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DECISION 7(LVII)

MATTERS RELATED TO ARTICLE 15 OF THE ITTA, 2006 ON COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Article 15 of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, Decision 7(XXX), Decision 8(LV) and Decision 4(LVI) on the role of ITTO in international and regional fora;

Noting with appreciation the efforts made in seeking collaboration and cooperation with international partners under ITTO's Biennial Work Programme, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), in carrying out the Organization's mandate as specified in the ITTA, 2006 and as summarized in Document ITTC(LVII)/13 presented during the Fifty-seventh Session of Council;

Reaffirming the importance of maintaining and further strengthening cooperation with relevant international organizations, institutions and partners in order to advance the objectives and implementation of the Agreement, in light of the special acknowledgement accorded in other fora including the 2021 G7 Environment Ministers' Communique;

Noting that some measures for enhancing the ITTO's role in international and regional organizations and fora can be accommodated with existing resources while other measures will require additional funding from other sources;

Decides to:

1. Request the Executive Director to further pursue the measures in the Annex to this decision for effective ITTO involvement in international and regional organizations and fora, in particular with regard to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the recently established Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogues under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), taking into account the expected mutual benefits and timing of relevant international and regional events, and to provide progress reports to Council during this time frame;
2. Request the Executive Director to undertake measures that support the implementation of the new Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026, including through measures identified within the approved budget of the Administrative Account, and to seek voluntary contributions from member countries to support the measures identified in the Annex to this decision;
3. Encourage members to seek ways to assist ITTO and/or member countries to access funding sources (such as GEF8 replenishment funds and future replenishment cycles) through country driven programmes which could help realize ITTO priorities through funding some of the smaller pilot projects approved by ITTO which could be upscaled later with funding from the GEF or others;

4. Authorize the Executive Director to offer ITTO co-sponsorship, pending availability of funds, to any country-led initiatives on issues relevant to ITTO objectives, including measures outlined in the Annex to this decision, and urge member countries to engage with their respective country focal points of these organizations to realize mutual synergies;
5. Request the Executive Director to seek voluntary contributions from members of US\$100,000.00 to meet the costs of implementing this decision in 2022-23 and to report to Council on funds raised and their use during this period;
6. Review the effectiveness and benefits of undertaking such measures and update as needed the measures contained in the Annex to this decision at its Fifty-eighth Session in Yokohama in 2022, in view of progress made and developments in relevant international and regional events.

Annex

International Organizations and Conventions

UNFF

- Continue to be actively involved in UNFF meetings (especially regarding trade and environmental issues, forest monitoring, forest conservation and sustainable management).
- Prepare briefs and/or contribute to the UNFF Programme of Work 2021-2024 on issues where ITTO has comparative advantage.
- Continue to be actively involved in UNFF ministerial segments and multi-stakeholder dialogues.
- Continue to host and lead side events at UNFF meetings (with CPF partners as appropriate) on key UNFF topics related to ITTO's mandate to facilitate highlighting recent ITTO accomplishments and innovations.
- Continue to participate in relevant ad hoc technical expert groups convened by UNFF.

CPF

- Continue to serve as the lead agency on issues where ITTO has comparative advantage.
- Continue to participate in and contribute to select CPF Joint Initiatives which fit ITTO's mandate under the ITTA, 2006 and the CPF Workplan 2021-2024.

FAO

- Continue and enhance coordination and cooperation on trade statistics, including collaborative reporting on statistics.
- Strengthen coordination with FAO regional commissions, including having the three ITTO Technical Committees report on activities of the commissions during Committee sessions, with a view to considering areas for joint project work.
- Continue to strengthen communication and cooperation between Secretariats on areas of mutual interest, such as capacity building, criteria and indicators, Forest Resource Assessment, forest contribution to carbon cycles, forest fires, improved harvesting and processing techniques, forest education and, where appropriate, certification, legality verification and mutual recognition.

CITES

- Continue to actively participate, in preparatory work within the Plants and Animals Committees leading up to the CITES COP 19 to be held in Panama City, Republic of Panama, with a view to providing technical advice and guidance to support informed discussions at CITES COP 19 in 2022.

WTO

- Re-engage with the WTO to provide information on ITTO's trade and environment activities.
- Monitor and report to Council developments in WTO Trade Policy Reviews particularly on potential impacts on the tropical forestry sector, revision in the agriculture negotiations and other relevant developments and/or outputs from the WTO Ministerial Conferences.
- Participate in WTO meetings where feasible if relevant to providing assistance to ITTO members on trade issues.

CBD

- Continue to seek collaborative avenues with the CBD Secretariat and its members with a view to operationalizing the MOU finalized in 2021, particularly in relation to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework when finalized and agreed upon.

CIFOR

- Continue cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

ICRAF

- Explore the possibility of dialogue and collaborative work in areas of mutual interest.

IUFRO

- Continue to collaborate with IUFRO on activities of mutual interest, including Global Forest Expert Panel reports undertaken by IUFRO relevant to tropical forests.

UNEP

- Continue and explore the possibility for increased cooperation, including joint sponsorship of workshops in areas of mutual interest related to sustainable forest management, such as forest fires, and explore avenues on joint UNEP-UNDP-World Bank activities and/or programmes with a view to seeking a role for the ITTO as an implementing agency in producing regions.

UNFCCC/IPCC

- Continue to participate at, monitor developments and contribute where relevant and appropriate to UNFCCC/IPCC discussions regarding forests post-COP 26, especially on the Forests, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogues and discussions on deforestation and their potential implications for tropical forests and the world tropical timber economy.
- Invite, as appropriate, representative(s) of the UNFCCC/IPCC and other relevant institutions to report to Council on the status of forest/timber related discussions under UNFCCC/IPCC/FACT.
- Continue to strive to achieve an MOU between ITTO and UNFCCC to promote cooperation on work related to tropical forests.

UNCCD

- Continue to explore opportunities for dialogue and potential cooperation in areas of mutual interest.
- Continue to strive to renew an MOU between ITTO and UNCCD to promote cooperation on work related to tropical forests.

International Financial Institutions

GEF

- Recommend to Council areas for increased dialogue and potential technical collaboration on GEF policy and project funding, particularly in relation to GEF-8 including co-financing with GEF implementing agencies of ITTO and producer member projects that may be suitable for funding under the GEF biodiversity, land degradation and climate change focal areas, and the potential for an ITTO role as an implementing or executing agency under GEF, particularly in the Small Grants Program which is likely to open up to new Partner agencies.
- Extend and deepen ITTO's ongoing cooperation with the GEF Secretariat and the GEF implementing agencies: the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP.
- Exchange information (markets and statistics, guidelines and project experience) and cooperate with the GEF's Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) to explore mutual synergies that can increase ITTO's global influence and branding as an expert on tropical timber/forestry-related matters.
- Engage with member countries to coordinate their approach to ITTO and GEF, aimed at member qualification for country-driven project funding under GEF programming which could facilitate the realization of mutual synergies that may assist with the implementation of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 in their own territories.

World Bank

- Continue to explore possibilities for increased cooperation with the World Bank with respect to implementing ITTO objectives in member countries based on "lessons learned" through ITTO project implementation and evaluation.
- Engage in dialogue with the World Bank on the implementation of the World Bank Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and the World Bank Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) with a view to promoting synergies where possible, in all producing regions.

Regional Development Banks

- Initiate a dialogue with relevant regional development banks, including the Inter-American Development Bank, African Development Bank and Asian Development Bank on their policy review and project implementation processes relevant to ITTO objectives, including implementation of national forest plans and strategies, research and development and plantation management.

Regional Organizations and Fora

COMIFAC

- Continue collaborative work and explore new avenues with COMIFAC to build on successful projects implemented to facilitate knowledge-sharing and enable strengthening relationships between Francophone countries and ITTO with a view to promoting more active support for ITTO activities and in implementing ITTO criteria and indicators and guidelines.
- Participate in high level African regional forest law enforcement conferences as appropriate.

ASEAN and ASEAN Foundation

- Explore possibility of joint projects on training programmes for prevention of forest fires and other relevant matters and knowledge-sharing on sustainable forest management with participation of local communities within the region.

APEC

- Continue to collaborate in the APEC-EGILAT process by participating actively in meetings and contributing to relevant joint activities

Criteria and Indicators Processes

- Continue to actively participate in meetings of the Montreal and Pan-European processes on temperate and boreal forests, including as appropriate meetings of their technical advisory committees.
- Continue to actively participate in the FAO Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) process and other CPF work to streamline international reporting on forests using C&I.
- Consider as appropriate expanding cooperation on C&I previously undertaken with the (now defunct) African Timber Organization to other regional tropical forest criteria and indicators processes involving ITTO producer members.

South Pacific Forum

- Participate in relevant activities of mutual interest.

Non-Governmental and Private Sector Groups**IUCN**

- Continue to strengthen collaboration related to forest rehabilitation and restoration in development of transboundary conservation areas, bushmeat issues, and the IUCN red list of endangered species, consistent with ITTO's mandate aimed at supporting the implementation of the ITTO Guidelines on Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics.

Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- Continue to strengthen outreach to international and regional NGOs/CSOs to encourage their greater participation in ITTO policy and project activities and explore opportunities for collaboration in areas of mutual interest.
- Strengthen the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) established pursuant to Decision 9(XXVIII) to facilitate greater contribution and participation by civil society to the work of ITTO.

Trade/Industry Groups

- Strengthen the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) established pursuant to Decision 9(XXVIII) to facilitate greater contribution and participation by the trade/industry to the work of ITTO.

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