

**Notes from Interim Steering Committee Meeting Follow-up Session
for Asia FLEG, as adopted May 24, 2005
6:00 PM – 9:15 PM, Tuesday, May 17, 2005
Kensington Room, Crowne Plaza Hotel at the UN, 304 E. 42nd St, New York, NY**

The Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), as host and chair of the forthcoming meeting of the Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (Asia FLEG) Task Force, convened a meeting to seek guidance and assistance in progressing the Asia FLEG process. The attendance list is attached as Annex 1.

Romeo T. Acosta, Director, Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources served as Chair of the meetings on May 15 and 17, and Undersecretary Ramon J.P. Paje chaired the Interim Steering Committee meeting on May 24, 2005.

The Chair summarized **key outcomes** of the Monday, May 15, 2005, namely that:

An Interim Steering Committee was established that would provide guidance to the Task Force chair and move the Asia FLEG process forward until the next meeting of the Task Force, tentatively scheduled for September 2005 in the Philippines.

Key priorities for Asia FLEG will be:

- Strengthening regional and international enforcement cooperation; and
- Strengthening forestry transparency and access to data.

The Japanese delegates expressed their willingness to become members of the Interim Steering Committee.

Agenda Item 8: Proposed Schedule of Activities

Participants outlined expected **Outputs** for the September 2005 Task Force / Advisory Group Meeting:

1. A strategy and action plan to implement the key priorities of
 - Strengthening regional and international enforcement cooperation; and
 - Strengthening forestry transparency and access to data
2. Organization, Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee, Regional Secretariat, and National Secretariat
3. Work procedures and decision-processes for the Task Force, Steering Committee, Regional and National Secretariats
4. Implementable activities (regional and national level) before the 2006 Ministerial meeting
5. Agenda for the 2006 Ministerial Meeting

Participants outlined expected **Inputs** to the Task Force / Advisory Group Meeting:

1. **Organizational and logistical support** for a meeting in the Philippines in September 2005.
2. **A meeting of key customs and forestry enforcement** personnel from producer and consumer countries, designed to provide recommendations to the Task Force and support progress towards a regional enforcement mechanism. This meeting could immediately precede the Task Force / Advisory Group Meeting, based on timely planning and organizational work. Select participants would remain in the Philippines and present the results of the meeting to the Task Force / Advisory Group. Participants highlighted that **this meeting would benefit from an analysis and background paper on how customs and forestry personnel can complement their agency work to serve FLEG activities. Participants also highlighted the benefits of detailing the documentation requirements for establishing timber legality.**
3. **A gap analysis of forest transparency** and the role that forest transparency can play in strengthening forest law enforcement and governance.

4. **National level information sharing:** In order to enrich the discussion at the Task Force and Advisory Group meeting, countries should share information about the following questions (with emphasis on the two agreed priorities):
 - What building blocks exist at the local and national level?
 - What are countries doing now and what is the ongoing work in the country and at the regional and international levels?
 - What added value work can be done to advance cooperation on a regional and/or international basis?
 - What can countries undertake in the immediate term (between September 2005 and the Ministerial meeting in 2006)? What resources are required for these? Where are these resources to come from?
 - What do the countries commit to do?
5. **An analysis of a potential regional enforcement mechanism** such as the Lusaka Task Force and how it could be applied to the issue of forest law enforcement in the FLEG countries.
6. **A framework for a strategic action plan**, taking into consideration the results of the analyses in items 2, 3, 4, and 5, to implement the key priorities of
 - Strengthening regional and international enforcement cooperation; and
 - Strengthening Forestry Transparency and access to data.
7. **A proposed agenda** for the Task Force / Advisory Group Meeting, reflecting the preparatory work, the expected outputs and the two key themes.
8. **Relevant work completed by organizations and processes** such as the International Tropical Timber Organization and the Asia Forest Partnership.

Agenda Item 9: Proposed Budget and Components

It was agreed that small working groups of Interim Steering Committee members will meet over the course of UNFF-5 to discuss budgets for and components of the inputs listed above for the September 2005 TF / AG Meeting. Participants agreed that development of a proposal for logistical and organizational support for the TF / AG should be given priority and that proposals for other inputs should be developed as quickly as possible. [Note: The May 24th meeting adopted the attached budget.]

Agenda Item 10: May 26th Consolidation Meeting Agenda

It was agreed that governments will participate in diplomatic networking during the remainder of UNFF-5 and will look for further opportunities to raise the profile of Asia FLEG.