



EC FOREST PLATFORM RESOLUTION

The objective of the European Community (EC) development policy is to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty. This involves support for sustainable economic, social and environmental development, and the promotion of the integration of developing countries into the world economy.

Forest resources directly contribute to the livelihood of 90% of the 1.2 billion people in the developing world that live in extreme poverty¹. Yet the reality is that the European Community has almost no direct contact with the people and organisations that know about forest issues in recipient countries. The purpose of the EC Forest Platform is to fill this gap by giving a voice to NGOs and forest peoples who want to provide EC policy makers with 'on the ground' information on forests and forest peoples.

The EC Forest Platform Strategy Meeting, held in Yaoundé during 6-8 December 2004, brought together Indonesian and Cameroonian civil society to debate the impacts of EC aid policies and projects on forests and forest peoples. The shared experiences underlined the current lack of transparency and a deficient involvement of civil society in EC co-operation processes and projects.

We, the undersigned non governmental and indigenous peoples organizations, are willing to engage in constructive co-operation with the European Community and its partner countries to improve the efficiency of EC Aid in forest issues. To achieve this objective we have identified initial steps that should be addressed and we therefore **urge the European Commission and its partner countries to:**

- **ensure transparency and access for information** in all EC co-operation activities;
- **set up meaningful mechanisms to involve civil society** throughout all EC Aid processes, including the drafting, mid-term review and evaluation of the **Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs)**;
- set up meaningful mechanisms to involve civil society, including indigenous peoples organizations and affected communities, during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of **EC projects**;
- **develop a transparent data flow and financial monitoring mechanisms** for the implementation of EC projects;
- actively involve civil society in the initiatives envisaging to achieve **good governance in the forest sector**.

¹ Domment, Caroline (1999) *Fish for Thought: Fisheries, International Trade and Sustainable Development*. International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) & IUCN – The World Conservation Union. Natural resources, Trade and Sustainable Development Series, No.1

In a parallel development, in May 2003 the European Commission adopted the **EU Action Plan on Forest law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)**², acknowledging its responsibility as one of the world's largest timber and wood product importers in bringing illegal logging to an end. In July 2004, the Commission presented the package of FLEGT measures to help address the USD 15 billion annual global trade in illegal timber.

The undersigned EC Forest Platform members welcome the proposed regulation³ for a voluntary licensing scheme and the bilateral agreements with wood-producing countries, but we would like to **insist the European Community to:**

- **actively involve civil society in the FLEGT action plan**, including during the negotiations of the partnership agreements with FLEGT partner countries and the licensing system needed;
- **ensure that the system of monitoring is being undertaken by independent organizations** with civil society involvement to ensure the credibility of the system.

Sharing concerns about overall EU external actions efficiency and coherence, we are calling for a proposal that will ensure the EU's actions contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication: commitments that are clearly emphasised in the Treaty (Article 2, Article 177). It is crucial that the EC Aid programme in its different partner countries reflects these basic values.

Yaoundé, 08 December 2004

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4. Martin Yetna, **CAVEN**
5. Eric Major Tougueu, **CADEF**
6. Stephan Rostock, **ADEID**
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8. Dr Sosthène Ahanda, **SERDEV**
9. Miranda Wattaht Ngwengi, **CARFAD**
10. Patrice Kosso Boua, **COPANEDE/SERCAADE**
11. Jacques Unkap, **PROSENAT**
12. Jean Jacques Mem, **AEJ Sahel**
13. Halleson Durrel Nzene, **Global Village Cameroun**
14. Benjamin Bayoi , **AJEPE**
15. Luc Sintat Mpouma, **OCDE**
16. Marie Louise Tshongo, **FOCARFE**
17. Raoul Modeste Mbida, **CRADIF**
18. Henri Mevah, **PAPEL-Cameroun**
19. Mbah Manga, **GICAEDER**
20. Emmanuel Mbenda, **CUVIPREN**
21. Meleta Quinta, **FDD**
22. Christine Andela, **COSADER**
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26. Emmanuel Kam Yogo, **CED**

² Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). Proposal for an EU Action Plan. 21.05.2003 COM(2003)251 final

³ Draft Council Regulation concerning the establishment of a voluntary FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community; 20.07.2004; COM(2004)515 final