

## Satisfaction with Results Achieved

The thirty-second session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-32) was held from 13–18 May 2002 in Bali, Indonesia.

Approximately 300 participants, including delegates representing 40 ITTC member countries, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations were welcomed by the Executive Director of the ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organisation)<sup>1</sup> Manoel Sobral Filho.

While he noted in his opening address the progress made toward achieving international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed forests, particularly through policy reform in ITTO member countries, he underlined the need to improve forest management on the ground. The Executive Director also stressed that the ITTO must do more to combat illegal logging and trade. He said that the relevant ITTC-31 decision is one of the most important measures in terms of addressing impediments to sustainable forest management (SFM). The primary factor undermining SFM, he said, is the failure of markets to remunerate the global services provided by natural forests.

On the last day of the session, delegates met in an ex-

tended session of the Council to hear reports from the Committees and adopt decisions (including the controversial decision on certification – see page 238). Barney Chan,

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<sup>1</sup> The International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) was negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It was adopted on 18 November 1983 in Geneva, and entered into force on 1 April 1985.

The International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) was created by treaty in 1983 and its headquarters were established in Yokohama, Japan, in late 1985.

The primary idea is to provide an effective framework for consultation among producer and consumer member countries on all aspects of the world timber economy within its mandate. The ITTO has 57 members – 31 producer countries and 25 consumer countries and the European Union – which together represent 95 per cent of world trade in tropical timber and 75 per cent of the world's tropical forests.

The governing body of the ITTO is the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC), which includes all members. There are two categories of membership: producer and consumer countries. Annual contributions and votes are distributed equally between the two groups. Within each group, individual members' dues and votes are calculated based on market share and, in the case of producers, the extent of tropical forests within the country. The Council is supported by four committees, which advise and assist it on issues for consideration and decision. The Council is also advised by an Informal Advisory Group (IAG), which meets just prior to each ITTC session to discuss issues to be addressed at the forthcoming session and to formulate a possible list of decisions to be considered and adopted by the Council at that session.

Chair of the Trade Advisory Group (TAG), stressed the Group's concern with timber certification, emphasised that it does not support any particular certification scheme, and advocated a phased approach to certification. He underscored the severe impacts of illegal logging to the timber trade and called upon the ITTO to address the issue.

In his closing remarks, the delegate from Brazil saluted the spirit of cooperation that enabled the session to accomplish so much, and highlighted the decision to create the Civil Advisory Group (CSAG).

Juan Mayr, Minister of the Environment of Colombia, said the present session had demonstrated the importance and relevance of the ITTO. He expressed his conviction

In his closing remarks, Chair Jürgen Blaser (Switzerland) noted the significant decisions adopted by ITTC-32. With regard to the difficulties in the certification discussions, he called for a fundamental discussion at ITTC-33 on the role of the ITTO in respect to certification. He further called for consideration of the ITTO's role in international forest-related initiatives; the ITTA renegotiation; the organisation of work; and legally produced timber and declaration of origin.

The Council adopted the following eleven decisions:

- Projects, Pre-projects and Activities
- Civil Society Advisory Group (printed on page 237)
- ITTO Guidelines for the Restoration, Management and

#### Change in forested land 1990–2000 by sub-region: Asia and the Pacific

	total land area (million ha)	total forest 1990 (million ha)	total forest 2000 (million ha)	% of land forested in 2000	change 1990-2000 (million ha)	% change per year
Australia and New Zealand	795.0	164.9	162.5	20.4	-2.4	-0.1
Central Asia	391.6	16.6	19.3	4.9	2.7	1.6
Northwest Pacific and East Asia	1 147.8	195.2	212.7	18.5	17.4	0.9
South Asia	640.3	86.3	85.3	13.3	-1.0	-0.1
Southeast Asia	434.5	234.7	211.4	48.7	-23.3	-1.0
South Pacific	53.9	36.4	35.1	65.2	-1.2	-0.4
<b>Asia and the Pacific</b>	<b>3 463.2</b>	<b>734.0</b>	<b>726.3</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>-7.7</b>	<b>-0.1</b>

Source: compiled from FAO 2001a

Note: numbers may not add due to rounding

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that the ITTO has a promising future, and called on donor countries to redouble their efforts to support it and its projects.

Aulikki Kauppila (Finland), Spokesperson for the Consumers Group, said that for sensitive issues, a mechanism should be created for a thorough exchange of views before embarking on negotiations. She stated that the Chair's proposal to have a discussion on the ITTO's role in certification on the agenda was an example of such a mechanism. She said that consumers believe the CSAG decision will be useful in improving the ITTO's credibility, visibility and reputation among those who criticise the ITTO's work in the field of forestry.

Untung Iskandar (Indonesia), Spokesperson for the Producer Group, welcomed the CSAG decision, highlighting the vital roles that civil society organisations, including environmental groups, play in supporting efforts to achieve SFM. Regarding certification, he requested to put on record that voluntary certification means otherwise for producers, as they have to certify their forest management systems to allow them to sell their forest products.

Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests

- Preparation for Renegotiation of the ITTA, 1994
- ITTO's Contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)
- Management of the Administrative Budget for 2002
- Sustainable Management and Conservation of Mangrove Forest Ecosystems – ITTO Mangrove Workplan
- Organisation of Work under the ITTA, 1994
- Forest Law Enforcement in Africa
- Promotion of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in the Congo Basin
- The Potential Role of Phased Approaches to Certification in Tropical Timber Producer Countries as a Tool to Promote SFM (printed on page 238).

Most delegates were happy with the results achieved during the session, but recognised that the complexities surrounding the discussion on certification and the organisation of the Council's work demonstrated the challenges ahead. (MJ)