee (ISC) had decided upon for the agenda of the Preparatory Conference. These were: information and transparency; institutions; legislation and law enforcement; enterprise and forest management; and forest governance and livelihoods. On the basis of this preparatory activity, civil society developed interjections in the relevant thematic and regional break-out groups that followed during the Preparatory Conference. It ensured that civil society's participation was effective, consistent and highly relevant to the process that led to the drafting of the 'consolidated issues paper' on the penultimate evening. An unexpected bonus was the inclusion in this process of all stakeholders who wished to participate. This was particularly fortunate because it enabled them to stop Russia's attempt to propose a concept paper of its own as the basis for the final consolidated issues paper. Russia's efforts clearly demonstrated their intention to 'own' the ENA-FLEG process, which could be a threat to many other stakeholders' aims.

Another successful event during this conference was the stakeholders' panel that took place on the first day of the Preparatory Committee. Panellists focused, amongst others, on Japan's Fair Wood Campaign, which aims to help remove illegally or unsustainably produced wood products from the marketplace, and the role of governments as major forest resource owners and consumers, implying a need for public procurement policies.

It was decided that the Secretariat and the International Steering Committee would draw up a draft declaration before November and that this will be open for public review and governmental consultative processes in August and September. Civil society representatives also agreed amongst themselves that information exchange, lobbying of national governments and a joint position paper were needed. They drew up a list of tasks to be

completed between June and November, and captured key observations and recommendations in a civil society statement. They argue that a good multi-stakeholder preparatory process will contribute to improving the quality and credibility of Ministerial Conferences. There is also a need for ongoing and transparent flows of information and funding and a realistic timeline for securing stakeholder participation. The statement states that civil society looks forward to working with governments to define and initiate national preparatory processes and, at the international level, to clarifying arrangements for stakeholder participation in the Ministerial Conference as well as in preparing initial draft documentation.

It would be excellent if the Ministerial Conference was able to maintain the spirit of cooperation developed during this event. It would make a significant difference to the quality of the final Ministerial Declaration and Indicative List of Actions and the possibility of allow them to be implemented in a cooperative manner.

## **Reports on Other Forest-related Meetings**

### **Minor Progress in Tropical Timber Negotiations**

The third session of the UN Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the International Tropical Timber Agreement, from 27 June until 1 July in Geneva, came and went without any significant progress on the most important issues. As expected, the most controversial issue remains funding, especially a proposal for assessed, mandatory contributions to policy work. The conference will reconvene from 26 – 30 January 2006, a little less than a year before the current agreement expires.

*For more information: <http://www.unctad.org>*

### **G8 Betrays the World's Poor on Climate Change**

Despite wall-to-wall media coverage of the G8 themes of poverty in Africa and climate change, G8 governments meeting in Scotland from 6-8 July remained unmoved by the mobilization of hundreds of thousands of citizens and dozens of celebrities. Critically, they failed to agree on any real and effective steps to address one of the worst threats facing the world – climate change - which will have particularly severe impacts on the poorest, including in Africa. Deforestation is both a consequence and a cause of climate change. The G8 did little more than invite the largest

developing countries to yet another dialogue on climate change, even though those developing countries have already pointed out, quite rightly, that they expect the G8 itself to take the lead. With just 13% of the world's population, the eight largest industrialized countries are responsible for over 45% of global emissions.

Meanwhile, the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, that took place 16 - 27 May in Bonn, Germany, also failed to make any significant progress towards establishing an effective regime to halt climate change. It is feared that the 11th Conference of the Parties of the Climate Convention and the 1st Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, scheduled to take place in December 2005, will be little more than an excessively large trade fair for oil companies and other polluters eager to buy cheap carbon credits.

For more information, please visit: <http://unfccc.int>

### Calendar of Forest-Related Meetings

More information on these and other intergovernmental meetings can be found at: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages>

- The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on the Review of the Implementation of the Program of Work on Forest Biodiversity of the Convention on Biodiversity will meet 25 - 29 July in Bonn, Germany. For more information, please visit: <http://www.biodiv.org/meeting>
- The Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biodiversity will meet 5 - 9 September 2005 in Montreal, Canada. See also the report by Sandy Gauntlett. For more information, please visit: <http://www.biodiv.org/meeting>
- The High-level Meeting on the follow-up to the Outcome of the Millennium Summit will be held 14 - 16 September in New York, USA. For more information, please visit: <http://www.un.org/events/index.html>
- The seventh Conference of the Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification will take place 17 - 28 October in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, please visit: <http://www.unccd.int>

- The 39th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council will be held from 7 - 12 November in Yokohama, Japan. For more information, please visit: <http://www.itto.or.jp>
- The Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance Ministerial Meeting will take place 22 - 25 November in St. Petersburg, Russia. See also the reports by Anatoly Lebedev and Andrei Laletin. For more information, please visit: <http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/ardext.nsf/14ByDocName/ForestGovernanceProgramEuropeandNorthAsiaForestLawEnforcementandGovernance>
- The 11th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biodiversity will take place from 28 November to 2 December in Montreal, Canada. For more information, please visit: <http://www.biodiv.org/meetings>
- The first Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and eleventh Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place from 28 November to 9 December in Montreal, Canada. For more information, please visit: <http://unfccc.int>
- The 6th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization will take place 13 - 18 December in Hong Kong. For more information, please visit: <http://www.wto.org>

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