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## DECISION 8(XXI)

### ENHANCEMENT OF ITTO'S STATISTICAL FUNCTIONS AND NETWORK

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Noting Articles 29 and 30 of the ITTA, 1994, which address statistics, studies and information;

Welcoming the work of the two consultants and the Technical Working Group in the preparation of the Pre-Project Study on the Evaluation and Enhancement of ITTO's Statistical Functions and Networks (Document PPR 40/96 (M));

Aware of the need to avoid duplication of effort and to cooperate with other international organizations that collect, disseminate or analyze statistics relating to forests and the production and trade of forest products;

Also aware of the problems of data collection;

Noting that while some of the recommendations contained in the report have been implemented or could be implemented immediately without additional resources; other recommendations will require more time or are more appropriately implemented as part of other actions;

Decides to request the Executive Director to take steps to:

1. Collect data and information from member countries and other primary sources unless those data are readily available in a reliable or timely manner from other organizations, and utilize ITTO resources for better analysis of all data, putting tropical forest-related data in the context of the global market place, identifying trends and future developments;
2. Focus the ITTO's Annual Review on analyzing and providing insights into the tropical timber market;
3. Strengthen and focus the Annual Forecasting and Statistical Enquiry as per the report of the Technical Working Group;
4. Continue ITTO's participation in the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Forest Statistics (IWG) and actively pursue a joint questionnaire with the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through the IWG;
5. Circulate to all members and the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals the updated general elements for preparing and assessing project proposals on statistical information systems;
6. Continue to strengthen its coverage of end use markets in collaboration with other relevant organizations, e.g. the International Trade Center;

7. Utilize ITTO's regional consultants to collect and distribute information of relevance to the Organization;
8. Develop a consistent and comprehensive format for its various reports and continue its work in developing ITTO's Home Page on the World Wide Web to facilitate wider sharing of its statistical and other reports, such as project reports.

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