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TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION  
20-28 May 1998  
Libreville, Gabon

## **DECISION 5(XXIV)**

### **FURTHER STREAMLINING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEES**

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Decision 4(XXI) on the establishment of an Expert Panel on the Organization of Work under the ITTA, 1994;

Further recalling Article 24 of the ITTA, 1994 to undertake policy work and project activities in the areas of Economic Information and Market Intelligence, Reforestation and Forest Management, and Forest Industry, in a balanced manner, to the extent possible integrating possible policy work and project activities;

Also recalling Decisions 4(XXII), and 4(XXIII), which called for the convening of an informal working group, to evaluate project reports on ongoing and completed pre-projects and projects to assist the Committees and Decision 7(XXII) which elaborated on the task, composition and requirements of the Expert Panel for Technical Evaluation of Pre-projects and Project Proposals;

Having reviewed the experience of the informal working group at its Twenty-fourth session,

Recognizing the continuing need for the Committees to assess and streamline their organization of work and to restructure their agenda to ensure an appropriate balance;

Further recognizing the continuing need for the Committees to reflect an appropriate balance between project and policy work in order to attain the overall objectives of the ITTA, 1994;

Decides to:

1. Dissolve the informal working group which has met twice to evaluate reports on ongoing and completed pre-projects and projects to assist the Committees on Economic Information and Market Intelligence, Reforestation and Forest Management, and Forest Industry;
2. Request the Executive Director, prior to the Twenty-fifth session of the Council, to convene a meeting of up to three days composed of members of the Secretariat and the Chairpersons of the Committees, and the Expert Panel Chairperson to organize the work and agendas of the Committees with a view to promoting efficient and effective consideration of agenda items 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the respective Committees concerning pre-projects and projects, at the Council's Twenty-fifth session. The Terms of Reference are annexed.
3. Request members to submit additional comments on the streamlining of the work of the committees to the Executive Director by July 31, 1998.
4. Request the Executive Director, by September 15, 1998, to convene a four day meeting of a group of eight individuals, four from producer countries and four from consumer countries, who are highly familiar and experienced with the workings of the ITTO project cycle and policy work, the Committees and the Expert Panel for Technical Evaluation of Pre-projects and Project Proposals, together with appropriate members of the Secretariat, to:
  - consider further measures for strengthening and streamlining the work of the Committees and Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals, taking into account comments received from members and Decisions 4(XXI), 1996 and 4(XXII), and 4(XXIII), 1997, including their respective annexes; and

- propose ways to streamline the work of the Committees and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals;
  - propose ways to enhance the policy work of the Committees;
5. Review the report of the group at its Twenty-fifth session with a view to taking immediate action; and
  6. Request the Executive Director to allocate the financial resources from the Special Account to implement this Decision.

**ANNEX**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR DECISION 5(XXIV)**

1. Assist Committees to prepare their work and agendas for the Twenty-fifth Session of the Council;
2. Examine whether modifications proposed by the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Projects and Pre-Projects have been adequately addressed by the proposing entity. In relation to this task, the Group shall be guided by the categories of decisions outlined in the Annex of Decision 4(XXIII);
3. Review the reports on on-going pre-projects and projects with the assistance of the Secretariat, to identify issues that should be highlighted during committee sessions; and
4. Review the reports on completed pre-projects and projects with the assistance of the Secretariat to identify;
  - those that may benefit from ex-post evaluation;
  - lessons that could be usefully applied to other projects or project proposals; and
  - relevance for policy considerations;
5. Prepare reports for consideration by the Committees.

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