

***REPORT***

Ciudad  
Guayana,  
Venezuela,  
18-22 February  
1991

**Latin American  
Forestry  
Commission  
Seventeenth session**



**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**

## PREVIOUS SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

First Session	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	23 May 1949
Second Session	Lima, Peru	14 November 1949
Third Session	Santiago, Chile	11 December 1950
Fourth Session	Buenos Aires, Argentina	16-23 June 1952
Fifth Session	Caracas, Venezuela	4-15 October 1955
Sixth Session	Antigua, Guatemala	4-15 November 1958
Seventh Session	Mexico City, Mexico	3-6 August 1960
Eighth Session	Santiago, Chile	13-19 November 1962
Ninth Session	Curitiba, Brazil	5-12 November 1964
Tenth Session	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	4-9 December 1967
Eleventh Session	Quito, Ecuador	11-21 November 1970
Twelfth Session	Havana, Cuba	2-7 February 1976
Thirteenth Session	Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, Mexico	18-22 February 1980
Fourteenth Session	Lima, Peru	15-18 November 1982
Fifteenth Session	San José, Costa Rica	6-10 October 1986
Sixteenth Session	Kingston, Jamaica	18-22 April 1988

**REPORT**

of the

**SEVENTEENTH SESSION**

of the

**LATIN AMERICAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela,  
18 - 22 February 1991

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
Rome



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## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- (i) Tropical Forestry Action Programme (TFAP)  
The Commission reconfirmed its interest in and support for the TFAP and recommended that, in view of the high level of TFAP activity in the region, FAO consider establishing decentralized mechanisms to ensure that the countries of the region involved receive effective and timely support and that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms be set up at the regional and national levels. It suggested that a second meeting of the TFAP coordinators be held to assess progress and establish intra-regional monitoring, evaluation and coordination mechanisms to promote the exchange of experience. The delegate of Bolivia offered to host such a meeting in Santa Cruz (paras. 12 and 13).
- (ii) International instrument on conservation and development of forests  
The Commission expressed its support in general for the proposed instrument. It underlined the fact that the instrument should recognize, without restrictions, the autonomy and sovereignty of each country with regard to the use of their natural resources (para. 15).
- (iii) Contribution of small-scale forest enterprises to forestry and rural development  
The Commission acclaimed the importance of small-scale enterprises and their potential for contributing to forestry and rural development. It noted that FAO had formulated a technical cooperation project entitled "Promotion and Technical Assistance to Small-scale Forest Enterprises" and confirmed the importance of such a project. It recommended that FAO give priority to arranging its funding. Also, the Commission requested that FAO consider arranging the financing of a formulated project for the Caribbean on non-wood forest products in small-scale forest enterprises (paras. 23 and 24).
- (iv) Forestry field operations in the region  
The Commission requested that the Operations Service of the Forestry Department help to locate funding for the small-scale enterprises and forestry information projects that had been endorsed by delegates, including the submission of projects to different bodies (para. 29).
- (v) Reports of Technical Cooperation Networks  
The Commission reviewed the activities of the five technical cooperation networks in the forestry sector, noted with satisfaction the progress achieved and suggested that the networks be strengthened by grouping the various governmental and non-governmental institutions working in this field, and that the FAO Representatives could provide assistance in the distribution of documents. It recommended that, in view of the variety of activities being conducted by the Caribbean Technical Cooperation Network on Upper Watershed Management, this network consider changing its name in order to reflect the broad scope of its activities in the forestry sector. It further recommended that a proportion of the funds earmarked for the TFAP be allocated for support to regional collaboration through the technical cooperation networks (paras. 33, 35 and 37).
- (vi) Establishment of a forestry information system for the region  
The Commission strongly endorsed the programme and project to establish a forestry information system for the region. It recommended that this project be submitted to the international community for financing, including the International Tropical Timber Organization (para. 40).
- (vii) Change of title of the Latin American Forestry Commission to "Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC)"  
In view of the decision of the FAO Conference to change the name of the region to "Latin America and the Caribbean", the Commission unanimously endorsed this proposal and recommended that this amendment be submitted for the approval of the FAO Council (para. 43).
- (viii) Executive Committee  
The Commission agreed on the necessity to strengthen its functioning and recommended that the Executive Committee maintain permanent contact with the different subregions, that it meet occasionally to evaluate the implementation of its recommendations, liaise with the FAO Regional Office and prepare the agenda for its next session (para. 44).





## INTRODUCTION

1. The seventeenth session of the Latin American Forestry Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was held in Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela, from 18 to 22 February 1991 at the kind invitation of the Government of Venezuela. The session was attended by delegates from the following Member Nations: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Jamaica, Honduras, Netherlands, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela, and observers from the Commission of the Cartagena Agreement and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. The full list of delegates and observers is given in Appendix B.

2. The Director-General of FAO was represented at the session by Mr M. K. Muthoo, Director, Forestry Operations Service, Forestry Department. The session was inaugurated by Ing. Eugenio de Armas, Vice-President of the Corporación Venezolana de Guayana, who represented the Minister of State, President of the Corporación Venezolana de Guayana.

### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Item 2)

3. The provisional agenda of the Commission (see Appendix A) was adopted. The documents submitted for consideration by the Commission are listed in Appendix C.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Item 3)

4. In accordance with Articles II-1 and II-5 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission elected a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. The following members of the Commission were unanimously elected:

Chairman:	Omar Carrero Niño (Venezuela)
Vice-Chairmen:	Atilio Ligrone (Uruguay) Luis Angel Villalobos (Costa Rica) Denise Amsterdam (Guyana)
Rapporteur:	Juan Moya (Chile)

Mr K. Thelen, FAO Regional Forestry Officer, acted as Secretary.

### STATE OF FORESTRY IN THE REGION (Item 4)

5. The Commission noted that various countries wished to highlight the economic and social contribution of the forestry sector in their respective countries, particularly in terms of gross national product, employment, investment, exports and parameters which require similar comparison methods and presentation formats throughout the member nations for appropriate assessment and comparison. In this connection, it was observed that there was scope for exchange of information and that those nations which were at a more advanced stage could provide assistance to others.

6. Delegations expressed concern about the levels of deforestation of natural forests. Particular attention was paid to potential remedial strategies and mechanisms. Various delegations indicated that they were implementing different mechanisms to remedy the situation, such as debt reduction

in exchange for nature conservation, reforestation and natural forest management incentives, among others. The selection of mechanisms and the need for the private sector and the rural people to have access were requirements which national strategies needed to consider; this may constitute a possibility for international cooperation.

7. The Commission noted that wood was a basic source of energy for the rural populations. However, very serious shortages were arising in different areas in the region.

8. Delegations reaffirmed the importance of sustainable development principles and noted that major efforts were required for these to be reflected in the forestry policies formulated and implemented by the governments. Delegations stated that policies should propitiate actions that foster economic growth, environmental protection and social equity.

9. The Commission stressed the importance of the Tropical Forestry Action Programme (TFAP) as an instrument to conserve and develop the forests of the region and various delegations drew attention to progress made in its formulation and implementation in their respective countries.

#### TROPICAL FORESTRY ACTION PROGRAMME (Item 5)

10. The member nations of the Commission involved in the TFAP reconfirmed their interest in and support for this mechanism and recognized the need for FAO to continue to exercise its coordinating role, which has enabled the TFAP to be so dynamic in the region.

11. The Commission recognized and reaffirmed that the TFAP greatly influenced the formulation of coherent and complementary forestry policies in countries in which it had been implemented and that it had become an effective mechanism for the mobilization of international funds for projects that generate the requisite national consensus through the implementation of its inherent participation modalities.

12. The Commission noted the high level of TFAP activity in most of the Latin American and Caribbean countries which surpassed that observed in other continents. In this connection, it recommended that FAO consider establishing decentralized mechanisms to ensure that the countries of the regions involved receive effective and timely support. It also recommended that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms be set up at the regional and national levels.

13. The Commission suggested that a second meeting of the TFAP coordinators be held to assess progress and to establish intra-regional monitoring, evaluation and coordination mechanisms to promote the exchange of experience. The Commission took note of the offer of the Bolivian delegate to host such a meeting in Santa Cruz.

#### INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENT ON CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTS (Item 6)

14. The Commission noted that the FAO Secretariat had been formulating the concept of a world instrument, open to all types of forest, to cover forest management, conservation and development.

15. The Commission expressed its support in general for the proposed instrument. It underlined the fact that the instrument should recognize, without restrictions, the autonomy and sovereignty of each country with regard to the use of their natural resources.

16. Delegates concurred that the respective governments needed to express their political commitment before recommendations and agreements were formulated.

17. The Brazilian delegation indicated that discussions and the initial decisions about the eventual development of a forestry instrument were the responsibility of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and of the meeting of its Preparatory Committee in March 1991. It noted that in the formulation of the instrument equal weight should be given to all the forest resources, of which 50 per cent were temperate or boreal. In addition, it considered that the concept of restricted codes of conduct should be avoided while the instrument was being formulated. Also, it was observed that the elaboration of the instrument should in no way impair the preparation of other instruments, including those on biodiversity and climatic change. It expressed concern about the figures included in paragraph 2 of document FO/LAFC/91/3, regarding deforestation in Latin America, particularly the methods of establishing such figures. The Brazilian delegation also questioned the applicability and relevance of compensatory mechanisms as proposed in paragraph 13 of the same document, until further justifications and details had been provided.

#### CONTRIBUTION OF SMALL-SCALE FOREST ENTERPRISES TO FORESTRY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (Item 7)

18. The Commission congratulated FAO on having included in the agenda an item on small-scale forest enterprises and their potential contribution to forestry and rural development. It acknowledged that one of the causes of deforestation was the fact that the rural populations had not benefited from the harvesting, processing and marketing of the numerous wood and non-wood products procured from the natural forests and forest plantations. It stressed that once the forests generated income for the rural inhabitants the forest establishment and utilization cycle would not be interrupted and the enhanced well-being of the rural population, derived from its involvement in productive forest activities, would be authentic, lasting and increasingly greater.

19. The Commission noted that small-scale forest enterprises accounted for a significant, but hitherto neglected, proportion of rural and urban forestry activities and of the industrial forestry sector in general. The cumulative benefits of these enterprises were considerable and their promotion had been recognized as an essential component of economic and social development. It recognized that the limited information available indicated that these enterprises generally encountered a series of difficulties that restricted their performance and prevented them from contributing more significantly to development.

20. The Commission emphasized that small-scale forest enterprises represented a fundamental vehicle for encouraging the rural communities to develop woodlots. It also indicated the need for production units in indigenous areas, that are managed by the indigenous populations themselves, to avoid intermediary interference, with full regard to the legal status.

21. It noted a number of important features for the establishment of these enterprises, *inter alia*: business administration, forest management in small areas, markets and marketing, product development and financing. It observed that small operators needed to be trained and that the proposed technologies should be easy to implement. It also remarked that this issue could not be treated in isolation but had to be linked to other aspects such as soil and water conservation.

22. The Commission underlined the fact that the large-scale enterprises could play a major role in promoting small-scale forest enterprises which could in turn often complement their production.

23. The Commission took note that FAO had formulated a technical cooperation project entitled "Promotion and Technical Assistance to Small-scale Forest Enterprises". It unanimously confirmed the importance of such a project and recommended that FAO give priority to arranging its funding.

24. During the discussion the importance of non-wood forest products in small-scale forest enterprises was mentioned, and it was pointed out that there existed a formulated project on these products for the Caribbean. In this respect, also, it requested that FAO consider arranging the financing of this project.

25. The Brazilian delegation reviewed its national experience on the promotion of small-scale forest enterprises and offered to host a meeting on this topic.

#### REVIEW OF 1988-89 ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR 1990-91 (Item 8)

26. The Commission noted that the Forestry Department's work programme for 1990-91 would continue many of the activities undertaken in the previous biennium, with renewed emphasis on responding to requests from member countries for assistance in establishing their forestry sector priorities through the TFAP process. This had been manifested by establishing a separate sub-programme for TFAP in the 1990-91 biennium. The Commission also noted that certain functions of the Department had also been rationalized, with the result that the TFAP Coordinating Unit reports direct to the ADG; the Policy and Planning Service had been renamed "Forestry Planning and Institutions Service", reflecting the fact that activities related to institutional strengthening had been brought into closer integration with policy and planning work; and the Forest Industries Division had been renamed "Forest Products Division".

27. The Commission requested and received clarification of the amounts and use of TFAP funds. It also enquired about the possibility of securing additional funds for LAFD activities, including the follow-up of recommendations related to the promotion of small-scale forest enterprises and regional technical cooperation networks. The Secretariat explained that the best option would probably be to finance these activities from extra-budgetary funds.

#### FORESTRY FIELD OPERATIONS IN THE REGION (Item 9)

28. Details were presented on the composition, trends, totals and sources of funding for projects which had been implemented in the region under the leadership or coordination of FAO, as well as estimates of funds available for forthcoming years during which the type of project will essentially remain the same but with added emphasis on institution building and TFAP-related activities.

29. The Commission requested that the Forestry Operations Service of FAO's Forestry Department help to locate funding for the small-scale enterprises and forestry information projects that had been endorsed by delegates.

30. The Commission noted the difficulties in obtaining funding and discussed ideas for the submission of projects to different bodies.

## REPORTS OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION NETWORKS (Item 10)

31. The Commission was informed about the activities of the five technical cooperation networks for the forestry sector that were supported by the FAO Regional Office: the Network on Watershed Management; the Network on National Parks, other Protected Areas and Wildlife; the Network on Agroforestry Systems; the Network on Dendroenergy; and the Caribbean Technical Cooperation Network on Upper Watershed Management.

32. The Commission emphasized the importance of forestry-related exchange of experience and technical cooperation among the countries of the region and noted with satisfaction the progress made by the technical cooperation networks in this regard.

33. The Commission underlined the importance of effective communication and distribution of information and publications on the part of the networks at the national level. It suggested that the networks' coordinating institutions establish or strengthen national networks by grouping the various governmental and non-governmental institutions working in this field. The need for enhanced distribution of documents was also raised and it was suggested that the FAO Representatives could provide assistance in this connection.

34. The Commission noted the importance of and the excellent results from exchanges of technical staff among the countries of the region. There was a need to establish detailed directories of experts in the nations belonging to the networks for the provision of advisory services and it was suggested that such directories be prepared for those networks that do not have them.

35. The Commission noted the variety of forestry activities being conducted by the Caribbean Technical Cooperation Network on Upper Watershed Management and recommended that this network consider changing its name in order to reflect the broad scope of its activities.

36. The Commission underlined the importance of adequate funding for the existing networks and the need for additional funds to establish the new networks proposed for the region, such as the approved network on integrated forest management as recommended by its sixteenth session.

37. The Commission noted the need for unrestricted exchange of TFAP experience and suggested that the concept of networks could be applied to enhance the exchange of experience among the countries of the region. It recommended that a proportion of the funds earmarked for the TFAP be allocated for support to regional collaboration through the technical cooperation networks.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF A FORESTRY DATA BASE FOR THE REGION (Item 11)

38. The Commission was informed about the draft programme and project to establish a forestry information system which it resolutely endorsed because of serious regional shortcomings in this field. It suggested that particular attention be paid to the following needs:

- to include the current progress being made in the institutions of the region to avoid duplication of effort;
- to draw up a schedule and to stagger the development of the project, starting from its most straightforward objectives;

- to determine a system and responsibilities for the collection of data among the forestry services of the countries, which should be given the necessary authority and capacity; this would at the same time provide them with official status;
- to ensure the ability to provide timely, accurate and sufficient information as this would determine the validity of the system's data base.

39. A number of countries made their experience and data records available to accelerate the effective implementation of the proposal.

40. The Commission recommended, as a result of these considerations, that this project be submitted to the international community for financing, including the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

#### OTHER BUSINESS (Item 12)

##### (a) Tenth World Forestry Congress

41. The Congress will be held in the Palais des Congrès, Paris, from 17 to 26 September 1991; 163 countries and 81 international organizations had been invited to participate in it. Three thousand participants were expected to attend. In line with the established principles, the World Forestry Congress is purely advisory. The implementation of its recommendations is for the consideration of those to whom they are addressed (governments, international organizations, scientific bodies, forest owners, general public, etc.) in the light of their particular situation.

42. The Commission was informed about the preparations for the Congress the theme of which was "Forests: A heritage for the future". An Organizing Committee had been established in Paris, chaired by a General Secretary assisted by six Technical Secretaries. FAO had appointed a parallel Associate Secretariat to provide technical support. The six major themes of the Congress were:

- The forest, a protective heritage
- Conservation and protection of the forest heritage
- Trees and forests in land use management
- Management of the forest heritage
- The forest heritage and economic resource
- Policy and institutions.

##### (b) Change of title of the Latin American Forestry Commission to "Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission" (LACFC)

43. In view of the decision of the FAO Conference to change the name of the region to "Latin America and the Caribbean", the Commission unanimously endorsed this proposal and recommended that this amendment be submitted for the approval of the FAO Council.

##### (c) Executive Committee

44. Delegates agreed on the necessity to strengthen the functioning of the Commission. To this effect they recommended that the Executive Committee maintain permanent contact with the different subregions, that it meet on the occasion of different meetings and congresses to evaluate

the implementation of its recommendations, liaise with the FAO Regional Office, prepare the agenda for its next session and develop such actions as may be appropriate to strengthen the role of the Commission.

(d) World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas

45. The fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas was scheduled to be held in Caracas in February 1992 under the auspices of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The Commission took note of this meeting and urged that governments of the region ensure active participation in it.

(e) Field trip

46. On Thursday 21 February delegates visited the forestry plantations programme developed by the CVG-PROFORCA Enterprise in the southern part of the Monagas and Anzoátegui States. Within the same programme they visited the plantation areas of Chaguaramas and Uverito, the sawmill complex and the research centre of El Merey; explanations on the progress of the projects were given by the administrators and technicians responsible for them.

47. Delegates expressed their satisfaction and admiration for the achievements of the Enterprise in the areas of research, plantations and processing; they exchanged ideas and experience on this topic and urged that the follow-up and development of these projects be intensified.

MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY  
(Item 13)

48. The Commission requested that its recommendations be referred to the attention of the Committee on Forestry.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Item 14)

49. The Commission took note of the invitation of the delegation of Uruguay to host the next session in 1993. The date will be decided by the Director-General in consultation with the host country.

## AGENDA

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Election of Officers
4. State of forestry in the region
5. Tropical Forestry Action Programme
6. International instrument on conservation and development of forests
7. Contribution of small-scale forest enterprises to forestry and rural development
8. Review of 1988-89 activities and Programme of Work and Budget for 1990-91
9. Forestry field operations in the region
10. Reports of Technical Cooperation Networks
11. Establishment of a forestry data base for the region
12. Other business
  - Tenth World Forestry Congress
  - Change of title of the Latin American Forestry Commission to "Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission"
13. Matters to be referred to the attention of the Committee on Forestry
14. Date and place of next session
15. Adoption of the report



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**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>
2	FO:LAFC/91/1	Provisional Agenda
5	FO:LAFC/91/2	Progress in the implementation of the Tropical Forestry Action Programme in the Latin American and Caribbean region
6	FO:LAFC/91/3	An international instrument for the conservation and development of the world's forests
7	FO:LAFC/91/4	Contribution of small-scale forest enterprises to forestry and rural development
8	FO:LAFC/91/5	Review of 1988-89 activities and Programme of Work and Budget for 1990-91
9	FO:LAFC/91/6	Forestry field operations in the region
10	FO:LAFC/91/7	Technical Cooperation Networks in the forestry sector supported by the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
11	FO:LAFC/91/8	Establishment of a forestry information system for Latin America and the Caribbean
12	FO:LAFC/91/9	Tenth World Forestry Congress
	FO:LAFC/91/10	Change of title of the Latin American Forestry Commission to "Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission"

Information documents

FO:LAFC/91/Inf. 1	Information Note
FO:LAFC/91/Inf. 2	Provisional timetable
FO:LAFC/91/Inf. 3	List of documents

Country reports received from:

Argentina	France
Bolivia	Guyana
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Cuba	Trinidad and Tobago
Dominican Republic	Venezuela





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