



THE FORESTS DIALOGUE

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The Forests Dialogue

TFD's first international dialogue on illegal logging

Theme: Practical Solutions to Combat Illegal Logging - dialogue on best practice for business and civil society

Dates: Tuesday 8th - Thursday 10th March 2005

Location: Hotel Conrad, Hong Kong

Overview:

Illegal logging in Indonesia, Brazil, the Congo Basin, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Cambodia and elsewhere results in social conflict and violence, costs governments billions of dollars in lost taxes, and causes great harm to forests. A significant amount of this illegally cut wood enters global trade depressing the prices of wood products and presenting unfair competition to those companies that respect the law.

Governments have made important commitments to work together to combat the trade in illegal wood, but those most involved in the forest products industry, the companies, have not been much involved in these discussions. Some of the world's largest forest products companies have, however, been taking significant steps to ensure that their wood supplies are from responsibly managed and legal sources.

Business leaders can work more closely with scientists, environmentalists, communities and governments to address the illegal logging challenge. The purpose of this dialogue is to promote such commitment and share experiences and tools to implement it in a cost effective way.

Objectives

- ➔ Raise awareness of business leaders and civil society about the seriousness of illegal logging and present a detailed picture of the problem, its causes and its impacts, with an emphasis on Asia.
- ➔ Identify cost-effective, proven and practical solutions to address illegal logging, particularly those that business can implement.
- ➔ Agree on how participants can work together for widespread adoption of these practical solutions, with concrete follow up to this event.

Expected Outcomes:

- ➔ Recommendations to companies involved in wood procurement about how they can eliminate illegal wood from their supplies.
- ➔ Input to assist governments such as UK, China, and Japan to eliminate illegal wood from their public procurement procedures in partnership with business.
- ➔ Review of lessons from ongoing efforts to independently verify legality of wood products. Recommendations will be made about how to expand such efforts and share those lessons.
- ➔ Recommendations to the UN Forum on Forests for global inter-governmental action, and to other agencies including the International Tropical Timber Organization and the UN FAO on how they can more effectively work with business to reduce illegal logging.

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Context:

The Forests Dialogue (TFD) emerged in 1999 from processes convened independently by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the World Bank, and the World Resources Institute. These converged to form a unique international multi-stakeholder dialogue group. This group is focused solely on issues related to the realization of sustainable forest management around the world.

The Forests Dialogue is governed and guided by a 23-member steering committee representing private landowners, forest products industry, environmental groups, retailers, foreign assistance organizations, unions, and academia. TFD is supported by a Secretariat at Yale University's Global Institute of Sustainable Forestry, in New Haven, Connecticut, USA. Detailed information is available at: www.theforestsdialogue.org

TFD is pursuing its mission by convening international multi-stakeholder dialogues around five issues selected by the steering committee. A dialogue format is used to share learning and promote collective action on these high priority forest issues, as follows:

- ➔ **Illegal Logging** - Dialogue to be held over three days in Hong Kong in 2005.
- ➔ **Forest Certification** - Various dialogues completed.
- ➔ **Forests and Biodiversity Conservation** - Dialogue held October 2003 in Brazil.
- ➔ **Intensive Forest Management** - Agenda for dialogue under development by TFD
- ➔ **Forests and Poverty** - Agenda for dialogue under development by TFD

Each process may also include follow up actions and continued discussion.

Format and Content:

About 75-100 participants are expected to participate in the Hong Kong meeting, including representatives from about 30 companies. Participants will be leaders from business, environmental and social NGOs, forest owners, forest products industry associations, retailers, researchers, and intergovernmental organizations. A small number of government representatives who have shown commitment and leadership on the issue will also be invited.

Opening presentations and the facilitators will set a constructive and positive tone. Additionally, short presentations accompanied by active discussion will be dispersed through the event. During the three-day event, some participants will make presentations as case studies to promote information sharing and learning. Facilitators will support the process under the guidance of TFD's Steering Committee. Great effort will be made to document lessons, valuable experience and seek agreement on specific issues, solutions, possible follow up actions and recommendations for input into other processes.

Preparatory material will be sent to all participants at least two weeks before the event. This will include a detailed agenda, summaries of the key presentations, and relevant background reading on the illegal logging problem.

See attached agenda.

Event Follow-Up:

The organizers and facilitators of the event will ensure that there is thorough documentation of the presentation and discussions. This material will be made widely available. Additionally, output of relevance to other processes and stakeholders will be communicated appropriately (see the expected outcomes listed above). Specific follow-up actions and events will be discussed and documented and steps taken by TFD's Secretariat and Steering Committee to implement them, together with participants in the dialogue.

The Forest Dialogue's Steering Committee will discuss and take decisions on specific follow-up activities recommended by participants at a meeting immediately after this event. A brief summary of the meeting will be published and placed on The Forest Dialogue's website together with all the associated materials (presentation, minutes, and background materials).

Event Planning and Organizing:

A small, informal working group is planning the event. This is led by TFD's Secretariat (Gary Dunning) and The Nature Conservancy (Nigel Sizer), with WBCSD's Forest Industry Working Group (James Griffiths), DFID (Hugh Speechly), SIDA (Bo Gohl) and WWF (Mubariq Ahmad, Per Rosenberg and Rod Taylor). Others actively advising the process (who are also members of The Forest Dialogue's Steering Committee) include Manoel Sobral (ITTO), Roberto Smeraldi (Friends of the Earth Brazil), and Bill Street (International Federation of Building and Wood Workers).

TFD is also working with the United Nations Forum on Forests (Pekka Patosarri, Ghazal Badiozamani) as the meeting will serve as an Organization-Led Initiative in support of UNFF. The report of the meeting, including all of its recommendations, will be submitted for review and consideration by member states at UNFF 5 (New York City, May 2005).

Dialogue Sponsors:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), UK Department for International Development (DFID), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), World Business Council for Sustainable Development, YTL Group (Malaysia), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and International Paper. Other sponsors may be added.

Logistics:

The event will be held in at the Conrad Hotel in Hong Kong. The event will begin with a welcome reception and dinner on Monday March 7. The meeting will start early on Tuesday morning and continue through to Thursday afternoon. Participants would depart Friday morning. There will also be sponsored dinners on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, which would serve as informal opportunities for continued discussion.

More information:

For more information about The Forests Dialogue and for contact information see the website at www.theforestsdialogue.org or e-mail at info@theforestsdialogue.org