

RCEN FOREST CAUCUS - ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

The Forest Caucus was active in three main areas of activity this year: i) Forest Caucus networking and communications through caucus meetings and teleconferences; ii) ENGO participation in Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Meetings and the United Nations Forum on Forests; and iii) the Forest Caucus participated in Environment Canada's Forest Sector Sustainability Table, and coordinated an ENGO submission to UNFCCC on the inclusion of avoided deforestation as a category within the Clean Development Mechanism. Please see below for details.

1. Forest Caucus Networking and Communications

Forest Caucus meeting at the RCEN Annual Conference on the Environment*

Over 15 Forest Caucus members attended the Forest Caucus meeting held September 24th in Montreal including representatives from WWF Quebec and SNAP Montreal. Former Minister of the Environment Charles Caccia also attended as a special guest.

National Boreal Issues Teleconference*

Twelve Forest Caucus members participated in the boreal issue-based teleconference held on January 1 date?, 2006 in preparation for the inaugural Forest Sector Sustainability Table (FSST) meeting. Key issues raised by the group and noted by Rachel Plotkin (Sierra Club of Canada), who was the FSST RCEN-selected ENGO representative.

Meetings/Teleconference to prepare the Annual Forest Caucus Meeting 2006*

Six Forest Caucus members participated in a Forest Caucus meeting/teleconference held September 27, 2006 in Ottawa to prepare for the Annual Forest Caucus meeting/teleconference taking place at the RCEN Conference on Agriculture and the Environment, to be held on October 21, 2006. Forest Caucus members were encouraged to fill in a forest-issues survey and calendar of events circulated by email in advance of the meeting/teleconference to help set the Forest Caucus priorities for the upcoming 2006-2007 Work Plan.

* Minutes from these teleconferences were circulated to Forest Caucus members.

2. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Meetings and Teleconferences

ENGO delegates were selected for several CBD meetings (see below for details). All attendance was made possible through funding from the Biodiversity Convention Office (EC).

Priscilla Sette (Saskatchewan Environmental Society)

[11th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice](#)

November 28 - December 2, 2005

Montreal, Quebec

Olivier Rukundo (Centre for International Sustainable Development Law)
[4th meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on Article 8\(j\)](#)
[4th meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing](#)
January 23-27, 2006 and January 30 to February 3, 2006
Granada, Spain

Éric Darier (Greenpeace, Quebec)
[3rd Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety](#)
March 13-17, 2006
Curitiba, Brazil

Éric Darier (Greenpeace, Quebec) and Olivier Rukundo (Centre for International Sustainable Development Law)
[8th Ordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD \(COP 8\)](#)
March 20-31, 2006
Curitiba, Brazil

Teleconference on Canadian ENGO Engagement in the CBD

In July 2006, Gabrielle Kretzschma (New Brunswick Partners in Agriculture member and co-chair of the RCEN Agriculture Caucus) volunteered to be the CBD Alliance Advisory Board (AB) representative for North America until 2008. Five Forest Caucus members participated in a teleconference held on August 29th, 2006 to discuss how Canadian ENGOs can engage the Canadian Government on the CBD, and ensure that Canada is implementing its existing commitments under the CBD. The Forest Caucus decided to submit a proposal to the CBD Secretariat for writing an ENGO position paper on the CBD, including recommendations for more effective ENGO participation.

3. United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

6th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF6)

UNFF6 was held February 13 – 24, 2006. As UNFF6 was a continuation of UNFF5, and because the RCEN has already provided NRCan with considerations for UNFF5, no funding was provided for an ENGO delegate to attend UNFF6 or for a new ENGO position paper. However, a Forest Caucus teleconference with NRCan was held February 8, 2006 to discuss ENGO recommendations and the Canadian position paper prepared by the government for UNFF6. An [ENGO Statement](#) was prepared by Andrea Lockwood (Forest Caucus Chair) with input from the Forest Caucus, and circulated to the official Canadian delegation during UNFF6.

Post-UNFF6 Teleconference with NRCan

Forest Caucus Steering Committee members Mark Purdon (R.E.A.P. Canada) and Boris Romaguer (Ambioterra), and NRCan representative Sandra Ribey, participated in a teleconference on the UNFF process on August 2, 2006. NRCan is organizing an exploratory international meeting (October 17-19, 2006 in Ottawa) of officials from

approximately 30 “like-minded countries” to discuss potential benefits and prospects of launching a legally binding instrument (similar to the international [Mine Ban Treaty](#) – also known as the Ottawa Convention). The government is planning to consult with NGOs after the October meeting. In the fall, NRCan will be contacting the RCEN to commission a policy paper if the meeting with international delegates is successful.

4. Forest Sector Sustainability Table (FSST)

Tim Gray (formerly with CPAWS) was the ENGO representative selected by the RCEN to participate at the FSST Design Team (DT) meeting held in Vancouver on November 15th, 2005. Beatrice Olivastri (Friends of the Earth) was selected by the FSST Co-Chairs to participate as well. The initial FSST Co-Chairs were Russ Horner (Norske Canada) and Mark Carney (Finance Canada). Russ Horner resigned from his Co-Chair position in the fall and Avrim Lazar (President and CEO, FPAC) became the interim Co-Chair, later replaced by Andy Neigel (Vice-President, Operations Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries). The RCEN selected Rachel Plotkin (National Director of Forests and Biodiversity, Sierra Club of Canada) to be the FSST ENGO representative. Mara Kerry (Manager, Conservation Program Development, Nature Canada), was selected as the alternate. More information on the FSST can be found on the [RCEN Website](#) or the [Government of Canada website](#). At present, it is unclear whether the FSST will resume activities under the Conservative Government.

5. Submission to the COP UNFCCC in response to the call for views on the issue of avoided deforestation issued at the 11th session of the COP

A Papua New Guinea/Costa Rica submission was accepted for consideration by the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) (FCCC/CP/2005/L.2). The COP solicited views on the above submission, to be received by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) by March 31, 2006. The SBSTA is to report its recommendations to the COP by December 2007. A workshop is to be held on these issues in November 2006. The Forest Caucus coordinated an ENGO submission, written by Mark Purdon (R.E.A.P. Canada) and signed by 7 ENGOs, on the inclusion of avoided deforestation as a category of the Clean Development Mechanism within the Kyoto Protocol. The ENGO submission can be found on page 89 of the [NGO Submissions compilation document](#).