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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
Second session
Geneva 18 March-5 April 1991
Working Group I
Agenda item 3 (a)

LAND RESOURCES: DEFORESTATION

Revised decision submitted by the Chairman
on the basis of informal consultations

Combating deforestation

The Preparatory Committee:

1. Takes note and expresses its appreciation for the Progress Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference on Conservation and Development of Forests (A/CONF.151/PC/27 and A/CONF.151/PC/27/Corr.1).
2. Takes note also of the extensive discussions on forests, within the context of environment and development held under Working Group I and its Ad Hoc Subgroup on Forests.
3. Notes the diversity of concerns regarding forests, the points made by the delegations for consideration at the third session of the Preparatory Committee and the synoptic list compiled by the secretariat.
4. Further noting that there are currently ongoing negotiations on biological diversity and climate change conventions which will address, inter alia, forestry issues linked to those negotiations, requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to:

(a) Re-examine its work on document A/CONF.151/PC/27, in line with decision 1/14 of the first session of the Preparatory Committee, taking into

consideration the various submissions made during the meetings of Working Group I and the Ad Hoc Subgroup on Forests, and as fully and as comprehensively as possible analyse and address inter alia:

- (i) The historical loss of boreal, temperate, subtropical and tropical forest worldwide, its causes and its respective contribution to global environmental degradation;
- (ii) Recent initiatives in the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests;
- (iii) The roles of forests in relation to soil and water conservation and socio-economic development in providing food security and domestic energy, eradicating poverty and raising standards of living and quality of life at the local and national levels;
- (iv) Suggestions regarding details of the requirements of funds and funding mechanisms;
- (v) Analysis and quantification of the respective economic values of boreal, temperate, subtropical and tropical forests in terms of:
 - Timber and forest produce;
 - Watersheds protection;
 - Flood prevention and control;
 - Soil protection and conservation;
 - Sanctuary and habitats for wildlife;
 - Recreation and eco-tourism;
 - Repositories for genetic resources;
 - Carbon and heat sinks;
 - Sources of fuel wood for developing countries;
 - Food and other basic needs of forest dwellers and local communities;
- (vi) The current levels and structure of world trade in timber and timber products;
- (vii) The important role that women, especially in developing countries, play in the conservation and sustainable development of forests and other land resources;
- (viii) The items in the synoptic list compiled by the secretariat will also be reported with suggestions for development-oriented action for reforestation and afforestation;
- (ix) The interlinkages with work on climate change and biodiversity.

5. Upon thorough assessment of the additional information to be presented by the Secretary-General to the Preparatory Committee at its third session, Working Group I will at its third session be in a position to examine all steps towards and options (including at a minimum, taking into account the special situation and needs of developing countries, a non-legally binding authoritative statement of principles) for a global consensus on the management, conservation and development of all types of forests, either as an integral part of the proposed earth charter or separately, while noting that the completion of this work may best be decided upon at UNCED 1992.
6. Requests the Secretary-General to take due account in its further work in this area of the relevant paragraphs of the Bergen Declaration, the Tlatelolco Platform on Environment and Development and the Final Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development for Asia and the Pacific, as well as the results of the regional Conference for Africa, organized in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/228, section II, paragraph 13 and decision I of the Preparatory Committee at its organizational session.
7. In the light of the foregoing, the following principles, amongst others, are outlined for further consideration of the Preparatory Committee meeting at its third session leading to UNCED 1992:
 - (a) Reaffirm Principle 21 of the Stockholm Declaration, including sovereignty of States over their natural resources and to recognize that forests include areas under permanent vegetative cover, ecosystems and human settlements and the States have the right to develop them in accordance with their need and level of socio-economic development, including the need to convert some of these areas for other uses in their overall socio-economic development based on rational land-use policies;
 - (b) All types of forests play a major role in economic development including subsistence needs in developing countries;
 - (c) All types of forests play a major role in maintaining the ecological balance at local, national, regional and global levels;
 - (d) All types of forests perform a wide range of social functions, including for forest dwellers, local communities and indigenous people who use and sustain forest resources and systems;
 - (e) These must be balanced to ensure that forests continue to play multiple roles in a sustainable manner;

- (f) To address issues crucial to sustainable development, including:
 - (i) The need to assess the cost, particularly for developing countries, involved in combating deforestation, and to identify ways and means for ensuring funding and technology consistent with General Assembly resolution 44/228 with a view to fulfilling the objectives of the Conference, in particular those stipulated in section I, paragraph 15 (j), (k), (l) and (m);
 - (ii) The need to assist developing countries with poor vegetative cover to launch and sustain afforestation and reforestation programmes with long-term objectives;
 - (iii) Technology transfer, including research and dissemination of information, training and joint development of projects;
 - (iv) Supportive national social, economic and environmental policies aimed at the protection, sustainable development and use of forests;
 - (v) Supportive international economic environment which promotes growth and development through various ways such as market access, terms of trade, addressing efficiently and urgently debt problems and alleviation of poverty;
 - (g) To address the interlinkages and harmonization of activities between forests, climate change and biodiversity.
8. The Preparatory Committee meeting affirmed that the UNCED process is the most appropriate forum for conclusive decisions pertaining to global consensus on forests, as referred to in paragraph 5 above.
