

## **ENGO Statement for the Sixth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests**

The Canadian Environmental Non-Governmental Organization (ENGO) community welcomed the opportunity to participate in a dialogue with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006, to discuss Canada's position at the Sixth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF6). On the basis of that discussion, the ENGOs submit the following statement to the official Canadian delegation to UNFF6. We hope that the delegation will consider this statement and incorporate some of its contents into its position.

### **ENGO Representation on the Official Canadian Delegation**

Canadian ENGOs value the opportunity to be represented on the official Canadian delegations that attend the UNFF meetings. ENGO delegates serve the following three key functions:

- i) they present directly the ENGO perspective on issues (which is more effective than having someone outside the ENGO community speak on their behalf);
- ii) the ENGO community is able to contribute to the delegation's response to the positions held by other countries; and
- iii) by including ENGO representatives as equal partners on delegations, Canada provides a positive model for other countries to emulate.

ENGO representatives have a role to play on every delegation, even when there has been no major shift in the Canadian position from one meeting to the next. UNFF6 is a case in point. While Canada's position may not have changed appreciably since UNFF5, an ENGO representative would still have fulfilled the three key functions outlined above had they been included on the UNFF6 delegation. Despite the fact that there will be little multi-stakeholder dialogue at UNFF6, an ENGO representative would have played an important role in terms of bringing the ENGO perspective to Canada's participation in the negotiations.

In short, the ENGO community understands that the decision not to include an ENGO representative on the official Canadian delegation to UNFF6 was based in part on the fact that this meeting is limited in its scope. However, we hope that this decision will not set a precedent for future meetings and we welcome NRCan's willingness to consider funding an ENGO representative to join the official Canadian delegation to UNFF7.

## **Key Issues to be Reflected in the Canadian Position**

There are some key issues that should be emphasized at UNFF6 and we ask that the delegation consider reflecting them in its position.

- Prior to instating a global legally binding instrument (LBI), Canada and other developed countries should provide demonstratable progress towards sustainable forest management through a critical assessment of such an instrument's domestic implementation carried out in partnership with independent stakeholders from the ENGO community.
- Negotiations should also address the importance of aboriginal traditional ecological knowledge.
- The delegation should address the importance of forest conservation, and the reuse, reduction and recycling of forest products, in its position.
- Equally important is the restoration and redevelopment of wild forests. We offer the following suggested text in relation to wild forests:

Given the great urgency that faces all the Earth's peoples in addressing the causes of global climate change and biodiversity loss, Canada calls on all nations to take immediate and effective action to restore large areas of natural forests to their native state and distribution. Monoculture plantations do not meet human needs, nor do they meet the needs of native flora and fauna.