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9-12 November 2026
Yokohama, Japan

REPORT OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG)

AT ITS FORTIETH MEETING

22 October 2026
Virtual meeting

Fortieth Meeting of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG)
Virtual Meeting, 22 October 2026

1. The Fortieth Meeting of the IAG was convened virtually on Thursday, 22 October 2026 at 19:00 (JST), chaired by Ms. Cassandra Price (Australia), Chairperson of the Council and the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA). The meeting was attended by Dr Muhammad Zahrul Muttaqin (Indonesia), Vice-Chairperson of the Council and Producer Spokesperson, Ms. Rata Muda, Chairperson of the Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets (CEM) and the Committee on Forest Industry (CFI) and Consumer Spokesperson, Mr. Taisei Ikariya (Japan), Representative of the Host Government of the Headquarters; Ms Sheam Satkuru, Executive Director (ED); other observer colleagues from Japan (Ms. Yoko Yamoto, Mr. Masatoshi Higuchi, Mr. Daiji Kawaguchi and Ms. Akiho Tsurugi); and senior members of the Secretariat. Ms. Christiane Epse Anzan (Côte d'Ivoire), Chairperson of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF), was absent.

2. Following the ED's introduction, The IAG considered and adopted the following agenda for discussion:
   A. Brief background of the IAG under Decision 2(LI)
   B. Update on preparations for ITTC 62
   C. Status of Parties to the Agreement
   D. Status of contributions to the Administrative Account
   E. Pending positions of Council Officer/bodies to be filled
   F. Consideration of Draft Decisions/Elements of Decisions Submitted Pursuant to ITTC Decision 7(XXXIII):
      - Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LXII)]
      - Extension of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 [Decision 2(LXII)]
      - Matters pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 3(LXII)]
      - Matters related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006 regarding the Appointment of the Executive Director [Decision 4(LXII)]
   G. Other Matters

A. Brief background of the IAG under Decision 2(LI)

3. The ED provided a brief overview of the tasks of the IAG, including to recommend draft decisions to the Council session. She referred to Decision 2(LI) and the Report of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) at its Thirty-ninth Meeting held virtually on 16 October 2025, as contained in document ITTC(LXI)/2 dated 22 October 2025.

B. Update on preparations for ITTC 62

4. The Secretariat informed the IAG that most documentation for the session was available on the ITTO website, but the programme for the opening session was still under preparation. The arrangements for the Joint Committee sessions including the Trade and Market Day were highlighted, and IAG members were encouraged to review the agenda for that day, soon to be available on the ITTO website.

5. The IAG received a briefing on the provisional agenda for the 62nd Session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC).

6. *Item 1: Opening of the session.* The Secretariat noted that a separate agenda for the opening session would soon be posted on the website.

7. *Item 2: Ascertainment of the quorum.* The Secretariat noted that 14 producer members with 532 votes (requirement 19 countries with 667 votes) and 27 consumer members with 876 votes (requirement 20 members with 667 votes) had registered or delegated their votes, meaning that if all those registered arrive for the ITTC62 with valid credentials, quorum would not be met during the first 2 days of the session. Quorum requirements for the first two days of the session would require an additional 5 producer countries with 135 votes. The Secretariat also noted that verbal confirmations of participation had been received from three producer countries, but no registrations yet. The IAG noted that there was still over two weeks remaining for additional registrations to come in and/or for members not attending to allocate votes to a member that will be in Yokohama.

8. *Item 3: Adoption of agenda and organization of work.* This item is usually a formality.

9. *Item 4: Report on membership of the Council.* The ED will inform Council that the USA officially ceased to be a member of ITTO as of October 21, leaving membership at 75 (37 producers and 38 consumers).

10. *Item 5: Distribution of votes for the 2026-2027 Biennium.* The Secretariat will report on the proposed re-allocation of votes for 2026-2027 taking into account the withdrawal of the USA. The re-allocated votes are available in the Annex of the Council Agenda (Document ITTC(LXII)/1 Rev.2).

11. *Item 6. Admission of observers.* The information on observers is listed in Documents ITTC(LXII)/Info.3 and ITTC(LXII)/Info.4. A total of 16 observers have applied to attend the session, including six new observers. The ED has reviewed the applications, and the Council will decide whether to admit these observers if they attend the Session.

12. *Item 7. Statement by the Executive Director.* The ED will address Council at the first session of the Council, as per usual practice.

13. *Item 8. Report of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG).* The report of the IAG will be tabled at the first session of Council, as per usual practice. The IAG report will be posted as a Council document, Document ITTC(LXII)/2 on the ITTO website prior the start of the session.

14. *Item 9: Report of the Credentials Committee.* The Credentials Committee will most likely meet several times during the session to review the credentials received prior to and during Council and the delegation of votes.

15. *Item 10: Matters related to Article 19 of the ITTA, 2006 on the Administrative Account.* A verbal update under this item will be presented by the ED to Council.

16. *Item 11: Matters pertaining to Article 44 of the ITTA, 2006*. The report of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) will be presented by its Co-Chairs.

17. *Item 12: Matters related to the appointment of the Executive Director.* The Secretariat informed the IAG that the Executive Director was appointed under Decision 6(LVII) for a period of four (4) years, and her tenure was extended for additional two (2) years until 31 January 2028 under Decision 2(LX) in accordance with Decision 6(LIV), operative paragraph 3. Pursuant to Decision 8(LII), Annex, paragraph (8), the issue of the appointment of the Executive Director needs to be on the agenda of the Council session that occurs at least one year before the end of her term.

18. *Item 13: ITTO Biennial Work Programme.* The Secretariat will present the progress report on the implementation of the 2026-2027 Biennial Work Programme (BWP), Document ITTC(LXII)/6.

Additional presentations will be made to the Council and Committees on selected BWP activities under this and other agenda items, including the ITTO Fellowship Programme, Document ITTC(LXII)/7.

19. *Item 14: Matters related to Article 15 of the ITTA, 2006 on cooperation and coordination with other organizations.* The ED will present an update to the Council on this item, with interventions also expected from partners attending the Session.

20. *Item 15: Special Account and Bali Partnership Fund.* The Bali Partnership Fund (BPF) currently has a balance of approximately USD20,000. The Secretariat sought the support of the IAG to recommend to Council that there is no need to convene the meeting of the BPF during this session. The IAG supported this recommendation.

21. *Item 16: Implementation of ITTO's new financing architecture, Phase II*. The ED will make a presentation to the Council on developments in the implementation of the new financial architecture (Document ITTC(LXII)/10).

22. *Item 17: Biennial Review and Assessment of the World Timber Situation 2025-2026*. The draft Biennial Review will be presented to Council by the Secretariat.

23. *Item 18: Reports of the Committees.* The reports will be presented by the respective Chairpersons on the final day of the session (Thursday).

24. *Item 19: Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council for 2027.* The Vice-Chairperson of the Sixty-second Session will be nominated, by convention, by the Consumer Spokesperson as the incoming Chairperson. The consumer caucus is to propose a new Vice-Chairperson, who, by convention, will be nominated by the Producer Spokesperson.

25. *Item 20: Dates and venues of the Sixty-third and Sixty-fourth Sessions of the Council and the associated Sessions of the Committees*. The Secretariat informed that, following the principle of rotation, the Sixty-third Session of the Council should be held in Africa and hopes that a member will volunteer to host the session. The Sixty-fourth Session of the Council will be held in Yokohama, Japan.

26. *Item 21: Decisions and report of the session.* The draft decisions that may be recommended for Council consideration by the IAG are discussed below (under agenda item F).

27. *Item 22: Closing of the session.*

C. Status of Parties to the Agreement

28. The IAG was informed on the current status of the parties to the ITTA, 2006. The ED reported that the Secretariat received a United Nations notification addressed to the Executive Director of ITTO that through the UN depositary notification issued by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (Treaty Section), via C.N.284.2026.TREATIES-XIX.46 of 23 July 2026, the Secretary-General of the United Nations has communicated that the United States of America has notified its withdrawal from the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006.

29. In accordance with Article 41(2) of the ITTA, 2006, the withdrawal shall become effective 90 days after the notice was received by the depositary, which is 21 October 2026. As such, the United States of America ceased to be a party to the ITTA as of this date. In accordance with Article 41(3) of the ITTA, 2006, "financial obligations to the Organization incurred by a member under this Agreement shall not be terminated by its withdrawal." As noted above, there are now 75 parties to the Agreement, comprising 38 consumer members, including the EU, and 37 producer member countries.

D. Status of contributions to the Administrative Account

30. The Secretariat reported on the status of contributions to the Administrative Account. The CFA will also review the status of contributions. The Secretariat reported that information on contributions to the Administrative Account was on the ITTO website and was updated whenever a contribution was received. To date, 16 of the 37 producer members have paid their contributions for 2026, with an outstanding balance of USD 1.33 million (out of USD 3.27 million, and 37 of 38 consumer members have paid, with an outstanding balance of USD 361,618 (out of USD 3.83 million). In total, 53 of 75 members have paid their 2026 contributions, amounting to USD 5.41 million out of USD 7.1 million. This was a collection rate of 76.12%. The number of consumer members does not include USA. The trial measure under Decision 4(LIX) allows submission of one project proposal or concept note subject to submission of a payment plan, after two full years of contribution payment has been completed. Cameroon completed the payment of two years of arrears, fully settling its 2021 contribution in August 2024 and its 2022 and 2023 contributions in August 2025; however, Cameroon has not yet submitted a payment plan for its remaining arrears. Mali completed the payment of two years of arrears, fully settling its 2022, 2023 and 2024 contributions in March 2026. Subsequently, the payment of all outstanding contributions, including its 2026 assessed contribution was made in July 2026. The ED noted that discussions were underway for some time with 2 countries, Ghana (since 2022) and Guyana (since 2024), with no constructive steps to date from either country regarding the Secretariat's proposed payment plans. Mr. Muttaqin noted that Indonesia was working with Ghana and Guyana in the Better Market Recognition Coalition (BMRC) and suggested that forum might be used to engage with these countries. The ED informed that efforts to engage with the UK-funded BMRC were ongoing but that initial indications were that its work would focus on reporting and information collection rather than field activities and that potential benefits to participating countries remained uncertain.

E. Pending positions of Council Officer/bodies to be filled

31. The Secretariat noted that the names of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets and the Committee on Forest Industry (from Guatemala) and the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (from Canada) were pending. Ms. Muda confirmed that Canada had nominated Mr. Talha Sadiq to be the new vice-chair of RFM.

32. The IAG took note of the vacancies for the Sixty-second Session of ITTC and also noted that four nominations each were required from the Consumer and Producer caucuses for the Credentials Committee. As mentioned above under B Item 15, the IAG supported the proposal of the Secretariat not to convene the Panel on Sub-account B and the Bali Partnership Fund. Two nominations from the Producer Caucus (one each from Africa and Latin America) and two nominations from the Consumer Caucus were pending for the Expert Panel. Nominations were also needed for new Vice-Chairpersons for the Council and Committees in 2027. Mr. Muttaqin noted that he and several other office holders were shouldering multiple responsibilities, informing that he would like the African region to take over the role of producer spokesperson. He will liaise with his caucus in this regard.

F. Consideration of draft Decisions/Elements of Decisions submitted pursuant to ITTC Decision 7(XXXIII)

33. The IAG considered the draft decisions/elements of decisions prepared by the Secretariat pursuant to ITTC Decision 7(XXXIII) as follows:

i. Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LXII)]
ii. Extension of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 [Decision 2(LXII)]
iii. Matters pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 3(LXII)]

iv. Matters related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006 regarding the Appointment of the Executive Director [Decision 4(LXII)].

Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LXII)]

34. The ED stated that, as per usual practice, this decision would detail activities and projects approved and funded by the Council and would be ready before the end of the session. Donor consultations were ongoing, and it was hoped that some projects would be funded at the session.

Extension of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 [Decision 2(LXII)]

35. The ED informed the IAG that this decision is to extend the SAP 2022-2026 for a four-year period from 2027-2030, enabling the duration of the SAP to coincide with the new ITTA being finalized by December 2029, bearing in mind that many elements in the SAP remain 'fit for purpose' until 2030. The IAG was agreeable to this proposal.

Matters pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 3(LXII)]

36. The ED informed the IAG that this decision will amend and ensure timely implementation of the timeline for renegotiating the ITTA, including providing for a second preparatory committee meeting and the first formal negotiating session in 2027. The Secretariat has been in contact with UNCTAD which confirmed that UNCTAD in practice does not provide any legal support/advice during negotiation processes. Its support will only extend to the provision of meeting space and clearing the text of the negotiated agreement prior to its submission to the UN depositary. UNCTAD also confirmed that a one-week slot is available in July 2027, and that from September the UNCTAD facility in Geneva would be undergoing renovations, making later dates (including for a possible Council session in combination with the negotiating session) more difficult to secure. An African member, which had originally expressed interest in hosting ITTC 63, recently withdrew its interest and it would likely be difficult for another African country to agree to host the session at this late stage. The ED floated the idea of combining a negotiating session and a Council session during 2027 (possibly in July or in October) in Geneva, with the Council to be convened at a separate private facility if UNCTAD is unable to provide its meeting facilities for the required duration.

37. Council will also need to decide if it desires an independent legal advisor present during the negotiations, and if so provide a budget for this. Mr. Muttaqin noted that it might also be possible for another country/region to host the ITTC session in 2027; the ED noted that was possible but that members may find it difficult to travel twice in a short duration of time. Ms. Yamoto requested information on the cost of holding a Council session in Geneva and noted that Japan could also be an option. She asked if it was necessary to hold the negotiating sessions in Geneva if UNCTAD support was limited. The ED noted that the proposed five-day negotiating session in Geneva could be shortened to three days at UNCTAD, with a three-day Council session to follow, possibly at another venue. ITTC 62 and the first preparatory meeting are already scheduled for Japan so another meeting in Japan would be problematic for many members in terms of travel costs, etc. The ED further noted that holding the negotiation sessions at a non-UN location might impact the status of a resulting agreement as an official UN treaty. The Secretariat will continue to investigate this. Ms. Yamoto requested that further details on costs of the negotiating session in 2027 (and a possible combined Council session) be provided to Council, which Secretariat will do.

Matters related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006 regarding the Appointment of the Executive Director [Decision 4(LXII)]

38. The Secretariat informed the IAG that, as per the provisions of Decision 8(LII), Annex, paragraph 8, "the Executive Director shall ensure that the issue of appointment of the Executive Director is on the agenda of the Council Session that occurs at least one year before the end of his or her term". Under Decision 2(LX) the term of the current Executive Director was extended for a period of two years and a decision needs to be taken at this session due to the end of that term being 31 January 2028.

39. The IAG recommended the following list of decisions to be considered for adoption by the Council at its Sixty-second Session:

    i. Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LXII)]
    ii. Extension of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 [Decision 2(LXII)]
    iii. Matters pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 3(LXII)]
    iv. Matters related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006 regarding the Appointment of the Executive Director [Decision 4(LXII)].

40. Draft proposals for these decisions (except the first and last) are included in Annex A to this report.

G. Other Matters

41. There were no other matters.

H. Adjournment

42. The Fortieth meeting of the IAG was adjourned at 20:00 Japan time with a vote of thanks to the participants of the meeting.

ANNEX A

Draft Decisions

Only text of draft Decisions is appended to this Report.

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Draft DECISION 2 (LXII)

EXTENSION OF THE ITTO STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2022-2026

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Decision 5(LVII) by which the Council adopted the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026;

Noting that the implementation period of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 will expire at the end of 2026;

Recalling that the Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 provides that the Council may decide to extend the Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 to 2029 if it decides on a three-year final extension of the ITTA, 2006;

Noting Decision 1(LIX.1) on the further extension of the ITTA, 2006, in accordance with Article 44(2), for a period of three years with effect from 7 December 2026 until 6 December 2029;

Decides to:

1. Extend the implementation period of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026, without amendment, to 2029; and

2. Request the Executive Director to continue to formulate and implement the Biennial Work Programmes in line with the Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 as extended by this Decision.

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Draft DECISION 3 (LXII)

MATTERS PERTAINING TO ARTICLE 44 OF ITTA, 2006

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Article 44 of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) 2006;

Noting that the ITTA, 2006 entered into force on 7 December 2011 with an initial duration of ten years, and was extended for a period of five years with effect from 7 December 2021 until 6 December 2026, in accordance with Decision 4(LVII);

Noting Decision 1(LIX.1) on the further and final extension of the Agreement in accordance with Article 44(2) of the ITTA, 2006, for a period of three years with effect from 7 December 2026 until 6 December 2029;

Recalling Decisions 4(LVII), 4(LVIII), 5(LIX), 4(LX) and 4(LXI) on the preparatory work for the future negotiation, including the establishment of the open-ended Preparatory Working Group (PWG);

Taking note of the report of the PWG contained in Document ITTC(LXII)/5, including its recommendations on the tentative Roadmap for 2027;

Recognizing the need to plan for the expiry of the ITTA, 2006 by allowing adequate time and resources for the negotiation of a successor agreement;

Further recognizing the voluntary contributions of Japan and the USA supporting the preparatory work to date;

Decides to:

1. Express its appreciation to the PWG, its Co-Chairpersons and all participating Members for their work, and note that the mandate of the PWG, as extended by Decision 4(LXI), concludes with the Sixty-second Session of the Council on 12 November 2026;

2. Convene the second session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom II) in Yokohama, Japan in the first quarter of 2027 on xxx, to continue preparations for the negotiation of a successor agreement to the ITTA, 2006, taking into account the report of the PWG and the outcome of the first session of the Preparatory Committee;

3. Request the Executive Director to make the necessary arrangements with UNCTAD and the United Nations Office at Geneva for the first negotiating session in (tentatively) the third quarter of 2027, including conference services and legal advisory support, and to communicate the dates to Council at the earliest opportunity;

4. Adopt the tentative timeline and estimate of costs for 2027-2029 contained in the Annex to this Decision, which replaces the Annex to Decision 4(LXI);

5. Request the Secretariat to continue to post the documents and reports of the preparatory meetings on the ITTO member portal for transparency and awareness for all Members;

6. Encourage all Members to participate actively in the Preparatory Committee and the negotiating sessions;

7. Request the Executive Director to seek voluntary contributions to meet the budgetary requirements for the implementation of this Decision, and authorize the Executive Director to use funds from the Working Capital Reserve up to US$516,000 in 2027 in the absence of sufficient voluntary contributions;

8. Request the Executive Director to report to the Council at its Sixty-third Session on the progress of the negotiation, including recommendations on the Roadmap and budgetary requirements for 2028.

ANNEX

TENTATIVE TIMELINE AND ESTIMATE OF COSTS RELATED TO THE NEGOTIATION OF THE ITTA

(in United States dollars)

Tentative Timing		Description	Provisional Estimated Expenses
2027	**Q1**	**PREPCOM II - (3 days in Japan)** *- Meeting Facilities (incl. SIS Equipment)* *- Language Staff (Interpreters/Translators), etc.*	$250,000
	Q2	**Intersessional Virtual Meeting** *- Virtual session. Interpretation (online) & document translation*	$8,000
	Q3/Q4	**Intersessional Virtual Meeting** *- Virtual session. Interpretation (online) & document translation*	$8,000
	Q3/Q4	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION I - (5 days in Geneva)** *- Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.* *- Conference services and legal advisory support.*	$250,000
		Total:	**$516,000**
2028	**Q1**	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION II - (5 days in Geneva)** *- Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.* *- Conference services and legal advisory support*	$250,000
	Q3	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION III - (5 days in Geneva)** *- Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.* *- Conference services and legal advisory support*	$250,000
		Total:	**$500,000**
2029	**Q1**	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION IV - (5 days in Geneva)** *- Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.* *- Conference services and legal advisory support*	$250,000
		Total:	**$250,000**

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