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Panama City, Panama

REPORT OF THE

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

AT ITS SIXTY-FIRST SESSION

Panama City, Panama

27–31 October 2025

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KEY ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFoCO	Asian Forest Cooperation Organization
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
BWP	Biennial Work Programme
CAFI	Central African Forest Initiative
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEM	Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets
CFA	Committee on Finance and Administration
CFI	Committee on Forest Industry
CIFOR-ICRAF	Center for International Forestry Research–World Agroforestry
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
CRF	Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EGILAT	Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade
EU	European Union
EUDR	European Union Deforestation Regulation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAG	Informal Advisory Group
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTC	International Tropical Timber Council
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PWG	Preparatory Working Group
RESTEC	Remote Sensing Technology Center of Japan
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar(s)

OPENING OF THE SESSION (AGENDA ITEM 1)

1. The 61st Session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC), held in Panama City, Panama, was opened by the Chairperson, Mr. Carlos Espinosa Peña (Panama) who welcomed Council members and noted the symbolic significance of meeting in his country which is a biodiversity hotspot bridging two hemispheres. He noted the importance of tropical forests in meeting global environmental challenges and the timeliness of discussions that will take place during the session to renew and review the mandate of ITTO under the ITTA. Panama, which is already a bridge for the world, can also serve as a bridge between producers and consumers as they undertake discussions on the role and mandate of ITTO. He urged members to undertake constructive discussions and to enjoy their time in his country.

2. Ms. Sheam Satkuru, Executive Director, International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) welcomed the dignitaries attending the opening session and noted the contributions of donors and all members who had paid assessed contributions to allow ITTO to continue its important work. She stressed the importance of tropical forests and ITTO's role in sustaining them, noting the important role of indigenous and local communities.

3. The Hon. Mr. Jorge Rodriguez Zuniga, Vice-Minister of the Environment, Costa Rica, noted his country's strong support for ITTO and his gratitude for its support for Costa Rica's forests since it had become a member. He reported on efforts towards the sustainable management and development of Costa Rica's forests. He noted several areas where ITTO projects had contributed to sustainable forest management (SFM) in Costa Rica and was hopeful such support would continue. He recognized the important role of women and rural communities in fostering SFM, while stressing the key contribution of the private sector in achieving a green economy. He pledged Costa Rica's continued support for ITTO and its work.

4. H.E. Mr. Roberto Seminario Portocarrero, Ambassador of Peru to Japan, noted the important role of ITTO in fostering a constructive dialogue on issues surrounding the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests. He highlighted Peru's successful implementation of over 60 ITTO-funded projects, which have made a significant contribution to SFM in his country (home to the fourth largest tropical forest in the world). He thanked the donors that supported these projects and noted that Peru was presenting 3 new projects at this session in the hope of attracting donor interest. Ambassador Portocarrero reiterated Peru's unwavering support for the goals and work of ITTO.

5. H.E. Mr. Hendra Halim, Ambassador of Indonesia to Panama, stressed that discussions on the renewal of the ITTA should take account of global developments to ensure that ITTO continues to serve as a platform for sharing mutual concerns and seeking shared solutions to issues facing tropical forests. He noted that Indonesia looked forward to working with other members to negotiate a new agreement that was forward-looking, enabling members to maximize the benefit of sustainable forest management and fair trade in tropical timber.

6. The opening session concluded with a statement by H.E. Mr. Juan Carlos Navarro, Minister of the Environment, Panama, who welcomed delegates in the name of the government of Panama. Mr. Navarro noted the shared purpose of all members to promote SFM, while at the same time acknowledging the dire condition of many tropical forests around the world. Tropical forests are essential to combating climate change, to ensuring the continued existence of biodiversity and, ultimately, to the well-being of all life on our planet. He was proud that Panama was now a carbon negative country and stressed his country's ongoing commitment to managing forests sustainably and to the work of ITTO. The minister stressed that all countries need to assume national responsibilities for achieving global environmental objectives and outlined Panama's 3-step approach for policy development, funding and implementation of appropriate actions. He urged Council members to rise to the challenge during this session of taking ITTO into the future. Panama considers ITTO irreplaceable

and commits itself to working productively with the Organization and all its members to achieve their shared objectives.

ASCERTAINMENT OF THE QUORUM (AGENDA ITEM 2)

7. The Secretariat (Dr. Mohammed Nurudeen Iddrisu) reported that, as of the first day of Council, the quorum for the 61st Session of the Council had not yet been met due to an insufficient number of producer members holding sufficient votes attending the session (the consumer member requirement for quorum had been met as of the first day of Council). The Chairperson urged members and the Secretariat to do everything possible to ensure quorum was met.

8. This agenda item was reopened on the third day of Council when the requirements for achieving quorum were relaxed to a simple majority of members/votes for both producers and consumers in accordance with Article 13 of the ITTA, 2006. The Secretariat reported that with the relaxed requirements and taking account of the assignment of votes from members unable to attend to members at the Session, quorum had been attained. The list of participants is contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.2.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK (AGENDA ITEM 3)

9. The Chairperson referred to Document ITTC(LXI)/1 and invited comments on the provisional agenda.

10. In the absence of objections and comments, the provisional agenda was adopted.

REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL (AGENDA ITEM 4)

11. The Chairperson invited the Executive Director to inform Members on the status of membership of the Council.

12. The Executive Director informed the Council that the Organization's membership stood at 76, comprising 39 consumer members and 37 producer members. There had been no change in membership since the 60th Session of the Council.

PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES FOR THE 2026-2027 BIENNIUM (AGENDA ITEM 5)

13. The Chairperson drew the attention of the Council to the annex of Document ITTC(LXI)/1, which showed the proposed distribution of votes for the 2026–2027 biennium, in accordance with Article 10(7) of the ITTA, 2006.

14. In accordance with Article 19(4) of the ITTA, 2006, the approved distribution of votes will be used for the assessment of the contribution of each Member to the Administrative Budget for the 2026–2027 biennium.

15. In the absence of comments or objections, the distribution of votes reproduced below was approved for the 2026–2027 biennium.

DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES FOR THE 2026–2027 BIENNIUM

PRODUCER MEMBERS	**2025 No. of Votes**	**2026/2027 Biennium No. of Votes**
Africa		
Angola	21	21
Benin	20	20
Cameroon	21	21
Central African Republic	21	21
Congo	21	21
Côte d'Ivoire	20	21
Democratic Republic of the Congo	21	21
Gabon	21	21
Ghana	21	21
Liberia	20	20
Madagascar	20	21
Mali	20	21
Mozambique	21	21
Togo	20	20
Asia & Pacific		
Cambodia	22	22
Fiji	14	14
India	28	28
Indonesia	95	100
Malaysia	61	45
Myanmar	25	24
Papua New Guinea	42	39
Philippines	15	15
Thailand	47	48
Vietnam	24	37
Latin America/Caribbean		
Brazil	134	133
Colombia	23	23
Costa Rica	12	12
Ecuador	21	20
Guatemala	12	12
Guyana	15	15
Honduras	12	12
Mexico	24	24
Panama	13	13
Peru	27	27
Suriname	16	16
Trinidad and Tobago	10	10
Venezuela	20	20
TOTAL:	**1,000**	**1,000**

CONSUMER MEMBERS	**2025**	**2026/2027 Biennium**
	No. of Votes	**No. of Votes**
Albania	10	10
Australia	15	15
Canada	15	15
China	320	336
European Union	**329**	**323**
Austria	10	10
Belgium	15	15
Bulgaria	10	10
Croatia	10	10
Cyprus	10	10
Czech Republic	11	11
Denmark	11	11
Estonia	10	10
Finland	10	10
France	22	22
Germany	19	17
Greece	11	11
Hungary	10	10
Ireland	13	12
Italy	19	19
Latvia	10	10
Lithuania	10	10
Luxembourg	10	10
Malta	10	10
Netherlands	21	18
Poland	11	11
Portugal	13	13
Romania	10	10
Slovakia	10	10
Slovenia	10	10
Spain	12	12
Sweden	11	11
Japan	113	102
New Zealand	11	11
Norway	10	10
Republic of Korea	60	63
Switzerland	11	11
United Kingdom	27	22
United States of America	79	82
TOTAL:	**1,000**	**1,000**

ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS (AGENDA ITEM 6)

16. The Chairperson referred to Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.3 Rev.2 and Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.4. He said that, in accordance with ITTC Decision 3(LI), the Executive Director had reviewed applications for observer status for compliance with requirements. In accordance with that decision, the results of the initial review were published on the ITTO website two weeks prior to the session.

17. The ED reported on several observers that had been granted "permanent observer" status by the Council and urged that such observers be admitted to this session as usual. She noted that the new observers in Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.4 included two NGO observers (Ponterra from Panama and Satellites on Fire from Mexico) that had registered late. The Secretariat recommended that all observers be admitted to the session.

18. The Chairperson invited comments regarding the admission of observers. In the absence of comments or objections, all observers in compliance with the guidelines according to ITTO Rules were admitted as observers to the 61st Session of the Council.

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (AGENDA ITEM 7)

19. The Executive Director welcomed delegates to the 61st Council Session and noted that current global uncertainty was impacting all international organizations including ITTO. She lamented the decline in voluntary contribution funding of ITTO work but remained optimistic that ITTO's accreditation by the GCF and other ongoing efforts by the Secretariat could lead to positive developments. However, accreditation as a GEF implementing agency remained elusive. The ED urged members to include a role for ITTO in projects and activities funded by other multilateral organizations.

20. The ED further noted the declining level of interest by some members in ITTO's work. Africa was an example, with only one of 14 members in the region being up to date with their administrative contributions. The decline in ITTO project funding may be a contributing factor for the declining interest of some producer members in the work of ITTO.

21. The ED noted the good work undertaken by the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) on negotiations for a follow-up agreement to the ITTA, 2006. She urged members to carefully consider the report of the PWG and to carefully consider the kind of organization they want ITTO to be.

22. The Chairperson invited comments or questions on the Executive Director's statement. The representative of Colombia referred to the potential of funding through GCF and GEF, noting that he looked forward to further Council discussion on this topic under relevant agenda items.

REPORT OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG) – DECISIONS 3(XXII), 5(XXVI), 2(XLIX) and 2(LI) (AGENDA ITEM 8)

23. The Chairperson presented the IAG report to members as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/2, noting that pursuant to decisions 3(XXII), 5(XXVI), 2(XLIX) and 2(LI) and to facilitate the work for the session, the 39th meeting of the IAG was held virtually on Thursday 16 October 2025. He apologized for his inability to attend the meeting, which was chaired by the ED. He drew the attention of members to the following items discussed by the IAG:
    - the slow pace of payments to the Administrative Budget for 2025 (this topic would be taken up by the CFA at this session);
    - the need for nominations of several officers of Council and its subsidiary bodies (the Chair urged the caucuses to provide nominees as soon as possible);
    - the work of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) to discuss issues related to negotiation of a new ITTA;

- concerns regarding the potential loss of US funds to the 2025 administrative budget due to the US government shutdown; and
- the draft decisions forwarded by the IAG for the Council's consideration, as annexed to the report of the meeting.

24. The Chairperson invited comments and questions on the IAG report. The representative of Mexico recognized the work of the PWG and supported the continuation of its work until the next ITTC session. urging the Secretariat to seek funding for its continued work.

25. In the absence of further comments and questions, the IAG report was adopted.

REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 9)

26. Quorum was assessed and attained prior to the consideration of this agenda item.

27. Mr. Adam Mohd Nazri (Malaysia), Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, presented the report as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/3 Rev.3. He said the committee, consisting of Brazil, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Panama, Poland and UK, had examined and accepted the credentials and attendance of 27 countries and the European Union (EU) participating in the 61st session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Sessions of the Associated Committees.

28. Mr. Nazri said the Credentials Committee had also examined the representation of interest and the delegation of voting rights of 32 countries, in accordance with Article 11, Paragraph 2 of the ITTA, 2006. The list of member countries delegating their interests and voting rights was as shown below.

LIST OF MEMBER COUNTRIES DELEGATING VOTES

Country	Delegating votes to:
Angola	Panama
Central African Rep.	
Rep. of Congo	
Côte d'Ivoire	
Dem. Rep. of Congo	
Costa Rica	
Ghana	
Guyana	
Madagascar	
Togo	
Cambodia	Malaysia
Bulgaria	European Commission
Croatia	
Cyprus	
Czech, Rep.	
Estonia	
Germany	
Greece	
Hungary	
Ireland	
Italy	
Latvia	
Lithuania	
Luxembourg	
Malta	
Slovakia	
Finland	Sweden
Belgium	Denmark as President of the Council of EU
France	
Netherlands	
Portugal	
Slovenia	

29. The Council adopted the report and approved the credentials of delegations.

MATTERS RELATED TO ARTICLE 19 OF THE ITTA, 2006 ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT – DECISIONS 3(LVII) AND 4(LIX) (AGENDA ITEM 10)

30. The Chairperson drew the attention of members to Decision 4(LIX) on the management of the Administrative Budget and invited the Executive Director to introduce this item.

31. The ED reported on the working group constituted under Decision 3(LVIII) to consider the issue of arrears in contributions to the Administrative Budget. She reported on efforts to encourage members to at least make partial payments, noting the working group recommendations that led to Decision 4(LIX) allowing submission of limited projects/concept notes following partial payment of arrears. Unfortunately, the decision did not provide guaranteed funding for any such projects/concept notes that arose through its provisions, hence little interest from countries in potentially benefitting from its

provisions. The ED noted that while some countries have long term arrears over many years, others have lost interest in the Organization more recently. Three countries that had previously been active in ITTO activities (including paying assessed contributions and benefitting from substantial project funding in the past) have been approached and tentative payment plans proposed by the Secretariat, but none have yet responded and no formal payment plan has been finalized with any country to date.

32. With no further requests for the floor, the agenda item was closed.

MATTERS PERTAINING TO ARTICLE 44 OF ITTA, 2006 – DECISIONS 4(LVII), 4(LVIII) AND 4(LX) (AGENDA ITEM 11)

33. Ms. Vaneska Betancourt (Panama), Co-chair of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) presented the report of this working group. in the absence of the other Co-chair Mr. Dan Carl (USA). Three virtual meetings of the PWG were held in 2025, along with 4 regional consultations. Consultancies undertaking comparative analyses of other commodity organizations and global environmental governance were carried out. The comparative analysis with other commodity organizations highlighted ITTO's unique role with its dual focus on conservation and utilization.

34. The PWG has recommended an extension of its mandate through 2026 and a corresponding budget. Topics to be discussed in 2026 if the PWG is extended include (inter alia) the scope of a new agreement, categories of membership, votes/contributions to the Administrative Budget, duration of the agreement and role of the private sector. The draft decision appended to the IAG report reflects the recommendations of the PWG. The PWG stressed the need for more effective participation in its work by all members if its work continues in 2026.

35. The Chairperson opened the floor for discussion. Mr. Bjorn Merkell (Sweden) expressed his hope that the PWG would be extended by Council and, if so, urged members to fully participate in its work in 2026. He urged members to carefully study the consultant reports produced for the PWG in 2025.

36. The Producer Spokesperson (Dr. Muhammad Zahrul Muttaqin, Indonesia) reported on the first meeting of his caucus which discussed the low participation of producer members in the PWG to date. The caucus had decided that focal points for each producer region will be appointed to coordinate producer inputs to the PWG going forward, with Asian and Latin American focal points already identified. He requested the Secretariat's assistance to identify an African focal point given the lack of African delegates at this session.

37. The ED drew the attention of Council to discussions in the CFA on the possible duration and budget of the proposed extension of the work of the PWG, including a proposed preparatory meeting to be held in conjunction with ITTC62. She also reminded members that several items had been identified for possible further consideration by the PWG. There was a need for Council to take a decision on which of these items to consider if the PWG was to be extended. She summarized the discussions undertaken in the CFA, and proposed that to ensure cost and time efficiencies, a preparatory committee could be combined with the Council Session within a single week. This could be structured with the proposed preparatory meeting taking place on Monday and Tuesday followed by the Council convening from Wednesday to Saturday of the currently scheduled Council week.

38. The Producer Spokesperson indicated that it would be necessary for his caucus to share more views (possibly through regional meetings) before it could have a position on the ED's proposal for a preparatory working group to be convened in conjunction with ITTC62.

39. The delegate of Panama proposed that regional representatives be nominated from each producer region to allow each region's position to be formulated regarding the proposed preparatory meeting. She requested support from the Secretariat to facilitate this.

40. The Consumer Spokesperson (Ms. Rata Muda, New Zealand, nominated in absentia of Ms. Aysha Ghadiali, US)) noted that her caucus was generally in favour of a condensed ITTC week and proposed opening the week with a one-day preparatory committee (Monday), then 4 days of Council, then a final day of preparatory committee meeting. This would allow more members to attend at least one day of the preparatory committee meetings and allow members time to consult with capitals if necessary.

41. The ED noted that a decision needed to be taken at this Council session regarding the process. She urged the producer caucus to discuss this issue at its meeting tomorrow so that the draft decision could be amended as necessary prior to being considered by the Chair's drafting committee. She recalled that the approach proposed by Panama had been adopted for regional consultations in 2025 and could be repeated in 2026 if the PWG is extended. She noted that the revised Roadmap proposed by the PWG already calls for regional consultations. The Secretariat proposal reduces the two preparatory committees proposed in the revised PWG Roadmap to one meeting in conjunction with ITTC62 in the interest of time and financial efficiency.

42. The Chairperson urged the caucuses to discuss this matter further at their upcoming meetings with a view to being able to adopt a decision on this matter during this session.

43. Prior to the re-opening of this item on day 4 of the session, the Chairperson invited the delegation of Benin (which had just arrived in Panama) to make a short intervention. The delegate of Benin apologized for his delegation's late arrival due to travel difficulties and pledged to work with other members to make the session a success.

44. The Producer Spokesperson reported that three regional groups and coordinators had been established for Africa, Asia and Latin America. The caucus supports the extension of the work of the PWG and agrees that the proposed preparatory committee proposed in the revised PWG Roadmap should happen in conjunction with the 62nd session of Council. No agreement had been reached by the caucus on the logistics of the proposed preparatory committee, including exact timing. He noted that it may be necessary to consider a hybrid meeting to ensure full participation by producers.

45. The Consumer Spokesperson reported that her caucus was in favour of a Monday – Saturday Council week, incorporating a preparatory committee with regular Council business. She urged the Chairperson to facilitate a discussion on the report of the PWG and related consultancy reports.

46. The ED asked the Producer Spokesperson whether his caucus agreed with the revised Roadmap in the PWG report. She reminded members that there were currently 2 proposals for the week of the 62nd Council session, one for a preparatory committee meeting (prepcom) on Monday and Tuesday with regular Council business to follow on Wednesday – Saturday, and the other for the prepcom to bookend regular Council business on Monday and Saturday.

47. The delegate of the EU stressed that it was necessary to hear the views of the producer members ahead of the 62nd session of Council. If progress is not made now, it may be difficult to make progress in future due to resource and other constraints.

48. The delegate of Australia echoed the EU's concerns and urged producer member countries to share their views on the PWG report and proposals. Australia is already discussing its mandate for a negotiation and the sooner more details are available on what will be covered in a negotiation the better.

49. Canada thanked the PWG for its work. His country feels that a new ITTA should maintain its focus on tropical timber trade. Some of the items in the PWG report on the scope of a new ITTA may be covered in other international conventions/for a, so care should be taken to avoid duplication.

50. The Producer Spokesperson noted that the establishment of regional groups and spokespersons was intended to ensure adequate input from producers. He felt that this structure would facilitate producer input to the proposed preparatory committee and/or working group. His caucus has agreed that a new ITTA could extend the mandate beyond timber, but no agreement has been reached on what other tropical forest products/services might be included.

51. The delegate of New Zealand asked members to inform on the extent of internal discussions on a new ITTA. Her country had undertaken significant inter-agency interactions prior to this session. She requested members to focus on what issues might be considered in a new ITTO so that this could form the basis for more internal consultations ahead of ITTC 62.

52. The delegate of Panama identified non-timber forest products and ecosystem services as possible areas for inclusion in a new ITTA. She noted that Panama did not support expanding the mandate to ecosystem services since the existing ITTA already allows for work to promote ecosystem services in collaboration with relevant organizations with specific mandates covering such services.

53. The delegate of India noted that further consultation between producer members and internal consultations were necessary. He felt that this consultation process could be undertaken quickly and a unified producer position could be conveyed inter-sessionally.

54. The delegate of the EU thanked producer members for their initiative to foster engagement. He expressed caution on any expansion of the mandate of ITTO under a new ITTA, since this could lead to more complex and lengthy negotiations. He suggested that the negotiation should focus on solving existing problems, including financing. He asked about the timing in the proposed Roadmap, with conclusion of negotiations proposed for 2029 shortly before the expiration of the current ITTA, which might not allow sufficient time for ratification of a new agreement.

55. The ED hoped that negotiations would conclude sooner than the date proposed in the Roadmap, but it was not prudent to assume this. She requested members to alert the Secretariat on country focal points for the negotiation in order to ensure streamlined communications.

56. The delegate of Australia thanked the producer caucus for their efforts at this session. She supported the idea to limit discussions on expanding the scope of the ITTA and to focus on solving existing issues and problems.

57. The delegate of Canada thanked the ED for outlining the urgency of this item and thanked the producer caucus for its efforts to engage on this item at this session. He urged members to share views at this meeting, even if these were unofficial views at this stage.

58. The delegate of New Zealand noted that her country's preliminary position is to conditionally support the expansion of the mandate to internationally traded tropical wood products, subject to further consideration of the definition of wood products (including under the WTO). Expanding the mandate to include NTFPs could also be considered given the importance of NTFPs to SFM. New Zealand also tentatively supports the explicit inclusion of tropical plantations in the definition of tropical timber.

59. The Chairperson, speaking on behalf of Panama, noted that SFM in his country must be comprehensive, recognizing all values arising from forests. His country supports expanding the mandate of ITTO under the ITTA to explicitly recognize this fact.

60. The delegate of Colombia noted that NTFPs and ecosystem services provide alternative and complementary development options for tropical forest countries. He felt more discussion was necessary to ensure that any expansion of ITTO's mandate to more explicitly cover these aspects did not duplicate the actions and roles of other international initiatives. He recalled that the ITTA is a trade

agreement and negotiations and consultations need to take this into account, including through involvement of appropriate expertise.

61. The delegate of Australia recalled the recommendation from the TAG to consider biodiversity credits as a possible funding source for ITTO producers, and this should be kept in mind during the renegotiations.

62. The delegate of Japan noted that NTFPs are already included in Article 1 of the current ITTA. Her country was cautious about expanding the scope of the existing ITTA and urged members to carefully consider this issue. She noted there are likely to be many other contentious issues.

63. The EU noted the links between votes, assessed contributions and membership categories. He felt that more interaction with producer colleagues on this and other matters would be useful, and the current structure of ITTO can impede this. He felt that the current structure implies a divergence of interests that may no longer hold, given that all members agree on the need for SFM. Members should consider what membership structure is needed to best achieve ITTO's objectives.

64. The delegate of New Zealand agreed that the membership structure could be changed to facilitate better collaboration and communication between members. Her country has no formal proposals but seeks more information on membership structures in other international organizations.

65. The delegate of the UK said his country is tentatively supportive of a single or hybrid membership status.

66. The delegate of Japan reiterated that a single membership structure would have several far-reaching implications. Japan supports maintaining the status quo in terms of membership structure.

67. The delegate of Malaysia agreed with Japan's position, supporting continuation of the current membership structure, which recognized shared responsibilities.

68. The delegate of Canada referred to the report of the PWG and the proposal to delink membership status from assessed contributions and votes. He asked for the Secretariat's thoughts on this.

69. The ED reported that the proposal to delink votes from assessed contributions was not in fact fully endorsed by the PWG. She indicated that most large members (in terms of forests or voluntary contributions) wish their votes to reflect this. The issue of membership status needs to be carefully considered by all members during the implementation of the Roadmap proposed by the PWG for 2026. She regretted that there were insufficient resources to allow more in-person meetings during 2026.

70. The Chairperson, speaking on behalf of Panama, noted that his country still had no unified position on this and other matters to be considered under the negotiation of the ITTA. The initial position is that the membership categories should remain unchanged. He noted that most companies operating in Panama's forests were funded by Chinese capital, and that most forest products from Panama now go to China, but China had (until now) not supported any of Panama's SFM related projects. He urged all members to continue to study the PWG report and related materials, and to establish national consultation mechanisms to facilitate the negotiation of the ITTA. He invited all members to participate in his drafting committee during this session to ensure that a decision carrying forward the work on negotiating the ITTA can be adopted by consensus.

71. With no further interventions, the Chairperson closed this item.

ITTO BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME – DECISIONS 9(XXXIV) AND 3(LIX) (AGENDA ITEM 12)

(a) Progress Report on the implementation of the BWP 2024-2025

72. The presentation under this agenda item by the Secretariat is available at BWP 2024-2025.

73. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the progress report on the implementation of the Biennial Work Programme (BWP) 2024–2025, as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/5.

74. The Secretariat (Dr. Gerhard Breulmann) presented a general overview of the progress of the activities approved under the BWP, some of which had already been (or will be) presented to Committees and the Council under other agenda items. The BWP had been adopted under Decision 3(LIX). It contained 37 activities, which were divided into two parts, comprising 21 activities that required financing through voluntary contributions, core budget or other sources, and 16 administrative and financial activities plus an activity covering the secondment of an officer by the Korean Forest Service that did not require financing.

75. The total funding sought under the BWP was USD 7, 009,585 in voluntary contributions and USD 2 million in core budget contributions. The activities requiring financing were divided into five groups, comprising field-oriented activities; normative work; collaborative activities; communication and outreach; and analytical, statistical and other recurring work. Dr. Breulmann presented an overview table showing the 21 activities that required financing, indicating those activities that had been fully funded, those that were pending finance, and those for which partial financing had been received. Core budget activities were also indicated as partially funded, with the report noting that the shortfall in contributions to the Administrative Account meant that a certain percentage of the core budget had not been received in the previous year, which affected the implementation of activities approved and financed in the ITTO core budget.

76. Dr. Breulmann said USD 5.2 million had been received in voluntary contributions. He showed a list of donors that had contributed to the implementation of the BWP, including the following ITTO members: Germany, the USA, Japan, Canada and Australia. He said voluntary contributions had also been received from non-members including the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), Soka Gakkai Japan, Dr. Hwan Ok Ma and Kisso-an. A small amount of funding had also been provided from the Organization's unearmarked funds. There had also been a grant for the secondment of the programme officer supported by the Korea Forest Service.

77. Dr. Breulmann summarized progress in several field-oriented activities under the BWP. These included the large activity on building legal and sustainable forest product supply chains, which had 4 sub-activities and to date had received approximately USD 3.2 million in pledges. Under the fourth sub-activity, ITTO and the Macao SAR Commerce and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), in collaboration with the Global Green Supply Chains Initiative (GGSC), co-organized the Global Legal and Sustainable Timber Forum (GLSTF) in 2023 and 2024 to improve the legality and sustainability of tropical timber supply chains. The third forum in 2025 had to be cancelled due to a destructive typhoon coinciding with the dates of the forum. Other BWP activities highlighted included CITES non-detriment finding (NDF) training, biodiversity conservation in tropical timber producing forests, promotion of sustainable management and utilization of teak, statistics workshops, forest fire prevention/management and the enhanced application of ITTO gender guidelines.

78. Dr. Breulmann then introduced the status of activities related to normative work, collaborative work, communication and outreach, and statistical work. He reminded the Council that most of these activities would be continued under the 2026-2027 BWP.

79. The Chairperson thanked Dr. Breulmann for his presentation and called on donors to continue to finance approved BWP activities. He then called on the Vice-chair of Council to present a report on the ITTO Fellowship Programme, an ongoing activity under each BWP.

80. The Vice-Chairperson of the Council, Ms. Cassandra Price (Australia) presented the report on the ITTO Fellowship Programme (document ITTC(LXI)/6). The Fellowship Programme began in 1989 and had enabled more than 1 400 young and mid-career people working for a range of institutions and in the private sector to pursue their professional development. The distribution of funds to date comprised 40% to Africa, 30% to Asia-Pacific and 30% to Latin America/Caribbean. About 40% of the total number of Fellowship recipients were female applicants. The total programme funds distributed to date is about USD 9.8 million; the key donors were Japan, the USA, the Netherlands, Australia and others including Sweden, U.K., Finland, Bali Partnership Fund Sub-Account (b), the private sector and individual donors. The amount available in the present year was USD 154,739.51. The Fellowship Panel comprised representatives from Australia, Ghana, Japan, New Zealand, Peru and Republic of Congo, supported by the Secretariat. She thanked the Panel members for their work and the Secretariat for its support. A total of 90 applications were screened, of which 20 were shortlisted for consideration by the Panel. Ten of the 20 shortlisted applicants were female. The panel applied the standing selection criteria of consistency with the Fellowship Programme's objectives and priority areas, their qualifications, the benefits for the individuals and more broadly, the reasonableness of the costs of the proposed activities. The Panel also took into account balance among the subject areas and regions and the opportunity to promote the participation of women, and also considered the ITTO Strategic Action Plan.

81. Ms. Price said the Panel was pleased to recommend to the Council the awarding of 20 Fellowships with a total budget of USD 136,760.82 (the recommended applicants are listed in the Panel's report).

82. The Chairperson thanked Ms Price for her report. He thanked the donors who have contributed to the programme and ensured its continuity. He then opened the floor for any interventions from members on the BWP progress report.

83. The delegate of Malaysia expressed gratitude for being selected as one of the target countries for the GTI platform under the legal and sustainable supply chains BWP activity.

84. The delegate of Japan expressed Japan's thanks to the Secretariat and all members for their efforts to implement the 2024-25 BWP and expressed support for the 2026-27 BWP. Japan particularly looked forward to implementation of activities on fire management as well as the activity on conservation of biodiversity in tropical forests and urged that this activity avoid duplication with efforts being undertaken by CBD and others. It requested that "Japan" be included in the title of the activity related to awareness raising in the host country.

85. The delegate of Canada was pleased to have been able to contribute to BWP activities on fire prevention/management in tropical forests, statistical capacity building and biodiversity conservation. Canada looks forward to the continued and expanded implementation of these activities under the new BWP.

86. Indonesia recognized support provided under the BWP CITES capacity building activity and called for coordination of BWP implementation with other global initiatives.

87. Australia acknowledged the role of the BWP in guiding ITTO's work. It noted the need for voluntary funding for the BWP and urged members to provide such funding.

88. The delegate of New Zealand echoed the appreciation of others for the implementation of the BWP. New Zealand especially appreciated work on legal and sustainable supply chains, statistical work, and collaboration on conservation of biodiversity.

89. The delegate of Brazil noted the importance of the ITTO Fellowship program under the BWP, especially in helping women further their careers in the tropical forest sector.

90. The delegate of China supported ITTO's BWP work to promote sustainable tropical forest development and expressed readiness to further strengthen the Organization's work in this area.

91. The delegate of Panama expressed thanks for being included in the CITES NDF training workshop convened under the BWP in Costa Rica in 2025 which was important as his country was currently preparing NDFs for CITES-listed tree species.

92. In the absence of further requests for the floor, the Chairperson closed this agenda item.

(b) Draft BWP 2026-2027

93. The presentation under this agenda item by the Secretariat is available at BWP 2026-2027.

94. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat (Dr. Breulmann) to present the draft BWP 2026-2027, as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/7.

95. Dr. Breulmann said all activities proposed in the BWP 2026–2027 were continuations or follow-up activities to those implemented under the previous BWP, and no new activities were included. The first part of the report contained the 21 proposed activities that would require voluntary funding or funding under the core budget and 16 activities not requiring funding. The activities requiring funding each contained terms of reference in the activity descriptions. Of the 21 activities, 14 required voluntary contributions and seven had been approved under core operational costs, comprising activities such as the Tropical Forest Update, the Annual Market Discussion and the Market Information System. Other items were related to statistics, communication and outreach, expert panels and the biannual review. The total amount requested in terms of voluntary contributions was USD 2.6 million together with $2 million from the core operational budget for a total of USD 4.6 million.

96. Dr. Breulmann said the activities were divided into five groups, as per the previous BWP, with proposed activities building on what had already been achieved under the 2024-25 BWP. Group 1 comprised seven field-oriented activities in member countries. The activities included legal and sustainable supply chains, with the participation of the private sector, the continuation and expansion of the Mekong teak project, criteria-and-indicator workshops, a statistical capacity building workshop, and follow-up on fire activities conducted under the previous BWP. Group 2 comprised one activity and three sub-activities — normative work on policy guidelines and other strategic work, implementation of gender guidelines, dissemination of forest landscape restoration guidelines, and support for phase 3 of an activity to support a women's group in Togo. Group 3 encompassed collaborative work with the CBD, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and others and collaboration on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. Group 4 comprised communication and outreach-related work, consisting of the same activities carried out under the previous BWP and funded mostly through the core budget, although translation of the ITTO website into Japanese was financed by the Government of Japan. Group 5 contained activities to facilitate analytical, statistical and other recurring work, including support for TAG, CSAG, the Expert Panel, the Fellowship Programme, the Market Information Service (MIS), enhancement of statistical work, and the Biennial Review and Assessment of the World Timber Situation.

97. The Chairperson thanked Dr. Breulmann for his presentation and opened the floor for comments and/or questions.

98. The delegate of Canada asked for clarification on the activity on collaboration with CBD and how joint fundraising could be facilitated. The ED responded that initial work to foster further collaboration would initially be facilitated by attending CBD meetings using the resources provided in the administrative budget while continuing to fund raise for additional joint work while urging CBD to also seek funds for joint work.

99. The delegate of the EU indicated his delegation's satisfaction with the continuity under the new BWP. He noted that collaboration with CBD would need to take account that CBD was not an implementing agency for projects, instead mostly working through other organizations/entities.

100. In the absence of further requests for the floor, the Chairperson noted that a decision would be taken at this session to approve the 2026-2027 BWP and closed this agenda item.

MATTERS RELATED TO ARTICLE 15 OF THE ITTA, 2006 ON COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS – DECISION 7(LVII) (AGENDA ITEM 13)

101. The presentation under this agenda item by the Executive Director is available at Cooperation and Coordination with Other Organizations.

102. The Chairperson invited the Executive Director to brief the Council on this item.

103. The Executive Director's presentation summarized ITTO's cooperation and coordination with other organizations during 2025. The ED noted that the provisions for reporting on Decision 7 covered only up to 2023, but since members continue to appreciate updates on collaborative activities, the Secretariat continues to include this item on the agenda.

104. The ED reported that ITTO had been attempting to become accredited by GEF for the past four years, but GEF is not accepting new implementing agencies. ITTO is seeking to identify a partner that is accredited as a GEF implementing agency to collaborate with in developing a proposal to seek GEF funding – this work is ongoing.

105. Following ITTO's accreditation by GCF in March 2024, the Secretariat has been studying GCF programs/procedures and plans to develop a proposal for GCF under its micro-financing window (under USD 10 million). Forest fire management, legal and sustainable supply chains and forest restoration are possible topics for an ITTO project submission to GCF. The ED repeated her call on members to include ITTO in initiatives undertaken or developed with funding from GCF and/or GEF.

106. She noted that MOUs are being implemented or developed to foster collaboration with various partners, including UNU, RESTEC (a remote sensing agency in Japan), AFOCO, JICA, UNCCD, IGES (currently being renewed) and CBD.

107. Collaboration is also being strengthened with CIFOR-ICRAF, IUFRO, the Common Fund for Commodities CAFI (including on a project to be submitted to CAFI) and FAO.

108. Collaboration also continues within the CPF framework, including on Joint Initiatives on Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World and Forest Fire Management.

109. Collaboration with the TAG and the CSAG is evidenced by the Market Discussion and side event held during this Session. Links with several private sector representatives from producer member countries have also been fostered.

110. Talks and collaborative initiatives are also underway with Japan's Ministry of the Environment, the Japanese Space Agency (JAXA), several Japanese private sector entities and other agencies in the host country. Two networking activities were undertaken in Japan in 2025.

111. The ED closed by noting the many international meetings that the Secretariat had already attended in 2025 and would be attending to foster collaborative initiatives in the near future, including the UNFCCC COP 30 and the CITES COP 20.

112. The Chairperson thanked the ED for her presentation and opened the floor for comments and/or questions.

113. The delegate of Colombia recognized the importance of promoting ITTO and its mandate in relevant fora. He suggested that a one-page summary of ITTO's role and importance be developed to help members promote the importance of tropical forests and the value of ITTO. He asked about efforts to reach out to philanthropic entities in fund-raising and collaboration efforts.

114. The ED noted that most philanthropic organizations were quite specific in their target areas and requested members to alert the Secretariat of possible philanthropic contacts in their countries. The Secretariat has researched several philanthropies and will continue to do so.

115. The delegate of Canada expressed support for the efforts to collaborate with other organizations. Canada was supporting ITTO's application for observer status at the UN with Japan. He summarized a collaborative initiative led by Canada on combatting wildfires endorsed by all members of the G7 and several other developed countries.

116. The delegate of the UK noted his country's support for the work of ITTO and its collaboration efforts. He asked what efforts countries could take to promote closer engagement between ITTO and the GEF.

117. The ED suggested that if the UK (or any other member) sat on the GEF Council, they could promote the idea of ITTO being accredited as a GEF implementing agency and/or for GEF accredited implementing agencies to work with ITTO. She also noted that the Secretariat was considering engagement with the UK-led Better Market Recognition initiative.

118. The delegate of Brazil congratulated the ED and the Secretariat on the efforts outlined under this item. She noted that Brazil had also supported ITTO's observer status in the UN General Assembly.

119. The delegate of Indonesia called on ITTO to continue collaboration, especially on legal and sustainable supply chains, forest fire prevention/management, and SFM.

120. The delegate of the EU expressed appreciation for the report under this item. He supported the idea for a one-page summary of ITTO's role and impacts which could also be useful for country consultations during the negotiation of the ITTA. He drew attention to the potential for ITTO to collaborate in a planned global review of collective progress in implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to be reported to CBD COP 17 in 2026.

121. The Chairperson supported the idea of a short summary document outlining ITTO's role and impacts.

122. The delegate of Australia appreciated the importance and challenges involved with global collaboration. She noted that Australia had also supported ITTO's bid for UN observer status. She expressed support for the proposal for a one-page resource document to be produced to assist members in promoting ITTO and its work.

123. The delegate of Japan expressed appreciation for the Secretariat and ED's efforts towards collaboration. She expressed appreciation to other member countries who had supported ITTO's application for UN observer status.

124. The Chairperson invited the representative of FAO to make a statement under this item.

125. The representative of FAO noted the many benefits of tropical timber and the long collaborative relationship between ITTO and FAO. She noted ITTO's direct collaboration on CPF initiatives, notably the Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World and Integrated Forest Fire Management initiatives. She reported that ITTO and FAO would jointly host a side event on SW4SW at UNFCCC COP 30. She highlighted collaborative work on forestry statistics and the Global Forest Assessment. She proposed areas for future work and confirmed FAO's intent to continue working closely with ITTO to achieve shared objectives.

126. The Chairperson invited the representative of the Common Fund for Commodities to make a statement.

127. The representative of CFC recalled the long historic relationship with ITTO, noting that the shift from grant to loan financing by CFC had slowed collaboration in recent years. However, over the last year collaboration has increased based on development of a joint project submitted by CAFI to promote SFM in Central Africa. CFC looks forward to increased collaboration with ITTO in future.

128. In closing this agenda item, the Chairperson noted the many votes of support for the efforts and work of the Secretariat and Executive Director (including the development of a one-page ITTO fact sheet) and for ongoing reporting on this item at future Council sessions.

SPECIAL ACCOUNT AND BALI PARTNERSHIP FUND (AGENDA ITEM 14)

(a) Pledges to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund

129. The Chairperson invited members and observers to announce any new contributions they might wish to pledge to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund.

130. The delegate of Japan reported that Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had pledged a total of approximately USD 200,000 to the Special Account at this session, including pledges to a project in Peru, an activity on biodiversity conservation, and translation of relevant ITTO materials into Japanese. The Japan Forestry Agency reported a total pledge of $512,624 at this session, including pledges to projects in Vietnam and Togo.

131. The delegate of Australia reported that her country had made a voluntary contribution earlier in 2025 of $60,000 to the BWP activity on biodiversity conservation.

132. The delegate of Canada reported that it had provided modest support earlier in the year to the BWP activities on combating wildfire in tropical forests and statistical capacity building workshops.

133. The Chairperson thanked the governments of Japan, Australia and Canada. Details of all pledges are contained in Decision 1 adopted at this session. In the absence of further requests for the floor, the Chairperson closed this agenda item.

(b) Report of the Panel on Sub-Account B of the Bali Partnership Fund

134. The Chairperson invited the acting Chairperson of the CFA (and recently announced Vice-Chairperson of Council), Ms. Cassandra Price (Australia), to present the report of the Panel on Sub-Account B of the Bali Partnership Fund (BPF), as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/9.

135. Ms. Price informed members that the panel met on 30 October 2025 during the 61st session of the Council and consisted of representatives from Canada, Colombia, Japan, Malaysia and Panama (representing Africa since several African members had delegated their votes to it), together with the Executive Director. The panel, after careful deliberations, agreed by consensus that the entire amount of USD 137,888 currently available under the BPF sub-account B and the Unearmarked Fund, should be allocated to the ITTO Fellowship Programme for 2026. She thanked the members of the panel and the Secretariat for their support and submitted the report to Council for adoption.

136. The Chairperson thanked Ms. Price and invited interventions from the floor. There being no comments from the floor, the Council adopted the report.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ITTO'S NEW FINANCING ARCHITECTURE, PHASE II – DECISIONS 4(LVI) and 8(LVII) (AGENDA ITEM 15)

137. The presentation under this agenda item is available at Implementation of ITTO's New Financing Architecture.

138. The Executive Director presented an update to Council, including collaboration with partners to implement ITTO's new financing architecture (see also item 13). She noted that the programmatic approach and the four approved Program Lines (PL) were now permanent and that all concept notes submitted must be under one of the four approved PL.

139. The ED noted that from since 2019, there had been 61 concept notes submitted, including 12 in the past year. 15 of these had been approved for development into full projects and funded for implementation, with 2 of these having been funded in the past year. She thanked the donors who had supported these projects.

140. Total funding over the period was $17 million (averaging under $3 million per year), with the bulk of this going to the LSSC PL. She noted that pledges to concept notes and/or projects arising from them had decreased in 2025, totaling less than $1.85 million.

141. 7 projects, 12 BWP activities and 11 concept notes are currently awaiting financing seeking ITTO funding totaling over $8 million. 5 projects and/or concept notes had already lapsed under ITTO's sunset provision in 2025 and another 16 will be sunset in 2026. The ED noted that this was unsatisfactory and in closing, made a plea to donors to support more projects under the programmatic approach.

142. The Chairperson thanked the ED for her presentation and opened the floor for interventions.

143. The delegate of Mexico emphasized the importance of continued funding of projects developed through concept notes. She requested the Secretariat to develop a work plan to lobby for and/or facilitate financing for concept notes.

144. The delegate of the EU shared the concerns raised by the ED and urged members to work together to seek solutions.

145. The delegate of Benin asked for information on the fate of sunset projects, noting that Benin had 3 projects awaiting financing.

146. The Secretariat responded that countries could re-submit projects about to lapse under ITTO's sunset provision. Otherwise, projects lose their approved status and would need to go through the full appraisal process if re-submitted.

147. The delegate of Brazil asked for details on the timing of re-submission to avoid projects lapsing under the sunset provision. She also suggested that the decline in submission of projects to ITTO is due to the difficulties in securing funding.

148. The Secretariat responded that a letter from the ITTO focal point to the ED indicating the country's desire to maintain the project as eligible for financing prior to the sunset deadline would suffice. The ED agreed with the delegate of Brazil that lack of project funding was leading to a loss of interest in ITTO by some member countries. She urged members to work together to seek solutions.

149. The delegate of Panama urged consumer donor members (especially those consuming large volumes of tropical timber) to support tropical countries' efforts to manage tropical forests.

150. The delegate of Colombia asked about the possibility of funding approved projects/activities through the GCF to which ITTO had recently been accredited. He suggested ITTO could work with smaller national counterpart agencies in this regard.

151. The ED noted that the new financing architecture already provided a mechanism for collaboration (including funding) with other organizations. She stated that Secretariat is indeed in contact with the GCF, aiming to submit a proposal for funding in 2026. She reasserted her call for support from members to lobby other organizations like GCF and GEF to support ITTO-led initiatives.

152. There being no further interventions, the Chairperson reiterated that all members needed to play a role in securing funding for ITTO's work, including through their links with other international agencies. He noted that ITTO would soon be involved in a GEF project approved in the Darien region of Panama. He then closed this agenda item.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES (AGENDA ITEM 16)

153. The full reports of the Committees are contained in Annex IV.

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets (CEM) and Committee on Forest Industry (CFI)

154. Ms. Kenneth T. Almarines (Philippines), Chairperson of the CEM and CFI, presented the report of the 59th Session of the Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets (CEM) and the Committee on Forest Industry (CFI), as contained in Document CEM-CFI(LIX)/4.

155. Ms. Almarines reported that the CEM and CFI committees had reviewed the work of four completed projects and five ongoing projects. The CEM approved a project on timber traceability in Panama for ex-post evaluation. Policy work considered by the Committees was as follows:
(a) Legality frameworks (CEM);
(b) Forest and timber Certification and traceability (CEM);
(c) APEC-EGILAT and ITTO collaboration (CEM); and
(d) Promotion of sustainable wood use in domestic markets (CFI).
All of these policy work items would remain on the Committee agendas in 2026.

156. Ms. Almarines reported that Ms. Rata Muda (New Zealand) was elected Chairperson of CEM-CFI for 2026 and thanked all involved in making the 59th CEM-CFI Session a success. The CEM-CFI report was adopted.

Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management

157. Mr. Björn Merkell (Sweden), Chairperson of the CRF, presented the report of the 59th Session of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF), as contained in Document CRF(LIX)/6.

158. Mr. Merkell reported that the CRF had reviewed the work of three completed projects and one completed BWP activity as well as ten ongoing projects and one ongoing BWP activity during this session. All these projects and activities had made strong contributions to achieving SFM in relevant member countries. The Committee also received ex-post evaluation reports on two capacity building projects, including critical recommendations and lessons learned that will be considered by members in designing future projects.

159. CRF's policy work discussions at this session included the following six topics:
(a) Monitor progress in the application of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management
(b) Integrated fire management in tropical forest
(c) Developing and operationalizing ITTO's policy guidelines
(d) Joint ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity
(e) Cooperation and consultation with the CPF, UNFF and others
(f) Collaboration on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

160. Mr. Merkell thanked all involved in making the 59th CRF Session a success. The CRF report was adopted.

Committee on Finance and Administration

161. Ms. Cassandra Price (Australia), acting Chairperson of the CFA, presented the report of the 40th Session of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA), as contained in Document CFA(XL)/7. The CFA reviewed and recommended approval of the Administrative Budget for the 2026-27 biennium. Ms. Price said the committee had also examined the Organization's Administrative Budget and management operations and reviewed the assets and liabilities of the Organization and its revenues and the extent to which they impacted the work of the Secretariat. The committee had also reviewed the independent audited statements for 2024 pursuant to the requirements of the ITTO auditing standard, recommending approval of the ITTO financial statements. It had also recommended a one-year extension of the term of the current Director of Operations to July 31, 2027.

162. Ms. Price thanked all involved in making the 40th CFA Session a success. The CFA report was adopted.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL FOR 2026 (AGENDA ITEM 17)

163. The Chairperson invited the Producer Spokesperson to nominate the Vice-Chairperson of the Council for 2026.

164. The Producer Spokesperson informed the Council that a nomination had not yet been received for the position of Vice-Chairperson of Council for 2026 but expected this to be forthcoming soon.

165. The Chairperson then invited the Consumer Spokesperson to nominate the Chairperson of the Council for 2026.

166. The Consumer Spokesperson nominated Ms. Cassandra Price from Australia as the Chairperson of the Council for 2026.

167. The Chairperson thanked both spokespersons and invited Ms. Price to the podium. He proposed, by acclamation, the nomination of Ms. Price from Australia as incoming Chairperson and invited her to make an intervention.

168. Ms. Price thanked the Council for honouring her with her appointment as ITTC Chairperson. She noted the shared objectives of all members and thanked everyone who made the 61st Session of the ITTC a success. Ms. Price pledged to do her utmost to facilitate the important work of the Organization in 2026.

169. The Chairperson congratulated Ms. Price wishing her well in guiding the Organization through 2026-27. In the absence of further interventions, the Chairperson closed this agenda item.

DATES AND VENUES FOR THE SIXTY-SECOND AND SIXTY-THIRD SESSIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE ASSOCIATED SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEES (AGENDA ITEM 18)

170. The Chairperson invited the delegation of Japan to take the floor.

171. The delegate of Japan informed that the Sixty-second session of the ITTC (and the first Preparatory Committee meeting for the negotiation of the ITTA) would be held in Yokohama, Japan during the second week of November 2026.

172. The Chairperson noted that the Sixty-second Session of the ITTC would coincide with ITTO's fortieth anniversary and urged all members to attend. The Sixty-third session of Council would most likely be held in Africa (country to be announced later) in late 2027.

173. In the absence of further interventions, the Chairperson closed this agenda item.

DECISIONS AND REPORT OF THE SESSION (AGENDA ITEM 19)

174. The decisions adopted by the Council are contained in Annex III. The full text of all decisions, including annexes, is available on the ITTO website.

175. The Chairperson introduced draft Decision 1(LXI) "Projects, pre-projects and activities". There being no comments, the Council adopted the decision.

176. The Chairperson introduced draft Decision 2(LXI) "Adoption of the Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium". There being no comments, the Council adopted the decision.

177. The Chairperson introduced draft Decision 3(LXI) "ITTO Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2026-2027". There being no comments, the Council adopted the decision.

178. The Chairperson introduced draft Decision 4(LXI) "Matters Pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006".

179. The Producer Spokesperson suggested merging paragraphs 3 and 4 in the operative section of the decision. He also suggested amending the timeline so that the caucus meeting could be held prior to the first PWG meeting. The ED explained that the first PWG meeting scheduled for February 2026 was to set the scene and refresh participants' memories of the discussions from ITTC 61 before prioritizing items to be considered by the PWG and preparatory meetings to be held later in the year. She noted the willingness of the Secretariat to work with the caucuses as required to implement the roadmap.

180. The delegate of Japan noted that ITTC 62 would need to include an agenda item to approve the process and terms of reference for selecting a new ED given the expiration of the current ED's term on 31 January 2028. She drew the Council's attention to the need to work efficiently to successfully conclude

all Council business, including this important item, within a shorter than usual amount of time given the decision to include a two-day Preparatory Committee meeting during the Council week.

181. There being no further comments, the Council adopted the decision.

CLOSING OF THE SESSION (AGENDA ITEM 20)

182. The Chairperson called on the ED to introduce Mr. Polycarpe Masupa Kambale who made a short virtual intervention on the occasion of his retirement from the ITTO Secretariat. Mr. The ED expressed her and Secretariat's gratitude to Mr. Masupa for his commitment, service and diligence over the years. Mr. Masupa expressed his thanks to ITTO, his Secretariat colleagues and Council members for their support during his career. He wished the Organization well as it celebrates its 40th anniversary and going forward.

183. The Chairperson invited remarks from observers and/or members.

184. The delegate of Colombia thanked Mr. Masupa and other Secretariat colleagues for their assistance to his country.

185. The delegate of Benin joined in thanking and congratulating Mr. Masupa for his contributions to ITTO, including helping to ensure the success of ITTO projects in Benin.

186. The delegate of Japan noted Mr. Masupa's contributions to SFM in Africa have left a lasting legacy on ITTO. She wished Mr. Masupa a healthy and happy retirement.

187. The delegate of Sweden echoed the earlier comments, noting his appreciation for Mr. Masupa's tropical forestry expertise.

188. The Chairperson invited any other closing remarks from members.

189. The delegate of the EU thanked Panama, members, Japan, donors, the Secretariat and all others who contributed to the work undertaken at this Session. He noted the harmonious conduct of the Session and called on all members to continue working together to achieve ITTO's objectives.

190. The delegate of Peru thanked all involved in the successful 61st Session of the ITTC. She reaffirmed Peru's commitment to ITTO.

191. The delegate of India added its thanks to those expressed by others for the hard work of everyone involved in this Session. As a country with substantial tropical forests, India reaffirms its commitment to ITTO's strategic priorities.

192. The Consumer Spokesperson thanked Panama, host nation Japan, the Secretariat, the Producer Spokesperson and the co-chairs of the PWG. She welcomed the nomination of regional focal points (Benin, India, Panama) to facilitate future PWG work and looked forward to working with everyone in 2026.

193. The delegate of New Zealand thanked all involved in the success of the 61st ITTC, including the observers who worked to convene an excellent market discussion. New Zealand sees ITTO, with its dual mandate on sustainability and trade, as an important component of international forest governance. She urged members to participate in meetings of the PWG in 2026.

194. The Producer Spokesperson added his voice in thanking the Chair, his consumer counterpart, the government of Panama and all others who contributed to ITTC 61. His caucus is committed to a strong

ITTO that continues to serve the interests of all members to sustain tropical forests. The producer caucus is ready to contribute actively to the ITTA renegotiation process.

195. The delegate of China thanked Panama, the Secretariat and all delegates. Her country looks forward to working with all members to translate ITTO's work program into action on the ground.

196. The delegate of Brazil added her voice to those that preceded her in thanking Panama, Japan and all member countries, and the spokespersons for their hard work. She invited members to come to Belem for UNFCCC COP 30.

197. The delegate of Canada echoed the gratitude already expressed by others to Panama, Japan and all other members. He appreciated the daily summaries of Council work produced by the Secretariat. Canada looks forward to working with other members in its role as co-chair of the PWG in 2026.

198. The delegate of Panama thanked all members and other participants for visiting his country for ITTC61. He thanked all the members of the Panama team that had worked hard to ensure the meeting was a success. He stated that Panama looks forward to continuing working with all members to achieve the goals of ITTO.

199. The delegate of Benin joined others in thanking Panama, the Council Chairperson, Committee Chairs and the Secretariat along with all others who helped make the session a success. Benin stands ready to continue working with all members to further strengthen ITTO.

200. The delegate of Colombia thanked Panama and all members who had travelled far to attend the Session. Colombia looks forward to working with other members to renegotiate the ITTA and overcome current challenges.

201. The UK delegate thanked Panama and all other delegates for their hard work. He seconded comments seeking continued constructive engagement of members in the process leading to the renegotiation of the ITTA.

202. The delegate of Mexico congratulated the Chairperson and the Secretariat for organizing the meeting and thanked all delegations for their constructive approach to discussions at this Session. She thanked Japan for its funding of projects and fellowships in Mexico.

203. The delegate of Thailand expressed gratitude to Panama and all others involved in ensuring the success of ITTC61. He noted the establishment of regional coordination groups for engaging with the PWG and the new funding announced by Japan and other donors as significant achievements. He looked forward to ongoing collaboration with other members in 2026 and beyond.

204. The delegate of Australia reaffirmed her country's commitment to ITTO and to the negotiation of the ITTA, urging all members to participate effectively in the negotiation process in 2026 and beyond.

205. In his closing remarks, the Chairperson thanked the ED and the Secretariat for their hard work during the Session and throughout the year. He thanked his team at the Ministry of Environment for their untiring efforts to bring the Council session to a successful conclusion. He thanked all delegations for their constructive spirit and openness to dialogue, showing ITTO as a truly united Organization. He thanked all others collaborating with ITTO, particularly donors who help translate ITTO's goals into reality. He thanked his own government for their support for him as Chairperson and for ITTO as an important international partner.

206. He recalled that tropical forests are more than just timber sources, with their huge biodiversity and social impacts. ITTO's work on legal and sustainable sources of timber and other tropical forest

products make it an essential partner in international tropical forest governance. He urged all members to continue the important work in Panama to sustain tropical forests.

207. The Chairperson closed the Sixty-first session of the ITTC at 12:05 pm Panama time, October 31, 2025.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Document: ITTC(LXI)/Info. 2

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC(LXI)/Info.2
30 October 2025

Original: ENGLISH

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 – 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

This list is based on communications received to date. The format and data of the entries in this list are as provided to the Secretariat. A final list will be issued in due course and, to facilitate this, delegations are requested to give corrections or additions in writing to the ITTO Secretariat

* * * * *

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

La présente liste a été àtablie d'après les communications reçues à ce jour. La présentation et le contenu des renseignements sont reproduits tels qu'ils ont été communiqués au secrétariat. Une list finale des participants sera publiée en temps opportun; à cette fin, les délégations sont priées de communiquer toute correction ou addition par écrit au secrétariat de l'OIBT.

* * * * *

LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES

Esta lista está basada en las comunicaciones recibidas hasta la fecha. La forma y los datos de las inserciones en la lista son los facilitados a la Secretaría. Oportunamente se distribuirá una lista definitiva de participantes y para poder hacerlo con mayor facilidad se ruega a las delegaciones que proporcionen a la Secretaría sus correcciones o adiciones por escrito.

MEMBERS

AUSTRALIA

* Ms. Cassandra Price	Assistant Director, International Forest Policy, Agvet Chemicals and Forestry Branch, Department of Agriculture, Canberra

BENIN

* Mr. Korogone Sinagabe O Ulysse	Point Focat OIBT, Direction Générale des Générale des Eaux Forêts et Chasse, Cotonou
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BRAZIL

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CANADA

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CHINA

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COLOMBIA

* Mr. Jerson Leonardo González Umaña	Consultor de la Oficina de Asuntos Internacionales, Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible de Colombia, Bogotá

CONGO, REP. OF

* Ms. Florentine Paulette Ebina Taracanzo	Director of Forest, Ministry of Forestry, Brazzaville

Notes: * Representative/Représentant/Representante
** Alternate representatives/Représentant supléants/Representantes suplentes
*** Advisers/Conseillers/Asesores

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU, DENMARK

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AUSTRIA

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** Mr. Oscar Lopez Hoyos	Trade Officer, Economic and Commercial Office in Panama
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**	Ms. Eirna Yani Binti Mohd Arip	Senior Principal Assistant Secretary, Timber, Tobacco and Kenaf Industries Development Division, Ministry of Plantation and Commodities, Putrajaya
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**	Mr. Adam Mohd Nazri	Manager, Strategic Planning & Sustainability Division, Malaysian Timber Council, Kuala Lumpur
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**	Mr. Jaturong Wisuttising	Plan and Policy Analyst, Practitioner Level, Royal Forest Department, Bangkok

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*	Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai	Executive President and Secretary General, Viet Nam Timer and Forest Products Association (VIFORES), Ha Noi

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INTERNATIONAL WOOD PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (IWPA), U.S.A.

Ms. Ashley Amidon	Executive Director

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SATELLITES ON FIRE, MEXICO

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TRAFFIC, ECUADOR

Ms. Karen Noboa	Project Officer

Private Sector

PONTERRA

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Mr. Steve Johnson
Mr. Maria Soledad Jaime Artega
Mr. Omar Aubrelio Melo Cruz
Mr. Trisurat Yongyut

Ms. Tullia Baldassarri	Market Discussion Speaker
Ms. Emily Fripp	Market Discussion Speaker
Mr. Joao Carlos Baldasso	Market Discussion Speaker
Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero	Market Discussion Speaker
Mr. Ivan Tomaselli	Market Discussion Speaker

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Chairperson	Mr. Carlos Espinosa Peña
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Cassandra Price

Economic Information and Market Intelligence

Chairperson	Ms. Kenneth Tabliga Almarines, Philippines *(replacing Mr. Ray Thomas Fernandez Kabigting, Philippines)*
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Rata Muda

Reforestation and Forest Management

Chairperson	Mr. Bjorn Merkell
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Christiane Epse Anzan, Côte d'Ivoire

Forest Industry

Chairperson	Ms. Kenneth Tabliga Almarines, Philippines *(replacing Mr. Ray Thomas Fernandez Kabigting, Philippines)*
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Rata Muda

Finance and Administration

Chairperson	Mr. Pyoabalo Alaba
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Cassandra Price

Spokespersons

Producers	Mr. Muhammad Zahrul Muttaqin
Consumers	Ms. Rata Muda

ITTO SECRETARIAT

Ms. Sheam Satkuru
Executive Director

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

DOCUMENT: ITTC(LXI)/1

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC(LXI)/1
8 August 2025

Original: ENGLISH

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27-31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the session

2. Ascertainment of quorum

3. Adoption of agenda and Organization of Work

4. Report on Membership of the Council

5. Proposed Distribution of Votes for the 2026 - 2027 Biennium

6. Admission of Observers

7. Statement by the Executive Director

8. Report of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) – Decisions 3(XXII), 5(XXVI), 2(XLIX) and 2(LI)

9. Report of the Credentials Committee

10. Matters related to Article 19 of the ITTA, 2006 on the Administrative Account – Decisions 3(LVII) and 3(LVIII)

11. Matters pertaining to Article 44 of the ITTA, 2006 – Decisions 4(LVII), 4(LVIII) and 4(LX)

12. ITTO Biennial Work Programme – Decisions 9(XXXIV) and 2(LVI)

    (a) Progress Report on the implementation of the BWP 2024-2025
    (b) Draft BWP 2026-2027

13. Matters related to Article 15 of the ITTA, 2006 on cooperation and coordination with other organizations – Decision 7(LVII)

14. Special Account and Bali Partnership Fund

    (a) Pledges to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund
    (b) Report of the Panel on Sub-Account B of the Bali Partnership Fund (BPF)

15. Implementation of ITTO's New Financing Architecture, Phase II - Decisions 4(LVI) and 8(LVII)

16. Reports of the Committees

17. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council for 2026

18. Dates and Venues of the Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions of the Council and the Associated Sessions of the Committees

19. Decisions and Report of the Session

20. Closing of the Session

ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1 Opening of the Session

The Sixty-first Session of the Council will be opened by the Chairperson of the Council.

Item 2 Ascertainment of Quorum

The Executive Director will report to the Council on the state of the quorum requirement for the start of the Session.

Item 3 Adoption of Agenda and Organization of Work

[Document ITTC(LXI)/1]

The Council may consider and adopt its Agenda. On the schedule of meetings, the Council may consider the draft schedule distributed under Decision 5(XXII), the advice of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) and the due consultations in the Chairperson's Coordinating Bureau, which will issue the timetable daily and at more frequent intervals as necessary.

Item 4 Report on Membership of the Council

The Executive Director will report on the status of membership of the Council.

Item 5 Proposed Distribution of Votes for the 2026-2027 Biennium

[Document ITTC(LXI)/1 Annex]

The proposed distribution of votes for the 2026 – 2027 biennium, in accordance with Article 10(7) of the ITTA, 2006, is in the Annex of the Provisional Agenda [Document ITTC(LXI)/1]. The distribution of votes shall remain in effect for the rest of the biennium, except whenever the membership of the Organization changes or when any member has its voting rights suspended or restored, in which case the Council shall redistribute the votes within the affected category or categories.

In accordance with Article 19(4) of the ITTA, 2006, the approved distribution of votes will be used for the assessment of the contribution of each Member to the Administrative Budget for the 2026 – 2027 biennium.

Item 6 Admission of Observers

[Documents ITTC(LXI)/Info.3 and ITTC(LXI)/Info.4]

The Council may decide to admit those States and Organizations which request admission to the Session as Observers. Two lists of such applicants will be submitted at the Session for consideration and decision. The first list shall contain the names of all States and Organizations which have previously been admitted to the Council Sessions and the second those States and Organizations who are applying for admission on the first occasion at this Session.

In accordance with Decision 3(LI), operative paragraphs 2 and 3, the Executive Director has reviewed applications for compliance with respective requirements and the results of the initial review was published on the ITTO website two weeks prior to the Council Session.

The Council will consider the admission of Observers in accordance with Article 16 of the ITTA, 2006 taking into consideration the initial review.

Item 7 Statement by the Executive Director

The Executive Director will address the Council and report on activities of the Organization and other developments of relevance to the Organization.

Item 8 Report of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) – Decisions 3(XXII), 5(XXVI), 2(XLIX) and 2(LI)
[Document ITTC(LXI)/2]

Pursuant to Decisions 3(XXII), 5(XXVI), 2(XLIX) and 2(LI), and in order to organize its work for the Session, the Council may consider the report of the Thirty-ninth Meeting of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/2. The report will be presented to the Council by the Chairperson.

Item 9 Report of the Credentials Committee
[Document ITTC(LXI)/3]

The Council may consider and adopt the Report of the Credentials Committee and approve the credentials of delegations.

Item 10 Matters related to Article 19 of the ITTA, 2006 on the Administrative Account – Decisions 3(LVII) and 4(LIX)

The Chairperson will draw the attention of members to Decision 4(LIX) on the Management of the Administrative Budget. The Chairperson will then invite the Executive Director to introduce this item.

Item 11 Matters pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 – Decisions 4(LVII), 4(LVIII) and 4(LX)
[Document ITTC(LXI)/4]

The Council will receive the report of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) established under Decision 4(LVIII) and extended for one year under Decision 4(LX). The report will be presented to the Council by the PWG Co-Chairs.

Item 12 ITTO Biennial Work Programme – Decisions 9(XXXIV) and 3(LIX)
[Documents ITTC(LXI)/5, ITTC(LXI)/6 and ITTC(LXI)/7]

(a) The Council will receive the progress report on the implementation of the ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/5. The Council will also receive updates/reports on selected BWP activities, including the cooperation between ITTO and CITES, and the report of the fellowship programme [Document ITTC(LXI)/6] as will be informed in the provisional programme of meetings and activities.
(b) The Secretariat will present to the Council the Draft ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2026 – 2027 as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/7.

Item 13 Matters related to Article 15 of the ITTA, 2006 on cooperation and coordination with other organizations – Decision 7(LVII)
[Document ITTC(LXI)/8]

The Council will receive an update on the implementation of Decision 7(LVII) on matters related to Article 15 of the ITTA, 2006 on cooperation and coordination with other organizations as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/8.

Item 14 Special Account and Bali Partnership Fund
[Document ITTC(LXI)/9]

(a) Pledges to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund.
The Chairperson will invite Members and Observers to announce any new contributions they may wish to pledge to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund.

(b) Report of the Panel on Sub-Account B of the Bali Partnership Fund.
The Council will decide whether it is necessary for the Panel on Sub-Account B of the Bali Partnership Fund established under Decision 4(XXX) to meet during the session, taking account of the resources available. If the panel does meet during the session to consider actions/activities, pre-projects and projects that are eligible for funding under Sub-Account B, the Council may consider and adopt the recommendations contained in its report [Document ITTC(LXI)/9].

Item 15 Implementation of ITTO's New Financing Architecture, Phase II – Decision 4(LVI) and 8(LVII)
[Document ITTC(LXI)/10]

In accordance with Decision 8(LVII), the Council will receive the second progress report on the implementation of ITTO's new financing architecture, Phase II as contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/10.

Item 16 Reports of the Committees

The Council will have before it the Reports of the Associated Sessions of the Committees presented by the respective Chairpersons. The Council may consider and adopt the recommendations contained in each of the Reports.

Item 17 Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council for 2026

The Council may decide after due consultations, to elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026. Under Article 8 of the ITTA, 2006, the Council is required to elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for each calendar year, one from among the representatives of producer countries, and the other from among the representatives of the consumer countries. Under Article 8, paragraph 3, these offices are required to alternate each year between the two categories of Members, provided, however, that this shall not prohibit the re-election of either or both, under exceptional circumstances by the Council.

Item 18 Dates and Venues of the Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions of the Council and the Associated Sessions of the Committees

In order to maintain the established practice of setting Session dates and venues eighteen months or more in advance to facilitate logistical arrangements, the Council may wish to reconfirm/set the dates and venues of its Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions.

Item 19 Decisions and Report of the Session

The Council shall consider the proposed Decision(s) and adopt it/them in accordance with the procedures and modalities governing the Sixty-first Session of the Council in line with the ITTA, 2006 and the ITTO Rules of Procedure, as adopted under Agenda Item 10. In accordance with Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure, a report on the proceedings shall be prepared by the Secretariat and shall be circulated to all Members as soon as possible.

Item 20 Closing of the Session

Following any final statements by Delegates, the Chairperson will close the Sixty-first Session of the Council.

Annex

PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES FOR 2026-2027 BIENNIUM

PRODUCER MEMBERS	**2025** **No. of Votes**	**2026/2027 Biennium** **No. of Votes**
Africa		
Angola	21	21
Benin	20	20
Cameroon	21	21
Central African Republic	21	21
Congo	21	21
Côte d'Ivoire	20	21
Democratic Republic of the Congo	21	21
Gabon	21	21
Ghana	21	21
Liberia	20	20
Madagascar	20	21
Mali	20	21
Mozambique	21	21
Togo	20	20
Asia & Pacific		
Cambodia	22	22
Fiji	14	14
India	28	28
Indonesia	95	100
Malaysia	61	45
Myanmar	25	24
Papua New Guinea	42	39
Philippines	15	15
Thailand	47	48
Vietnam	24	37
Latin America/Caribbean		
Brazil	134	133
Colombia	23	23
Costa Rica	12	12
Ecuador	21	20
Guatemala	12	12
Guyana	15	15
Honduras	12	12
Mexico	24	24
Panama	13	13
Peru	27	27
Suriname	16	16
Trinidad and Tobago	10	10
Venezuela	20	20
TOTAL:	**1,000**	**1,000**

CONSUMER MEMBERS		**2025**		**2026/2027 Biennium**
		No. of Votes		**No. of Votes**
Albania		10		10
Australia		15		15
Canada		15		15
China		320		336
European Union	**329**		**323**	
Austria		10		10
Belgium		15		15
Bulgaria		10		10
Croatia		10		10
Cyprus		10		10
Czech Republic		11		11
Denmark		11		11
Estonia		10		10
Finland		10		10
France		22		22
Germany		19		17
Greece		11		11
Hungary		10		10
Ireland		13		12
Italy		19		19
Latvia		10		10
Lithuania		10		10
Luxembourg		10		10
Malta		10		10
Netherlands		21		18
Poland		11		11
Portugal		13		13
Romania		10		10
Slovakia		10		10
Slovenia		10		10
Spain		12		12
Sweden		11		11
Japan		113		102
New Zealand		11		11
Norway		10		10
Republic of Korea		60		63
Switzerland		11		11
United Kingdom		27		22
United States of America		79		82
TOTAL:		**1,000**		**1,000**

ANNEX III

TEXT OF THE DECISIONS

ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL AT ITS SIXTY-FIRST SESSION

DOCUMENT: ITTC(LXI)/11
DOCUMENT: ITTC(LXI)/12
DOCUMENT: ITTC(LXI)/13
DOCUMENT: ITTC(LXI)/14

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ITTC(LXI)/11
31 October 2025

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 - 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

DECISION 1(LXI)

PROJECTS, PRE-PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Having considered at its Sixty-first Session the recommendations of the three Committees on Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities and the Report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals for the 2025 project cycle, as contained in documents CEM-CFI(LIX)/4, CRF(LIX)/6 and ITTC/EP-60, respectively;

Noting that the time-bound electronic no objection procedures to approve relevant projects taking into account Expert Panel Ratings for Projects and Pre-Projects were conducted during the project cycle for 2025;

Welcoming the expression of interest by donors in several concept notes submitted under the programmatic approach and to be developed into full project proposals for future Council approval and funding, as listed in the annex to this decision;

1. Decides to:

(i) Endorse the approval obtained through the time-bound electronic no objection procedure for the following Projects and Pre-Projects for the project cycle of 2025:

PPD 206/25 Rev.1 (F)	Restoration and Sustainable Management of Gallery Forests in the Mono Delta Biosphere Reserve in Benin (Benin) ITTO Budget $69,440
PPD 208/25 Rev.1 (F)	Study for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Forest Resources in the Mo Plain, Togo (Togo) ITTO Budget $98,000
PD 930/22 Rev.2 (F)	Ecological Restoration and Sustainable Management of the Sitatunga Valley Natural Community Park in Benin (Benin) ITTO Budget $453,376
PD 939/24 Rev.2 (F)	Generation of Fundamental Information for the Second Cutting Cycle in the Amazon Rainforest (Brazil) ITTO Budget $498,400

PD 942/25 Rev.2 (F)	Developing Silvicultural Management Models for Forest Restoration Based on the Use of Seed Trees for the Establishment of Natural and Artificial Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru (Peru) ITTO Budget $1,061,040
PD 948/25 Rev.1 (M)	Experimental Commercial Plantations of Caoba (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in the Northern Coastal Area of Peru (Peru) ITTO Budget $494,816
PD 949/25 Rev.1 (F)	Strengthening Governance Systems and Local Regulatory Frameworks for the Resilience and Sustainability of Municipal and Community Forests in Western Guatemala (Guatemala) ITTO Budget $459,086.96
PD 950/25 Rev.1 (F)	Support to Local Communities for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Mountain Forests in the Sub-Northern Region of Togo (Togo) ITTO Budget $505,008
PD 952/25 (I) (former CN-25040)	Driving Forest-based Bioeconomy in Viet Nam's Acacia Forestry: Development of Guidance and Dialogue Platform for Cross-Border Vietnamese Acacia Value Chain Stakeholders (Viet Nam) ITTO Budget $280,000

(ii) Authorize the financing for immediate implementation of the Projects, Pre-Project and Activities as listed in the Annex to this Decision; and

(iii) Authorize the financing for immediate implementation of all the other approved Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities as soon as earmarked funds are available in the Special Account or in the Bali Partnership Fund Account.

2. Urges Members to consider financing those approved Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities for which funds are not immediately available,

3. Appeals to Members to make unearmarked contributions to the Thematic Programmes Account and the Special Account,

4. Further appeals to Members to also make voluntary contributions to the Bali Partnership Fund, particularly to the Sub-Account B of this Fund to finance Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities, and

5. Requests the Executive Director to continue consultations with potential donors in order to secure financing for those Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities for which funds are not immediately available.

ANNEX

Financing during 2025 for Projects, Activities and Concept Notes

(i) Projects:

PD 943/25 (I) Enhancing Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains in the Wood Industry to Stimulate Good Forestry Governance (Indonesia) [Japan $225,000 (Note 2)]	$225,000.00
PD 944/25 (F) Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment of Potential Investment Areas (PIAs) within Forest Land in the Philippines (Philippines) [Japan $160,000 (Note 2)]	$160,000.00
PD 945/25 (F) Emergency actions to secure forest conservation and livelihoods of traditional communities in the Brazilian Federal Conservation Unit Verde Para Sempre (Brazil) [Japan $149,877 (Note 2)]	$149,877.00
PD 946/25 (F) Capacity Building for the Restoration of the SOTA GOUNGOUN Forest Complex and Climate Change Mitigation in Benin (Benin) [Japan $225,000 (Note 2)]	$225,000.00
PD 952/25 (I) - Former CN-25040 Driving Forest-based Bioeconomy in Viet Nam's Acacia Forestry: Development of Guidance and Dialogue Platform for Cross-Border Vietnamese Acacia Value Chain Stakeholders (Viet Nam) [Japan $280,000 (Notes 2 and 5)]	$280,000.00
PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) Phase II – balance funds Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo (Togo) [Japan $232,624 (Notes 2 and 5)]	$232,624.00
PD 912/20 Rev.3 (I) Phase II – balance funds Strengthening Technical and Business Management in the Timber Forest Industry of Peru (Peru) [Japan $145,706 (Notes 2 and 5)	$145,706.00

(ii) Activities approved through Decision 3 (LIX) Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2024-2025:

PP-A/53-323K Co-hosting the Global Legal & Sustainable Timber Forum (GLSTF) (ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 Activity: 1) [IPIM of Macao SAR, China $75,000 (Note 2)]	$75,000.00

PP-A/61-379 $52,252.18
Strengthening Participation of the Private Sector in the Work of ITTO
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 Activity: 2
[Japan $52,252.18 (Notes 2 and 3)]

PP-A/59-358 $12,772.70
Statistical capacity building workshops
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 Activity: 6)
[Canada $12,772.70 (Note 2)]

PP-A/59-359 $61,967.43
Prevention and management of fire in tropical timber-producing forests
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 Activity: 7)
[Canada $41,967.43 (Note 2), Japan $20,000 (Note 3)]

PP-A/59-362 $38,526.00
Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical production forests
(ITTO and CBD)
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 Activity: 9)
[Australia $38,526.00 (Note 2)]

PP-A/52-319 $11,599.22
ITTO Fellowship Programme (Year 2025)
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2024-2025 Activity: 18)
[Kisso-an (Private) $1,396.20 (Note 2), Dr. Hwan Ok Ma $10,000 (Note 2),
Soka Gakkai/Seikyo Shimbun $203.02 (Note 2)]

(iii) Activities approved through Decision 3 (LXI) Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2026-2027:

PP-A/53-323N $1,140,215.00
Enhance the Information Exchange Function of the Global Timber Index (GTI) Platform to Promote the Development of Legal and Sustainable Timber Markets – GTI Activity Phase IV
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2026-2027 Activity: 1)
[IPIM of Macao SAR, China $1,140,215 (Note 1)]

PP-A/53-323P $325,358.00
Developing and Initiating a Trading Platform Based on the Blockchain-based Timber Traceability System to Facilitate and Promote Legal and Sustainable Tiber Trade – BTTS Activity Phase IV
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2026-2027 Activity: 1)
[IPIM of Macao SAR, China $325,358 (Note 1)]

PP-A/61-380 $20,000.00
Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical production forests
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2026-2027 Activity: 9)
[Japan $20,000 (Note 4)]

PP-A/61-381 $37,078.00
Public relations, outreach, and education (Awareness-raising in the host country Japan)

(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2026-2027 Activity: 14 (c))
[Japan $37,078 (Note 4)]

PP-A/52-319 $137,888.50
ITTO Fellowship Programme (Year 2026)
(ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2026-2027 Activity: 18)
[BPF-B $40,902.97 (Note 4), Unearmarked Fund $96,985.53 (Note 4)]

(iv) Other activities

PP-A/60-374 $18,588.00
Technical Assistance to inform FAO's work on Cultivating Sustainable Wood Futures in Asia and the Pacific
[FAO $18,588 (Note 1)]

PP-A/61-378 $40,000.00
Shaping deforestation-free agricultural and sustainable forestry value chains in the Congo Basin region
[CFC $40,000 (Note1)]

Total pledges to Projects and Activities confirmed after the Sixtieth Session of the Council to-date: **$3,389,452.03**

Note 1: Inter-sessional pledges received after the Sixtieth Session of the Council through a funding agreement or Memorandum of Understanding.

Note 2: Inter-sessional pledges received after the Sixtieth Session of the Council (new cash).

Note 3: Inter-sessional pledges received after the Sixtieth Session of the Council by allocating balance funds from completed projects returned to the donor.

Note 4: Pledges received during the Sixty-first Session of the Council (new cash / internal funds).

Note 5: This pledge is conditional upon the recipient member country paying its assessed contribution for 2025 in full.

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

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SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 - 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

DECISION 2(LXI)

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2026 AND 2027 FINANCIAL BIENNIUM

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling the Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO, Rule 3.3, which stipulates that Council shall approve and adopt the budget for the Administrative Account through a Council Decision;

Decides to:

1. Approve and adopt the Biennial Administrative Budget for the Financial Years 2026 and 2027 as contained in document CFA(XL)/2 Rev.1, in the amount of US$7,102,185 and US$7,104,278, respectively.

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 - 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

DECISION 3(LXI)

ITTO BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE YEARS 2026-2027

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Appreciating the work of the Secretariat in liaising with Members, the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) and the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) in preparing its proposal to Council on the Biennial Work Programme for the years 2026-2027;

Noting further that activities listed in the Annex to this Decision are derived from the following: (a) ITTA, 2006; (b) the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026; (c) the four ITTO Committee Reports to the Sixty-first Session of Council; and (d) previous Council Decisions;

Decides to:

1. Adopt the Biennial Work Programme for the years 2026-2027 as contained in the Annex to this Decision;

2. Authorize the Executive Director to seek voluntary contributions from Member Countries and other funding sources to finance implementation of the activities listed in the Annex;

3. Request the Executive Director to implement and/or facilitate the implementation of activities in the approved Biennial Work Programme for the years 2026-2027, as contained in the Annex;

4. Request the Executive Director to ensure that future activities to be funded outside the core budget are formulated as Concept Notes and included in the database, or as Council Decisions, in order to assess Member priorities and donor interest and financing, prior to being incorporated into the Biennial Work Programme (BWP).

5. Request the Secretariat to continue to indicate in the BWP how each activity aligns with the Programmatic Line(s);

6. Request the Executive Director to continue close collaboration with members of the CPF and other international partners in implementing the BWP for the years 2026-2027; and

7. Request the Executive Director to report to Council on the progress in implementing the Biennial Work Programme for 2026-2027 during the Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions of the Council.

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SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 - 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

DECISION 4(LXI)

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 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;

Noting the work and recommendations of the intersessional working group established under Decision 4(LVII) and extended under Decision 4(LVIII), 5(LIX) and 4(LX) to assess the need for negotiation and/or further extension of the ITTA 2006, as contained in Document ITTC(LIX)/5;

Further noting Decision 5(LIX), operative paragraph 4, making the virtual intersessional working group open-ended and renaming it as Preparatory Working Group (PWG);

Recognizing the need to plan for the expiry of the ITTA, 2006 by allowing adequate time and resources for preparing any subsequent agreement;

Further recognizing the work and recommendations of the PWG presented at the 61st Session of the Council;

Recognizing the voluntary contribution of Japan and the USA to date supporting the preparatory work;

Decides to:

1. Extend the mandate of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) until the 62nd Session of the Council in 2026;

2. Request the PWG to work in close collaboration with the Secretariat and in line with the revised Roadmap, as contained in the Annex to this Decision, to further analyze the identified elements

and additional elements, if any, to consider for the future negotiation; and explore options and make recommendations for addressing these elements based on discussions among Members;

3. Request the PWG to submit a report, including recommendations on the tentative Roadmap for 2027, to the Preparatory Committee and ITTC62. The report should address:

   (i) priority elements, clusters of elements and issues, and identification of substantive focus areas
   (ii) the positioning of ITTO vis-a-vis other relevant multilateral agreements and organizations, and initiatives
   (iii) the question of what needs to be included in the new Agreement and what could be left for operational decisions by Council
   (iv) possible additional elements for inclusion;

4. Request the Secretariat to post the minutes of PWG meetings, within 4 weeks of each meeting, on the ITTO member portal for transparency and awareness for all Members;

5. Encourage all Members to be actively engaged in the open-ended PWG to enhance inclusivity in the preparatory work for the future negotiation; and

6. 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$212,000 in the absence of sufficient voluntary contributions.

ANNEX

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

(in United States dollars)

Tentative Timing		Description	Provisional Estimated Expenses
2026	**February**	**Preparatory Working Group** - *Virtual session. Interpretation (online) & document translation*	$8,000
	March	**Caucus Meeting** - *Virtual session. Interpretation (online) & document translation*	$8,000
	June	**Caucus Meeting** - *Virtual session. Interpretation (online) & document translation*	$8,000
	September	**Preparatory Working Group** - *Virtual session. Interpretation (online) & document translation*	$8,000
	November **In conjunction with ITTC62**	**PREPCOM I - (2 days in Japan)** - *Meeting Facilities (incl. SIS Equipment)* - *Language Staff (Interpreters/Translators), etc.*	$180,000
		Total:	$212,000
2027	**Q1**	**PREPCOM II - (3 days in Japan)** - *Meeting Facilities (incl. SIS Equipment)* - *Language Staff (Interpreters/Translators), etc.*	$250,000
	Q3	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION I - *(5 days in Geneva)*** - *Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.*	$145,000
		Total:	$395,000
2028	**Q1**	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION II - *(5 days in Geneva)*** - *Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.*	$145,000
	Q3	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION III - *(5 days in Geneva)*** - *Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.*	$145,000
		Total:	$290,000
2029	**Q1**	**UNCTAD NEGOTIATION IV - *(5 days in Geneva)*** - *Travel costs for Secretariat (incl. DSA), etc.*	$145,000
		Total:	$145,000

* * *

ANNEX IV

REPORTS OF THE ASSOCIATED SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEES

DOCUMENTS: CEM-CFI(LIX)/4
CRF(LIX)/6
CFA(XL)/7

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS, STATISTICS AND MARKETS

COMMITTEE ON FOREST INDUSTRY

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FIFTY-NINTH SESSION
27-31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS, STATISTICS AND MARKETS

AND THE COMMITTEE ON FOREST INDUSTRY

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Report

Appendix A: **Report on the ITTO Annual Market Discussion – 2025**

Appendix B: **Statement of the Trade Advisory Group (TAG)**

REPORT

1. Opening of the Session

The Fifty-ninth Session of the Committees was opened on 27 October 2025 at the Joint Session of the Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets (CEM) and the Committee on Forest Industry (CFI), chaired by Ms. Kenneth T. Almarines (Philippines) deputizing for Mr. Ray Thomas Fernandez Kabigting (Philippines), Chairperson of the Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets (CEM) and the Committee on Forest Industry (CFI), who was absent from the meeting. The list of participants is presented in document ITTC(LXI)/Info. 2.

2. Adoption of Agenda and Organization of Work

The Agenda for the Joint Session of the CEM and the CFI as contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/1 Rev.1 was duly adopted. The CEM and the CFI met on 27, 29 and 31 October 2025 to consider items 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9B, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the Agenda. The Joint Session of All Committees met on 28 October 2025 to consider items 4 and 10 of the Agenda and on 29 October 2025 to consider items 5 and 9A of the Agenda. Ms. Cassandra Price, Australia, Vice-Chairperson of Council, chaired the Joint Session of all Committees.

3. Admission of Observers

The Committees admitted the observers listed in document ITTC(LXI)/Info.3 Rev.3 as approved by the Council.

4. ITTO Annual Market Discussion – 2025

The Committees noted the summary of the ITTO Annual Market Discussion – 2025, held in the Joint Session of All Committees as part of the Trade and Markets Day on 28 October 2025, as contained in Appendix A. The theme of the Market Discussion was “The Timber Industry Reimagined: Lessons from Market Struggles and Sustainability Efforts”. Ms. Ashley Amidon and Dr. Ivan Tomaselli (TAG Co-coordinators) moderated the Market Discussion.

The following feature presentations were made during the Market Discussion (available at https://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations/):

Ms. Emily Fripp Efeca (UK)	*Promoting Sustainable Tropical Timber Products Trade and Changing Consumer Perception: A New Phase*
Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai Vietnam Timber & Forest Products Association	*Learning from Viet Nam : How to Develop Value-added Tropical Timber Industry*
Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero Cámara Forestal Madera e Industria de Costa Rica	*The Future of the Tropical Timber Industry in the Central America Region – Towards a Comprehensive Agenda for Sustainability, Competitiveness and Legality*
Mr. João Baldasso CIPEM (Brazil)	*Forest Plantations in Latin America: Contributions to Ensure the Sustainable and Competitive Global Supply of Tropical Timber*

Ms. Tullia Baldassarri
INTERHOLCO AG

The Tropical Forest Industry in Africa: Efforts to Promote Integrated Social, Environmental and Economic Development

The Committees further noted the statement of the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) presented during the Market Discussion as contained in Appendix B.

5. Report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals

The Joint Session of All Committees considered the report of the Sixtieth Virtual Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals. With the absence of the panel members attending the Council Session, Dr. Gerhard Bruelmann from the Secretariat presented the report, as contained in document ITTC/EP-60 (presentation available at https://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations/).

The Sixtieth Panel appraised eleven (11) proposals. The Panel noted that:

- Eight (8) Project Proposals (73 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1); and
- Three (3) Project Proposal (27 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponent for essential revision, rated as category 2.

6. New Projects

The Committees noted the project that was approved on 24 October 2025 under the time-bound electronic no objection procedures to accept Expert Panel ratings and circulated to member countries pursuant to Decision 6(XLIII), following the recommendations of the Expert Panel at its Sixtieth Meeting as follows:

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets		
PD NUMBER	TITLE	SUBMITTED BY
PD 948/25 Rev.1 (M)	Experimental Commercial Plantations of Caoba (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in the Northern Coastal Area of Peru	Peru

The Committees were also informed that in compliance with the new financing architecture (approved by the 56th ITTC under Decision 4(LVI)), a donor has expressed interest in funding the Concept Note CN-25040-Viet Nam. Subsequent to that, the following proposal has been developed (without review by the Expert Panel as per the provisions of Decision 4(LVI)) by the Executing Agency in collaboration with the ITTO Secretariat and donor and taking into account comments received during the time-bound electronic no objection procedure that was completed on 24 October 2025:

Committee on Forest Industry		
PD NUMBER	TITLE	SUBMITTED BY
PD 952/25 (I)	Driving Forest-based Bioeconomy in Viet Nam's Acacia Forestry: Development of Guidance and Dialogue Platform for Cross-Border Vietnamese Acacia Value-Chain Stakeholders	Viet Nam

The Committees decided to recommend the above projects for immediate funding.

7. Review of Projects and Pre-projects in Progress

The Committees considered the Report of Projects and Pre-projects in Progress as contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/2 Rev.1 and took note of progress in the implementation of the following projects and pre-projects.

(A) Projects and Activity under implementation

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

1. PD 933/23 Rev.2 (M) Promotion of Sustainable Teakwood Use in Domestic Markets of India

Committee on Forest Industry

1. PD 912/20 Rev.3 (I) Strengthening Technical and Business Management in the Timber Forest Industry of Peru

2. PD 935/23 Rev.1 (I) Promoting Sustainable Wood Use for the Domestic Market in Malaysia

3. PD 943/25 (I) Enhancing Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains in the Wood Industry to Stimulate Good Forestry Governance (Indonesia)

4. PD 951/25 (I) Strengthening the Forest Sector Value Chain through Sustainable Forest Management and Harvesting in Costa Rica

The Korean delegate commented that PD 935/23 Rev.1 (I) is well aligned with the main objectives of the ITTO 2024-2025 Biennial Work Programme (BWP). However, Korea proposes that future project report include not only capacity-building and policy outcomes but also quantitative indicators such as market changes and economic impacts, so that project effectiveness can be evaluated more objectively. A more integrated approach linking CEM-CFI in policy, industry and market dimension will significantly contribute to achieving ITTO's sustainability goals.

(B) **Projects pending financing**

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

1. PD 948/25 Rev.1 (M) Experimental Commercial Plantations of Caoba (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in the Northern Coastal Area of Peru

Committee on Forest Industry

1. PD 912/20 Rev.3 (I) Phase II Strengthening Technical and Business Management in the Timber Forest Industry of Peru

2. PD 952/25 (I) Driving Forest-based Bioeconomy in Viet Nam's Acacia Forestry: Development of Guidance and Dialogue Platform for Cross-Border Vietnamese Acacia Value-Chain Stakeholders

(C) Concept Notes pending financing (Awaiting Expression of Interest by Potential Donors)

1. CN-24028 Establishing a Pilot Plantation Forest Information Sharing and Wood Supply Chain Traceability System in Vietnam

2. CN-25036 Development of a National System to Verify the Geographical Origin of Mexican Tropical Timber through Dendro-isotopic Fingerprinting and Genomic Markers to Combat Illegal Timber Trade, Deforestation and Illegal Logging

3. CN-25041 Reactivation Plan for the Forest Production Sector and its Value Chains, Promoting Increased Wood Consumption in Various Regions of Costa Rica

The Committees took note of the updates provided by the Secretariat on satisfactory progress in all the above projects.

8. Report on Completed Projects

The Committees considered the Report of Completed Projects and Pre-projects as contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/3 Rev.1 and additional information presented during this Session as follows:

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

PD 913/20 Rev.4 (M) Strengthening Forest Monitoring and Extending the Coverage of the Traceability System in Panama

The Committees took note of the completion report contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/3 Rev.1.

The Project Coordinator of the project presented the main outputs, which included: (i) developing a web-based legal wood network, promoted supplier-user roundtables, and launched a communication campaign with over 1.4 million views to raise public awareness; (ii) over 300 individuals from production chains were trained, with 70 active system users registered, strengthening institutional capacity; (iii) the system's installation of 13 satellite antennas in remote areas enabled real-time data access and improved control post operations; and (iv) outcomes improved environmental monitoring, opened responsible business opportunities, and enhanced sector competitiveness and trust among stakeholders.

The Secretariat informed the Committees that the completion report, the technical report and final audit report have been delivered by the executing agency in accordance with the project agreement. The Secretariat recommended that the Committees declare the project complete. The Committees duly declared the project complete.

Committee on Forest Industry

PD 926/22 Rev.1 (I) Promotion of Sustainable Domestic Wood Consumption of Wood Products in Thailand

The Committees took note of the completion report contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/3 Rev.1. The Thailand Delegate took the floor, on behalf of the Kasetsart University and the Royal Forest Department of Thailand as the Project Executing Agency, expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government of Japan and ITTO for the generous support. The project made a lot of positive impacts

both at the project site and at the national level for sustainable wood use and improving livelihood of smallholders.

The Secretariat informed the Committees that the completion report, the technical report and the final audit report have been delivered by the executing agency in accordance with the project agreement. The Committees duly declared the project complete.

PD 928/22 Rev.1 (I) Development of Sustainable Domestic Market for Wood Products (Indonesia)

The Committees took note of the completion report contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/3 Rev.1. The Indonesian Delegate conveyed the highest appreciation to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Japan, for funding the project. The project is beneficial to raise the commitment and engagement of the stakeholders in developing sustainable domestic market for wood products in Java Island in particular and at national as the major wood industry at national level.

The Secretariat informed the Committees that the completion report, the technical report and the final audit report have been delivered by the executing agency in accordance with the project agreement. The Committees duly declared the project complete.

PP-A/60-369 Strengthening Surveillance and Monitoring to Tackle the Surge in Forest Loss and Land Degradation, Induced by Intensifying Conflict in Thailand's Border Areas

The Committees took note of the completion report contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/3 Rev.1. On behalf of Kasetsart University of Thailand as the Executing Agency, the Thailand Delegate expressed sincere thanks to the Government of Japan and ITTO for the generous support to make the project successfully completed. This is the first project implemented in the community forest of Thailand that applies surveillance and real-time monitoring system through mobile application with the involvement of local community. The project made a lot of positive impacts to effectively prevent forest loss and illegal logging and poaching along Thailand-Myanmar border areas.

The Secretariat informed the Committees that the completion report, the technical report and the final audit report have been delivered by the executing agency in accordance with the project agreement. The Committees duly declared the project complete.

9. Ex-post Evaluation

(A) Ex-post Evaluation Reports

To facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned from ex-post evaluation of projects among members, the consideration of ex-post evaluation reports is undertaken in a Joint Session of All Committees. There were no ex-post evaluation reports on projects under CEM and CFI at this Session.

(B) Selection of Projects for Ex-post Evaluation

The Secretariat informed the Committees that the current balance available following consultation with donors on remaining monitoring and evaluation funds from completed projects for CEM is approximately US$167,043.70 and for CFI is approximately US$30,315.09. It recommended that members review the table of recently completed projects contained in document CEM-CFI(LIX)/1 with a view to making recommendation(s) for ex-post evaluation(s). The Chairperson informed the Committees that PD 913/20 Rev.4 (M) "Strengthening Forest Monitoring and Extending the Coverage of the Traceability System in Panama" is eligible for the ex-post evaluation. The Secretariat made a

proposal that the project be selected for the ex-post evaluation at this session with execution in 2027 to allow more time to realize the project's impacts on the ground. The Committees decided to select this proposal for ex-post evaluation to be carried out in 2027.

10. Policy Work

Three issues/activities under the CEM and one issue under CFI were considered by the Joint Session of All Committees.

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

(i) Legality Frameworks

The Joint Session of All Committees considered this item.

The Secretariat reported on developments relating to legality framework in 2024-2025, including four major legislative instruments: the EU Timber Regulation/EU Deforestation Regulation, the U.S. Lacey Act Amendments, the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act of Australia and the Clean Wood Act of Japan, which are regulations geared towards monitoring and controlling the flow of timber into their domestic markets. In addition, the update also covered legislative developments in other important timber markets, namely: the Korean Revised Sustainable Use of Timber Act, Ghana's FLEGT License, as well as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The Delegate of Colombia took the floor and informed the Committee that, with regard to the upcoming COP20 CITES, there are proposed amendments that include certain species of interest to member countries, though not specifically to Colombia. The Delegate noted that, based on the activities and discussions throughout the reporting period, there has been notable engagement from the organization on this matter. In light of the forthcoming COP meeting, the Delegate inquired whether there are any recommendations that should be taken into consideration.

The ITTO Secretariat responded that one of the key proposals to be addressed during the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP) concerns Brazilwood (Paubrasilia echinata), submitted by Brazil, which seeks to transfer the species from Appendix II to Appendix I of CITES. Additionally, there are two species from Africa, namely Afzelia bipindensis and Pterocarpus soyauxii proposed by group of countries from the Congo Basin region, for removal from Appendix II. The Secretariat further noted that these species had only been proposed for inclusion in the appendix II during the previous COP meeting held in Panama in November of 2022.

The ITTO Secretariat further informed the Committee that another species from India, proposed for listing by the European Union, was not supported by India. As part of the CITES consultation process, ITTO is regularly requested by the CITES Secretariat to provide technical comments on species proposed for listings by parties before any COP. Accordingly, ITTO convened a meeting to review and discuss the comments submitted by the European Union and other proponents. During the consultation process, several members provided their inputs, which were consolidated and subsequently transmitted to the CITES Secretariat as ITTO's official comments and observations for consideration during the upcoming COP meeting. Members were informed that they may access the detailed comments submitted by ITTO for reference.

The Secretariat also noted that another proposal concerned a conifer species from Argentina. However, as ITTO's mandate does not extend to coniferous species, the Organization did not provide any comments or observations on that proposal.

The Delegate of Malaysia reaffirmed the country's strong commitment to promoting the legal and sustainable trade of tropical timber. Since 2013, Malaysia has implemented the Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS), which comprises MyTLAS in Peninsular Malaysia, the Sabah TLAS, and the Sarawak Timber Legality Verification System (STLVS). These systems ensure that all timber produced complies fully with national laws and regulations. Building on this foundation, Malaysia completed a comprehensive study in August 2025 aimed at further strengthening its TLAS. The study focuses on harmonizing the existing regional systems into a unified national TLAS, thereby enhancing legality, traceability, transparency and sustainability. This initiative underscores Malaysia's proactive approach to aligning with international due diligence requirements and reinforces its position as a trusted and responsible supplier of legally and sustainably sourced tropical timber.

The Delegate of Indonesia reaffirmed the country's commitment to strengthening its Forest Legality Framework through the Enhanced Timber Legality Assurance System (ETLAS+) - Timber Legality Verification System (SVLK+). Indonesia continues to promote the legal and sustainable trade of tropical timber through active participation in international fora, including APEC EGILAT. Key initiatives include the full implementation of the SVLK, development of the Timber Legal Area Guidance Template, and ongoing contributions to regional and global dialogues. These efforts demonstrate Indonesia's dedication to sustainability, transparency, and good regulatory practices in the forestry sector. Furthermore, Indonesia continues to actively contribute to the implementation of ITTO projects that promote sustainable forest management (SFM) and help address the funding gaps that cannot be fully met through natural resource revenues alone.

(ii) Forest and Timber Certification and Traceability

The Joint Session of All Committees considered this item.

The Secretariat reported on recent developments in forest certification, traceability and transparency in ITTO producer member countries, covering the period of 2024-2025. In 2025, the total area of certified forests (FSC + PEFC) in ITTO producing member countries was 46.4 million hectares, accounting for 8.5% of the world total. The number of chain of custody (CoC) certificates in ITTO producer countries was 8,674 in 2024 (11% of the world total), an increase of 13%.

The FSC certified forest area in ITTO producer countries reached 26.4 million hectares which was 16% of global FSC certified area, while the PEFC certified area reached 19.9 million hectares, accounting for about 6.7% of the world total of PEFC. Eight (8) ITTO producer member countries that have PEFC certified areas were: Malaysia, Brazil, Indonesia, Congo, Gabon, Vietnam and Thailand.

Malaysia continues to strengthen forest certification through the Malaysian Timber certification scheme or MTCS. As of September 2025, 5.78 million hectares of natural forest and about 146,000 hectares of forest plantations have been certified under The MTCS together with 387 companies holding. This achievement reflects Malaysia's steadfast commitment to sustainable forest management and responsible timber production.

The Delegate of Australia stated that Australia takes the legal and sustainable trade of timber very seriously. Australia has recently reformed its legal logging laws, which place due diligence obligations on importers and processors to assess and mitigate the risk of illegally logged timber. Under these laws, importing illegally logged timber is a criminal offense, and certification is now formally recognized. The Delegate expressed appreciation for updates from the ITTO Secretariat and key trading partners, including Indonesia and Malaysia, on their efforts to ensure timber legality and sustainability. Australia also highlighted its strong focus on traceability in timber supply chains.

The Delegate of Panama provided an update on forest certification in the country. Panama is in the process of obtaining forest certification for approximately 155,000 hectares managed in eastern Panama and the Darien region. This initiative is part of the Government's efforts to consolidate sustainable forest management nationwide.

The Delegate of Colombia reaffirmed the country's commitment to supporting forest communities and implementing a system of sustainable forest concessions. Colombia continues to work with Afro-descendant and Indigenous communities to expand access to forest concessions and promote sustainable forest management.

The Delegate of India highlighted the country's robust national legislation on legal and sustainable forest management, which classifies all timber, whether inside or outside forests, as forest products. India has long relied on the National Working Plan Code for scientific management of forest resources and has implemented felling and transit regulations. In alignment with sustainability and legality standards, India launched the Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme (IFWCS), known as PRAMAAN, in December 2023. Additionally, India is developing tools for timber traceability and waste management, transitioning from the National Transit Park System to the National Transit Management System, which will cover all stages from plantation through harvesting and timber movement.

(iii) APEC EGILAT and ITTO collaboration

The Joint Session of All Committees considered this item. The Secretariat reported the participation of ITTO in the following APEC-EGILAT activities:

- The 27th APEC-EGILAT Plenary Meeting, Gyeongju (Korea), 26-28 February 2025. ITTO presented the progress of programme in line with legal and sustainable supply chains, entitled 'Sustaining legal supply chains of tropical wood and wood products'. The ITTO has also provided an update on its efforts to support the use of sustainably produced tropical timber in domestic markets of member countries through Japan funded Sustainable Wood Use (SWU) projects implemented in Viet Nam (completed), Thailand and Indonesia (to be declared complete at this Session).
- The 28th APEC-EGILAT Plenary Meeting and Workshop on Enhancing Enforcement and Legal Timber Trade, Incheon (Korea), 28-30 July 2025. In the workshop organized by the Government of Malaysia and the Government of Korea, ITTO made a presentation entitled 'Sustainable Tropical Forest and Legal Supply Chains – Pathways to 2030'. In the plenary meeting, ITTO provided an update on ITTO's efforts to support the use of sustainably produced tropical timber in domestic markets of member countries through Japan funded SWU projects implemented in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and India.

(iv) Items for CEM Policy Work for 2026

The Committee considered and agreed on the following items for discussion under its policy work agenda in 2026:

- Legality frameworks;
- Forest and timber certification and traceability; and
- APEC EGILAT and ITTO collaboration;

Committee on Forest Industry

(i) Promotion of Sustainable Wood Use in Domestic Markets

The Joint Session of the CEM and the CFI considered this item. The progress of the sustainable wood use (SWU) projects, funded by the Government of Japan, implemented in Thailand (PD 926/22 Rev.1 (I)); Indonesia (PD 928/22 Rev.1 (I)); and Malaysia (PD 935/23 Rev. 1 (I)) were reported to the Committees by the respective project coordinators.

The Delegate of Japan congratulated the Ministry of Forestry of Indonesia, Kasetsart University, and the Royal Forest Department of Thailand on the successful completion of important projects. Japan expressed hope that the results of these projects will continue to be disseminated, further promoting sustainable production and consumption and contributing to the improvement of domestic markets in both Thailand and Indonesia.

The Delegate of Canada expressed appreciation for the specific examples presented by the panellists regarding sustainable wood product markets and the promotion of sustainable wood use in domestic markets. Canada emphasized that this remains a national priority and encouraged the Secretariat and Council members to continue building on the work of existing initiatives, such as the Forest and Climate Leaders Partnership. The Delegate noted that at COP30 in Belem, Canada will co-chair the Forest Pavilion, which will address issues highlighted in the case studies and presentations, and looks forward to engaging with Council members during the event.

The Delegate of Korea expressed sincere thanks to the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the project in Malaysia. Korea looks forward to the project's effectiveness in enhancing and diversifying domestic consumption and promoting local markets for sustainable wood and wood products.

The Indonesian Delegate reiterated its strong commitment in implementing and sustainably developing the legality frameworks and Forest and timber certification and traceability by SVLK+. Indonesia has demonstrated a strong commitment to APEC EGILAT forum through several concrete actions, including the implementation of the Timber Legality Verification System (SVLK+), participation in the development of the Timber Legality Guidance Template for Indonesia, and active contributions to APEC EGILAT meetings. Indonesia affirms its commitment to good regulatory practices, including in the forestry sector, to support sustainability and competitiveness. Furthermore, Indonesia has actively contributed in implementing ITTO Project to support SFM and to fill the funding gap due to budget limitation of the government budget

The committees take note of the views expressed and will reflect the agreed and will reflect all the results and updates on this policy work area.

(ii) Items for CFI Policy Work for 2026

The Committee considered and agreed on the following item for discussion under its policy work agenda in 2026:

- Promotion of sustainable wood use in domestic markets.

11. Biennial Work Programme of the Committees for 2026-2027

The Committees took note of the activities of relevance to them in the BWP and noted that the 2026-27 BWP would be taken up for approval under agenda item 12(b) of Council.

12. Election of Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons for 2026

Following the usual consultations undertaken by the producer and consumer groups, Ms. Rata Muda (New Zealand) was elected as the Chairperson of the CEM and CFI for 2026 and a delegate of Guatemala, whose name will be informed later, was elected as the Vice-Chairperson of the CEM and CFI for 2026.

13. Dates and Venues of the Sixtieth and Sixty-first Sessions of the Committees

The Sixtieth Session of the Committees will be held in conjunction with the Sixty-second Session of the International Tropical Timber Council in 2026.

The Sixty-first Session of the Committees will be held in conjunction with the Sixty-third Session of the International Tropical Timber Council in 2027.

14. Other Business

None.

15. Recommendations to the International Tropical Timber Council

(i) The Committees recommended that funding be made immediately available for the following projects approved under the time-bound electronic no-objection procedure for the project cycle 2025:

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

PD 948/25 Rev.1 (M)	Experimental Commercial Plantations of Caoba (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in the Northern Coastal Area of Peru [US$494,816]

Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

PD 952/25 (I)	Driving Forest-based Bioeconomy in Viet Nam's Acacia Forestry: Development of Guidance and Dialogue Platform for Cross-Border Vietnamese Acacia Value-Chain Stakeholders [US$280,000]

(ii) The Committees recommended that funding be made immediately available for the following project approved and partially funded by the Republic of Korea at an earlier Session:

Committee on Forest Industry

PD 912/20 Rev.2 (I) Phase II	Strengthening Technical and Business Management in the Timber Forest Industry of Peru [US$145,706]

(iii) The Committees recommended that funding be made immediately available for the following concept note partially funded by USA at an earlier Session:

CN-24028	Establishing a Pilot Plantation Forest Information Sharing and Wood Supply Chain Traceability System in Vietnam [US$296,280]

(iv) The Committees recommended that funding be made immediately available for the following concept notes:

CN-25036	Development of a National System to Verify the Geographical Origin of Mexican Tropical Timber through Dendro-isotopic Fingerprinting and Genomic Markers to Combat Illegal Timber Trade, Deforestation and Illegal Logging [US$267,960]
CN-25041	Reactivation Plan for the Forest Production Sector and its Value Chains, Promoting Increased Wood Consumption in Various Regions of Costa Rica [US$336,726]

16. Report of the Session

The Committees adopted this report for submission to the Council, with due acknowledgement to the work of the Secretariat under the able guidance of the Chairperson of the Committees.

APPENDIX A

REPORT ON THE ITTO ANNUAL MARKET DISCUSSION – 2025
"The Timber Industry Reimagined: Lessons from Market Struggles and Sustainability Efforts"
29 October 2025, Panama City, Panama

The theme of the 2025 Annual Market Discussion organized by the ITTO Trade Advisory Group (TAG) was: "The Timber Industry Reimagined: Lessons from Market Struggles and Sustainability Efforts". The Market Discussion was chaired by Ms. Ashley Amidon and Dr. Ivan Tomaselli (TAG Co-Coordinators).

The speakers, and the titles of their presentations, were as follows:

Ms. Emily Fripp Efeca (UK)	*Promoting Sustainable Tropical Timber Products Trade and Changing Consumer Perception: A New Phase*
Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai Vietnam Timber & Forest Products Association	*Learning from Viet Nam : How to Develop Value-added Tropical Timber Industry*
Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero Cámara Forestal Madera e Industria de Costa Rica	*The Future of the Tropical Timber Industry in the Central America Region – Towards a Comprehensive Agenda for Sustainability, Competitiveness and Legality*
Mr. João Baldasso CIPEM (Brazil)	*Forest Plantations in Latin America: Contributions to Ensure the Sustainable and Competitive Global Supply of Tropical Timber*
Ms. Tullia Baldassarri INTERHOLCO AG	*The Tropical Forest Industry in Africa: Efforts to Promote Integrated Social, Environmental and Economic Development*

The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer session with members of the Council. Following the event, Ms. Ashley Amidon (TAG Co-Coordinator) presented the TAG Statement (Appendix B). Presentations made during the 2025 ITTO Annual Market Discussion and the TAG Statement are available at http://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations.

Summary of presentations

Ms. Emily Fripp, Director, Experts in Sustainable Forest & Agricultural Advice (Efeca), UK
Promoting Sustainable Tropical Timber Products Trade and Changing Consumer Perception: A New Phase

Emily Fripp, the founder and Director of Efeca, provided a reflection on the current status and trends and the global tropical timber market. She also offered thoughts on the broader, evolving landscape of forest-related markets, consumers and the opportunities and challenges that this brings.

To begin with she flagged that forestry is no longer about timber, forests play a fundamental role in managing the earth's climate, nature and biodiversity while providing an income for local communities, businesses and the global economy. This presents both opportunities and challenges for the international forestry sector.

“Today, the sector is facing complex geo-political issues and uncertainty. However, the tropical timber trade is a resilient and adaptable sector. It survived three major economic shocks and many tropical producer countries remain value-added players in the export trade. The sector’s ability to adapt will become increasingly important”.

Tropical timber production is increasingly supplied by plantations, with natural forest supply predicted to decline further. Smallholders and agroforestry systems will become increasingly important given the limited possibilities for expansion of large-scale plantations.

Forest managers, producers, regulators and local communities operate in an increasingly complicated, evolving landscape. This has driven a change from a focus where forest value was placed solely on timber and forest products. Now there is growing recognition of the holistic nature of forests, the many services they provide, and the numerous actors involved. This adds to the complexity of our operating space, bringing with it challenges, but equally huge opportunities.

Success in meeting future challenges will hinge on five pillars of innovation; Financial, leveraging public and/or private finance to be invested within the forestry sector; Social, multi-stakeholder collaboration, including co-creation processes to create contextual solutions; Policy development and implementation at different levels for example by embracing overarching goals and guidelines and Compliance with governance and institutional mechanisms and technological advances.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai
Vice President and Secretary General, Vietnam Timber & Forest Product Association (VIFOREST), Viet Nam
Learning from Viet Nam: How to Develop Value-added Tropical Timber Industry

In his presentation, Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai, distilled key lessons from Viet Nam’s experience that can inform other tropical countries in their efforts to develop a sustainable, efficient and high-value timber industry.

He pointed out that Viet Nam, once widely criticised for overexploiting its natural forests, has achieved a remarkable transition from dependence on domestic natural forests to sustainable plantation forestry and from being a raw material exporter to becoming one of the world’s leading suppliers of value-added wood products.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment the value of wood and wood product exports in the first six months of 2025 reached US$8.21 billion, an increase of almost 9% compared to the same period in 2024.

To advance, Viet Nam is developing its timber industry to be sustainable, efficient and high-value by focusing on advanced technology, improving the legal timber supply chain and shifting to higher-value production.

Key strategies include increasing the use of legal and certified timber, modernising processing facilities, boosting domestic production and promoting research and design to meet international market needs. Viet Nam is increasing plantation areas and fostering private and community-based plantations.

Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero, President, Cámara Forestal Madera e Industria de Costa Rica (CFMI), Costa Rica
The Future of the Tropical Timber Industry in the Central America Region – Towards a Comprehensive Agenda for Sustainability, Competitiveness and Legality

The tropical timber industry in Central America is facing a historic turning point. Natural tropical forests and forest plantations represent an ecological, social and economic asset of great strategic value. However, their continued existence depends on the ability of the region's countries to harmonize sustainable use with competitiveness and trade transparency, Mr. Montero said.

Central American countries have made progress in forest governance, sustainable forest management, certification, traceability and responsible trade systems. Some have modern legal frameworks and recognised certification while others face informal markets and weak oversight.

To overcome this scenario a regional vision is required where legality, sustainability, traceability and profitability coexist under the same value logic. The challenge is also cultural, repositioning tropical timber as a material of the future associated with the bio-economy and green construction.

The State has an essential role as a guarantor of forest sustainability and in this regard, Costa Rica is seeking a model of institutional coordination and public policy aimed at sustainable public procurement and developing the 'green economy', improving competitiveness, innovation and added value production and creating public-private partnerships and international cooperation.

Mr. João Baldasso
Center for Wood Producing and Exporting Industries of the State of Mato Grosso (CIPEM) (Brazil)
Forest Plantations in Latin America: Contributions to Ensure the Sustainable and Competitive Global Supply of Tropical Timber

Mr. Baldasso began his presentation with an explanation of the structure and objectives of CIPEM, the Mato Grosso Timber Production and Export Industries Center, which brings together eight forest-based employers' unions (523 individual companies).

The aim of CIPEM is to organise and strengthen the forest sector in Mato Grosso and throughout Brazil. CIPEM is at vanguard of sustainable forest management in Brazil, and it sees a huge potential in exploiting medium and low-density Amazonian species that are currently ignored by the market. Baldasso asserted that the Amazon region offers the opportunity to develop profitable and ecologically sound forest plantations, focusing on its native species

In 2024 Brazil's forestry exports generated approximately US$17 billion of this US$11 billion came from plantation forest pulp. The forest sector in Brazil today is dominated by plantations. Eucalyptus and pine are the major drivers of wood exports with the pulp and paper industries being key consumers. Over the past 30 years forest plantation productivity has nearly doubled with a lower cost base in Brazil compared to some traditional exporters thereby providing a significant competitive advantage.

The presentation includes a wealth of statistics and data on the distribution of plantations, species and end uses. He determined that the adoption of forest certification and compliance with legal frameworks are essential for market access.

The area of forest plantations in Brail continues to expand. Currently there are around 10 million hectares and in 10 years this is forecast to grow to 15-16 million hectares with an investment of US$70 billion and the potential creation of about 200,000 job s in rural areas.

As the area of plantations expand there needs to be a parallel expansion of processing capacity and development of an efficient physical infrastructure.

Baldasso recommended that to build on the success so far achieved it would be advisable to focus on productivity and prioritise plantations located close to domestic markets, integrate plantations for energy production with agro-industrial end users, strengthen legality, traceability and certification, mobilise green finance and invest in R&D to improve genetics, forestry techniques and product development.

Ms. Tullia Baldassarri, Communication and Marketing, INTERHOLCO AG, Switzerland
The Tropical Forest Industry in Africa: Efforts to Promote Integrated Social, Environmental and Economic Development

Ms. Baldassarri introduced the company she represents, Interholco, a supplier of 'Sustainable Hardwood – Made in Africa'. She explained the company manages a 1.16-million-hectare forest concession in the Republic of Congo which is FSC and PAFC certified.

The industry in Congo, she explained, has been challenged to achieve the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', (Industry 4.0) to be advanced by analytics, automation and advanced manufacturing technology backed-up by skill up-grading. This, says Ms. Baldassarri, can elevate the 'Made in Africa' brand.

To close the loop the timber sector needs allies linking achievements in the forest with external expectations, not to just to legitimise what companies do but to understand where and when they meet external expectations for social, environmental, economic and regulatory performance and compliance.

She added that when wood is harvested for the common good it becomes an agent of innovation and that social innovations emerge from interactions among stakeholders to construct solutions to social needs.

She said, for the future there are three milestones to be met: a halt in deforestation, restoration of degraded forests and continued promotion of sustainable forest management.

In conclusion Ms. Baldassarri quoted the following she attributed to Dr. Qu Dongyu, Director General FAO of the United Nations, "Protecting, Restoring and Managing forests are cost-effective options to provide multiple benefits for both people and planet"

Discussion and interventions
The delegation from Colombia made an intervention, asking the panellists how to overcome challenges related to engaging forest communities and sustaining income. Colombia is consolidating its forest economy and linking it with biodiversity and is concerned that due to a long delay (7+ years) before timber yields income that they will be replaced with non-timber forest products that are needed for short-term livelihood. The delegate asked how local communities can be motivated and supported in maintaining forest-based livelihoods, especially in remote areas like the Congo Basin.

Mr. Jaime Montero explained that success is based on three main factors: Environmental services payments since the 1990s provide continuous cash flow to forest users, established by national law and not dependent on external donors, Promotion of agroforestry and diversified forest supply chains with private sector participation, and Private partnerships between forest owners and companies facilitate deforestation control and sustainable procurement. He also emphasized planning reforms carefully to prevent land-use conflicts.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai explained that forest protection is linked to food security — when people have enough food, they stop shifting cultivation. Vietnam is now a leading rice exporter, which allows focus on forest protection and many farmers have diversified their livelihoods. He also added that Vietnam receives USD 150 million annually for forest communities from hydropower and ecotourism users. This has resulted in successful forest regeneration and reduced deforestation.

Ms. Tullia Baldassarri highlighted participatory approaches in forest concessions, especially related to Indigenous and local peoples, who are consulted under Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles. Engagement begins two years before logging to prevent conflicts. Grievance mechanisms exist and communities choose their own local benefit projects.

The delegate from Malaysia made an intervention focused on the trade-offs between forest carbon and sustainable forest management (SFM). There is a concern that Carbon markets currently yield less revenue than traditional forest-based industries, and asked panellists' views on balancing both.

Ms. Emily Fripp noted that carbon should be an additional income source, not a replacement. She also noted that opportunities exist at national, plantation, and smallholder levels (especially through agroforestry). She also placed an emphasis on credibility and robust MRV (monitoring, reporting, verification) systems.

Mr. Jaime Montero noted that an optimal model combines SFM revenues + carbon markets to ensure steady cash flow. He noted that relying only on carbon income is unsustainable.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai noted that carbon trade and wood trade should complement each other, and he warned against overpromising profits from carbon credits. Vietnam earned USD 50 million from its first carbon credit sale via the World Bank but urges patience.

The delegate from China commended Vietnam and suggested deeper China–Vietnam collaboration through ITTO and trade frameworks (e.g., ASEAN, SAP). They also supported expansion of the BMIC (Bamboo and Forest Products Market Information Center) initiative for reducing small enterprise costs. The also praised African forest initiatives and expressed interest in sharing best practices.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai agreed and called for understanding from the U.S. and noted that developing countries supply quality furniture to U.S. consumers.

The First Women's Network made an intervention, thanking Mr. Joel Baldasso for supporting gender inclusion. They cited a mentorship program for 300 women in Brazil's forest sector and noted that women now represent 18% of the workforce. They also emphasized importance of equity and inclusion, not just participation numbers.

The Republic of Korea's made an intervention which highlighted the need for traceability and legal timber systems and introduced Korea's DNA-based verification system to detect illegal timber. They also called for education, infrastructure, and information exchange among ITTO members.

The European Union's made an intervention, explaining the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) proposal context and recent delay due to IT system capacity concerns. The EU aims for a smooth rollout rather than premature launch. They also Introduced new EU initiatives for biodiversity credits, complementing carbon markets and promoting investment in biodiversity protection.

Ms. Ashley Amidon as moderator thanked all participants, noting lively exchanges and constructive ideas on forest sustainability, community livelihoods, and balancing environmental and economic priorities.

Trade statement

Ms. Ashley Amidon (TAG) read out a prepared statement to participants attending the Market Discussion. This statement is appended as it was presented in Appendix B.

Theme for 2026 Annual market discussion

The Trade Advisory Group (TAG) decided to defer its decision on the theme for the 2026 Annual Market Discussion. A theme will be conveyed to the ITTO Secretariat in advance of the next ITTC.

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF THE TRADE ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)
Presented at the 2025 Annual Market Discussion by
Ashley Amidon (TAG)
28 October 2025

Chair, Honored delegates and guests

Our industry stands at a crossroads internationally. Across the globe, we are navigating a period of profound uncertainty. Tariffs, retaliatory trade measures, declining consumer confidence, and intensifying regulatory burdens are creating a complex environment for those working to keep the tropical timber trade both sustainable and viable. As a result, we have entered a period of existential threat to forests, the trade, and ITTO.

Within the Trade Advisory Group these issues have been the focus of active and ongoing discussion. Today, I would like to highlight four key areas of concern that are shaping our future.

The first is Global Trade policy. TAG sees proposals and actions around the world that seek to limit market access, such as new tariffs on timber and wood product imports. Our members are deeply concerned that such measures will restrict market access, disrupt supply chains, and weaken global confidence in tropical timber. Worse still, these actions could accelerate the use of alternative, non-renewable materials in construction and design — materials that often carry a higher environmental cost than wood.

The 2025 FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment confirms that more than 50% of forests worldwide are now covered by long term management plans, which support forest sustainable management and use. Yet this narrative is not one understood by consumers or specifiers.

Frequent and unpredictable changes in trade policy, coupled with broader geopolitical tensions, are creating an unstable environment for wood and wood product exporters. This volatility makes it increasingly difficult to plan investments, maintain steady operations, and build long-term business partnerships.

The broader application of reciprocal tariffs further underscores the continuing risk for furniture, building materials, and other downstream product categories. Such measures will seriously weaken market demand, compounding existing pressures on both exporters and manufacturers throughout the value chain.

TAG urges policymakers to consider the broader implications of these policies — not only for trade, but for forests, for local communities, and for the credibility of sustainable forest management itself.

We are observing a global drift towards both higher tariffs and non-tariff barriers — and this threatens the very viability of the legal, sustainable tropical timber trade and makes diversification impossible. Forests retain their value to local communities only when they generate sustainable economic returns. If the ability to trade that timber is constrained, we risk creating incentives for forest conversion to agriculture or other land users. We urge all those involved in trade policy to think of the long-term harm that will be done to both businesses and forests if these policies continue.

TAG calls for trade frameworks that prioritize sustainable forest management — ensuring both continued market access and the long-term protection of the world's tropical forests. In short, TAG believes that good trade policy is good forest policy.

TAG would also recommend that the Trade Barriers study completed by ITTO in 2004 be revised and updated with actionable recommendations on how ITTO can help ease those barriers.

Our second concern is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, or CITES. Many TAG members view recent developments under CITES as a serious business risk.

We fully support the intent of the Convention — ensuring that international trade in wild species remains sustainable — but we also emphasize that any new tropical timber listing proposals must be grounded in sound science and developed through transparent consultation with all range states. We also remain concerned that every COP, the list of species proposed and included increases, yet there is almost no additional investment in management and scientific authorities to cope with an increased workload. This has the effect of significantly delaying or even halting trade.

TAG remains deeply concerned about the long-term direction of CITES policy and its cumulative effect on legal, sustainable timber flows. We therefore strongly urge and recommend that future CITES proposals be brought before the ITTC for discussion as was intended. This would allow member countries, industry, and civil society to provide full and meaningful feedback before decisions are finalized.

The third topic is the EU Deforestation Regulation. TAG is aware that the EU is contemplating an additional delay and urges decisive action. Uncertainty affects planning and actions by both governments and the private sector. TAG's concerns remain as they have been since the passage of EUDR in that compliance pathways are still unclear for many operators — particularly small and medium-sized enterprises and that there is a risk of uneven rollout across member states.

TAG emphasizes that effective implementation depends on clear and consistent communication, transparency, certainty, and a defined pathway for implementation and enforcement. We urge the European Commission to continue providing clear guidance, training, and capacity-building support across the supply chain.

Our shared goal should be purposeful regulation that prevents deforestation without undermining legal and sustainable trade, or penalizing those who are already following best practices.

Finally, TAG remains very concerned over consumer and specifier attitudes towards timber in general and tropical timber in particular. Combined with economic headwinds and trade barriers globally, the industry is facing a prolonged period of upheaval. We want to ensure that that prolonged upheaval does not become a prolonged decline. Therefore, TAG has decided to form a working group internally to discuss the causes of the progressive decline in the international tropical timber trade and bring recommendations to the Council in the immediate future.

In conclusion, the Trade Advisory Group remains firmly committed to collaboration: Our industry is a bulwark against deforestation, not a driver, and we look forward to working with governments, civil society, and our partners throughout the private sector to halt land conversion.

We all share a common goal — to ensure that the global tropical timber trade continues to be a force for good: a force that supports livelihoods, sustains forests, and contributes to the world's transition towards renewable, climate-positive materials. We believe we have a strong story to tell about the good forests do for both the economy and the environment. We urge members to work with us as trade policy and regulations are developed and implemented so that together, we can support tropical forests.

Thank you.

Note: TAG can be contacted at ti@itto.int

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

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REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL FROM THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

Item 1 - Opening of the Session

The Fifty-ninth Session of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF) was opened on 29 October 2025 by Mr. Björn Merkell (Sweden), Chairperson of the CRF. The list of participants is presented in Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.2.

Item 2 - Adoption of Agenda and Organization of Work

The Provisional Agenda for the CRF, as contained in Document CRF(LIX)/1 Rev.1, was adopted by the Committee. In accordance with agreed past procedures directed by Council, Agenda items 4, 5, 7, and 10(A) were considered at the Joint Session of the Committees convened on 28 and 29 October 2025. The Chairperson of the CRF proposed to organize the Session in the following order: Agenda Item(s) 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10(B), 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19.

Item 3 - Admission of Observers

The Committee admitted the observers listed in Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.3 Rev.3 as approved by the Council.

Item 4 - ITTO Annual Market Discussion - 2025

The Committees noted the summary of the ITTO Annual Market Discussion – 2025, held in the Joint Session of All Committees as part of the Trade and Markets Day on 28 October 2025, as contained in Appendix A to Document CEM-CFI(LIX)/4. The theme of the Market Discussion was "The Timber Industry Reimagined: Lessons from Market Struggles and Sustainability Efforts". Ms. Ashley Amidon and Dr. Ivan Tomaselli (TAG Co-coordinators) moderated the Market Discussion.

The following feature presentations were made during the Market Discussion (available at https://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations/):

Ms. Emily Fripp Efeca (UK)	*Promoting Sustainable Tropical Timber Products Trade and Changing Consumer Perception: A New Phase*
Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai Vietnam Timber & Forest Products Association	*Learning from Viet Nam : How to Develop Value-added Tropical Timber Industry*
Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero Cámara Forestal Madera e Industria de Costa Rica	*The Future of the Tropical Timber Industry in the Central America Region – Towards a Comprehensive Agenda for Sustainability, Competitiveness and Legality*
Mr. João Baldasso CIPEM (Brazil)	*Forest Plantations in Latin America: Contributions to Ensure the Sustainable and Competitive Global Supply of Tropical Timber*
Ms. Tullia Baldassarri INTERHOLCO AG	*The Tropical Forest Industry in Africa: Efforts to Promote Integrated Social, Environmental and Economic Development*

The Committees further noted the statement of the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) presented during the Market Discussion as contained in Appendix B to Document CEM-CFI(LIX)/4.

Item 5 - Policy Work

The Committee considered the progress in the implementation of the following policy-related matters:

(i) Monitor Progress in the Application of Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management [Activity 5, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

Adapting the 2006 ITTO Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management to African context / Dissemination and information sharing in ITTO member countries in Africa [Activity 5, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat highlighted the training workshop on criteria and indicators (C&I) held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2024, noting that its report and presentations are available on the ITTO website. The Secretariat also pointed out that further funds were needed to organize two additional C&I workshops in Africa, one for African anglophone and another for African francophone members.

(ii) Revision of the ITTO Guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests [Activity 7, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat introduced the prototype of the Tropical Integrated Fire Management Toolkit. The Toolkit's primary goal is to establish an online clearinghouse of curated existing fire knowledge resources specifically focused on tropical forests. It will serve as a single, reliable access point for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers, structured around the internationally recognized 5Rs Fire Framework (Review and analysis, Risk reduction, Readiness, Response, and Recovery).

Three regional consultants have been engaged, resulting in the collection of over 400 resources currently undergoing validation. The Toolkit focuses on practical information such as guidelines, training manuals, legislative frameworks, and weblinks to significant decision-making tools. The prototype design emphasizes user-friendliness, scalability, and optimization for various devices.

A "Contribute knowledge resources" function allows users to submit materials; however, all submissions will require Secretariat's curation to maintain database integrity. The Secretariat anticipates the first version to be released publicly in the first quarter of 2026. The Secretariat expressed its gratitude to the governments of United States of America, Japan, and Canada for their contributions to this initiative, and noted that additional financial resources are needed for the Toolkit's long-term upkeep and optimized functionality.

The Secretariat explained that ITTO leads on a new CPF Joint Initiative on "Integrated Fire Management (IFM) in Tropical Forests," with partners including FAO, GFMC, RECOFTC, and UNFF. ITTO holds a specialized niche focusing on tropical IFM issues.

Colombia appreciated ITTO's collaboration with other organizations in the fire sphere and highlighted the upcoming Call of Action on Integrated Fire Management and Wildfire Resilience at CoP30 being led by the efforts of Brazil in collaboration with FAO.

The delegate of Canada expressed support for the IFM Toolkit, noting that wildfires remain a priority for many members. In this context, Canada and the G7 developed the Kananaskis Wildfire Charter to raise global awareness on the prevention, response, and recovery from wildfire. Regarding the long-term management of the tool, Canada requested clarification on the expected contributions for its upkeep and maintenance. Canada also suggested exploring the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for maintenance and updates. Finally, Canada sought clarification on the planned collaboration between the Secretariat and the FAO Global Fire Management Hub.

The Secretariat clarified that ITTO's Toolkit is the first of its kind, and if the Hub develops a global clearinghouse, it will hopefully reference ITTO's Toolkit as a component rather than duplicating the effort. Earlier this year, ITTO hosted a side event on Tropical Fire at the Global Fire Management Hub Plenary. The conclusion of the side event recommended to the GFMH that a Tropical Fire Working Group be established. The GFMH Secretariat responded that they would like to focus on the first three already identified Working Groups during this upcoming year, before additional Working Groups are added. The hope is if such a WG is established, that ITTO will take a leading role

The Secretariat also acknowledged the member's request to incorporate references that address the ecological role of fire and Indigenous Peoples' knowledge. It was noted that regional consultants were instructed to include communities in their stakeholder advisory groups, suggesting that some of this knowledge may have already been captured. The Secretariat also noted that the volume of resources "mined" using AI was significantly greater than without its use. However, the Secretariat stressed that AI is still evolving, and some level of human screening by experts remains necessary.

The delegation of Brazil introduced the Amazon Regional Observatory (ORA), which provides real time early warning information and fire training in the Amazon, and encouraged ITTO to seek ways to work with them. The Secretariat confirmed that a link to ORA's website will be included as a resource in the Tropical IFM Toolkit.

The delegate of India highlighted the recommendations from its Country Led Initiative (CLI) presented in 2024 at the UNFF and requested that these recommendations be taken into consideration by the Council and within the Toolkit. The Secretariat reaffirmed that the clearinghouse's purpose is not to duplicate the work of other organizations or innovations in fire management. Instead, the Toolkit is designed to be a one-stop for effective dissemination of available resources to practitioners, policymakers, and communities.

The representative of Satellites on Fire stressed the urgency and importance of ITTO's Toolkit. The company introduced its early warning fire detection system which is supported by AI and satellites. The Secretariat recognized the leaps in technological innovation to address fire management needs, including the increasing number of applications available for use.

Regarding other fire related activities, ITTO organized a side-event during the 2025 Global Fire Management Hub Plenary focusing on responding to changing fire dynamics and needs in the tropics; participated in the RECOFTC-hosted Southeast Asia Fire Dialogue in May 2025 and will be a partner in the Southeast Asia Fire Mechanism; and participated in the recent UNFF Country Led Initiative on Fire hosted by the Government of Türkiye in October 2025. ITTO continues to participate in the quarterly meetings of the Wildfire International Fire Liaison Committee.

(iii) Developing and Operationalizing ITTO's Policy Guidelines to Members [Activity 8, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

a) Dissemination of the ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics [Activity 8 (b), ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat recalled the ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration developed in collaboration with several partners under the Joint Initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration which were published in 2020. The Secretariat informed that a series of virtual workshops were carried out between 2021 and 2023 to disseminate the guidelines in Asia and Latin America.

The Secretariat noted that for Africa, physical workshops have been identified as the most suitable vehicle for dissemination and that with the funds received in late 2025, there are plans for conducting the two workshops in 2026, one for anglophone and another for francophone members.

b) Support for Women's Groups with Gender Empowerment and Forest Landscape Restoration in Togo [Activity 8 (c), ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat presented a video that showcases the activities and achievements of activities conducted under a previous phase in Togo. The Secretariat informed the Committee that two Biennial Work Programme based activities on forest landscape restoration led by women will be reported at CRF59, one in Togo to be declared as completed and another ongoing in Benin, both funded by Soka Gakkai. The Secretariat concluded by noting the potential of replication of the activity to empower other women groups in Africa.

(iv) Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity / Programme document 2024–2025 in relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework [Activity 9, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the *ITTO/IUCN guidelines for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical timber production forests*, first published in 1993 and revised in 2009, are being updated to incorporate new knowledge and guidance. ITTO has engaged a consultant to assist in this process and held an expert meeting to get feedback on the first draft of the updated guidelines in Mexico in June 2025, with a second expert meeting expected to take place in Asia in the first quarter of 2026.

The Secretariat noted that under the current memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, ITTO published a brochure highlighting how the Organization's projects contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF); submitted a case study on traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technology of Indigenous Peoples and local communities for the global report on collective progress in the implementation of the KMGBF; and provided inputs to the CBD's Strategic review and analysis on their current expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity in the context of the KMGBF. The Secretariat also participated in the CBD's Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI)'s 'Global Workshop on Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative' in Korea in August 2025.

To conclude, the Secretariat informed the Committee that ITTO is currently working with CBD Secretariat to renew the existing MoU which expires at the end of this year. The Secretariat further noted that under the current MoU, funding has predominantly come from ITTO funding for the projects implemented under the ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative. Thus far, the MOU has not strengthened the Organization's ability to access CBD financing mechanisms (GEF and Kunming Biodiversity Fund). The Secretariat expressed its gratitude to the governments of Canada, Australia, Japan, Korea, and the United States of America for the funding which allowed for the work conducted under this BWP.

Following the report by the Secretariat, the delegate of Colombia noted the collaboration between CBD and UNFF and informed that Colombia participated in a consultancy under this collaboration. The delegate stated that Colombia wishes to highlight ITTO's fundamental role in promoting biodiversity conservation in sustainably managed tropical forests.

The delegations of Canada and the European Union took the floor to express their appreciation for the Secretariat's report on this topic.

(v) Cooperation and consultation with the CPF, UNFF and others [Activity 10, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat informed the Committee on its active engagement with the Collaborative Partnership on Forest (CPF) and other organizations, which allows a broader dissemination of the Organization's policy and field work and the recognition of the key role of tropical forest and tropical timber in international processes. The Secretariat highlighted the following activities undertaken in 2025:

- Active participation in UNFF country-led initiatives hosted by the governments of Morrocco (Community Based Forest Management) and Türkiye (Fire)
- The development of a new ITTO-AFoCo Joint Programme on "Advancing Nature Based Solutions through Sustainable Based Community Based Timber and Forestry Based Enterprises".
- Revitalization of ITTO's engagement with ASEAN and participation in the ASEAN Working Group (WG) on Forest Management and ASEAN WG on Forest Products Development.

Following the report by the Secretariat, the delegate of Indonesia took the floor to express the importance of ITTO's collaborative work within the CPF.

(vi) Collaboration on Criteria and Indicators for sustainable forest management (SFM) [Activity 11, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

The Secretariat informed the Committee that despite the lack of recent funding pledged for this activity, ITTO was able to participate in the Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) Advisory Group; Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire; and the FRA Task Force in further refining the definition of "forest degradation", utilizing remaining funds received in prior funding years. The Secretariat encouraged additional contributions to continue the work in the next biennium.

Item 6 - Biennial Work Programme of the Committees for 2026-2027

The Chairperson noted that the Committee was satisfied with the draft Biennial Work Programme 2026-2027.

Item 7 - Report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals
[Document ITTC/EP-60]

The Joint Session of All Committees considered the report of the Sixtieth Virtual Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals. With the absence of the panel members attending the Council Session, Dr. Gerhard Bruelmann from the Secretariat presented the report, as contained in document ITTC/EP-60 (presentation available at https://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations/).

The Sixtieth Panel appraised eleven (11) proposals. The Panel noted that:

- Eight (8) Project Proposals (73 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1); and
- Three (3) Project Proposal (27 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponent for essential revision, rated as category 2.

Item 8 - Projects and Pre-projects newly approved by EP
[Document ITTC/EP-60]

The Committee noted the following projects and pre-projects were approved under the time-bound electronic no objection procedures and circulated to member countries pursuant to Decision 6(XLIII), as

contained in Annex to Document ITTC/EP-60, following the recommendations of the Expert Panel at its 60th Meeting as follows:

Sixtieth Expert Panel

Category 1:

PD/PPD NUMBER	TITLE	SUBMITTING COUNTRY
PD 930/22 Rev.2 (F)	Ecological Restoration and Sustainable Management of the Sitatunga Valley Natural Community Park in Benin	Benin
PD 939/24 Rev.2 (F)	Generation of Fundamental Information for the Second Cutting Cycle in the Amazon Rainforest	Brazil
PD 942/25 Rev.2 (F)	Developing Silvicultural Management Models for Forest Restoration Based on the Use of Seed Trees for the Establishment of Natural and Artificial Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru	Peru
PD 949/25 Rev.1 (F)	Strengthening Governance Systems and Local Regulatory Frameworks for the Resilience and Sustainability of Municipal and Community Forests in Western Guatemala	Guatemala
PD 950/25 Rev.1 (F)	Support to Local Communities for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Mountain Forests in the Sub-Northern Region of Togo	Togo
PPD 206/25 Rev.1 (F)	Restoration and Sustainable Management of Gallery Forests in the Mono Delta Biosphere Reserve in Benin	Benin
PPD 208/25 Rev.1 (F)	Study for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Forest Resources in the Mô Plain, Togo	Togo

The Committee recommended that the Category 1 proposals be recommended to the Council for funding by ITTO donors.

Item 9 - Report on Completed Projects, Pre-projects, and BWP Project-based Activities
[Document CRF(LIX)/2]

The Committee considered the completed projects contained in Document CRF(LIX)/2 and noted that no pre-project and four projects were to be declared complete by the Council.

9.1 Completed Pre-project(s)

None.

9.2 Completed Project(s)

1) PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F) Enhancing Capacity of Local Communities and Forest Administration to Effectively Implement Community Forestry Programme (CFP) in Kratie and Mondulkiri Provinces of Cambodia (Cambodia)

The Secretariat reported that this project was initiated in October 2021 with funding from the Republic of Korea, the United States of America and Japan, and expressed sincere appreciation to all donors.

The total implementation period of this project was 39 months, including a three-month no-cost extension. The project was successfully completed at the end of December 2024. Project activities aimed to strengthen the capacity of local communities in supporting Cambodia's community forestry-based

sustainable forest management (SFM) program. Community-level guidelines on SFM were developed, approved by government, disseminated, and utilized in training programs.

One of the notable outcomes was the successful community-based microcredit and agroforestry initiatives developed and implemented in collaboration with the Community Forestry Management Committees.

The delegate of Korea expressed its sincere gratitude for the Secretariat's efforts and the Cambodia Forestry Administration's support in the successful completion of the project, and expectation that this project will continue to sustain the enhancement of local communities and strengthen the community-based forest management program.

The delegate of Japan expressed its sincere appreciation to all stakeholders of this project, including the Forestry Administration of Cambodia, acknowledged that this project, through the use of microfinance, has contributed to improving local livelihoods and conserving community forests, serving as a model for sustainable forest management, and that Japan looks forward to its continued positive impacts on the sustainable development of community forestry and the well-being of local communities in Cambodia.

The Committee noted that all requirements for the completion of this project have been met in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F) as completed.

2) PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo – Phase I (Togo)

The Secretariat reported on the satisfactory completion of this project funded by the Government of Japan, noting that expected outputs were achieved. The Secretariat highlighted the demarcation of the gazetted forest as a first step in addressing land conflicts and that outputs were in line with several sectoral policies and national programmes. The Secretariat informed the Committee that completion report and technical reports are available from the project search function of the ITTO website.

The delegate of Japan expressed its appreciation to the stakeholders involved in the project, the executive agency and the Secretariat noting that the project has implemented a wide range of activities relevant to land-use for sustainable forest management and forest conservation, including the development of a silvicultural manual and valued-added products.

The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) as completed, subject to the submission of a satisfactory final annual report.

3) PP-A/56-341B Support for Women's Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, Togo – Phase III (Togo) (BWP Activity 8c)

The Committee noted that all requirements for the completion of this BWP Project-based Activity have been met in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO. The Committee therefore decided to consider the BWP Project-based Activity PP-A/56-341B as completed.

4) PP-A/59-351 Community-Based Restoration of Cyclone-Affected Vulnerable Mangrove Forests through the Empowerment of Coastal Communities and Women in the Rewa Delta, Fiji (Fiji)

The Secretariat informed that this BWP Project-based Activity, funded by the Government of Japan, achieved its expected outputs as outlined in the project document. The project significantly raised public and institutional awareness regarding sustainable restoration of a 15-hectares of mangrove forest in Fiji's Rewa Delta. It actively involved local communities, including women's groups, through training workshops on mangrove management, sustainable harvesting, alternative livelihoods, and biogas used to reduce the pressure on mangrove fuelwood resources.

The delegate of Japan extended its congratulations on the completion of the project, noting that the project implemented a wide range of activities and expressed hope that it will continue contributing to local development in the future.

The Committee noted that all requirements for the completion of this project have been met in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PP-A/59-351 as completed.

Item 10 - Ex-post Evaluations

(A) Ex-post Evaluation Report
[Document CRF(LIX)/4 and CRF(LIX)/5]

The Joint Session of Committees took note of the report of the assessment of the forest fire thematic group ex-post evaluation on two following completed projects: PD 741/13 Rev.3 (F) implemented in Peru and PP-A/53-323 implemented in the Congo Basin.

The primary purpose was to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the implementation of both completed capacity building projects to determine the successful and unsuccessful outcomes, the reasons of successes and failures, while highlighting the contribution of both projects towards the achievement of sustainable forest management good practices.

The consultant, Maria Soledad Jaime Arteaga made a presentation before the Committee on PD 741/13 Rev.3 (F), "Capacity building for the sustainable management of tropical dry forests on the north coast of Peru" reporting that while the project was an operational success, it did not bring the expected behavioral changes due to an economic disconnect between sustainable use of natural resources versus survival needs and lack of institutional continuity. The consultant pointed out that improvements could be made to project design by stressing that projects should not be designed for implementation but rather for a transformational change. The consultant concluded that the project was not a failure but a learning laboratory, as it laid out a crucial foundation and provided a clear roadmap for future initiatives.

The consultant, Jean Marcial Bell, presented the ex-post evaluation of the BWP based-activity PP-A/53-323 "Capacity building for the implementation of legal and sustainable supply chains in the Congo Basin countries". The consultant noted that unfortunately outputs were not sustained after project completion, limiting the positive impacts of the project. The consultant suggested the creation of a post-project mechanism for follow up for future similar projects. The consultant concluded by stating that capacity building in legal and sustainable supply chains is urgently needed in the Congo Basin and suggested a remobilization and update of the training manual produced under the project.

Following the presentation by the two consultants, the delegate of Panama asked Ms Arteaga for a brief reflection on how to face the challenges mentioned in the project implemented in Peru. The consultant replied that projects need to be designed for long-term sustainability and not only for accountability. This

requires a deep understanding of political realities and scenarios for adequate planning into the future and ensuring that outcomes are assumed and continued by the project beneficiaries.

The delegate of Peru noted that project PD 741/13 Rev.3 (F) was implemented between 2017 and 2019, which was followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and inquired if that influenced the lack of project sustainability. The consultant informed that impacts of the pandemic were considered for the ex-post evaluation assessment and that the lack of appropriation of project outcomes by stakeholders was independent of the pandemic. For example, there was no posting of project publications on SERFOR's webpage nor of the good practices documented by the project for future replication.

The delegate of the European Union thanked the consultants for their presentation, noted the value of independent evaluations and inquired how the Secretariat incorporates lessons learned into project manuals and guidelines. The Secretariat replied that recommendations from ex-post help members to improve project design (a bottom-up approach that differs to other organizations), thus contributing to building in-country capacity on project formulation. The Secretariat stressed that when project manuals or guidelines are developed or updated, lessons learned from project implementation and recommendations from ex-post evaluations are considered.

The delegate of Colombia, noted that executive agencies in implementing countries are normally smaller agencies not comparable to GEF or GFC implementers, reason for which is important for national governments to create links with its implementors and strengthen governance, as Colombia is doing with the University of Tolima, which has help in crafting relevant policy.

The Secretariat highlighted the necessity of national governments' commitment to sustain project outcomes. One of the consultants suggested the use of mid-term evaluations to ensure sound project design and sustainability of project outcomes.

(B) Selection of Projects for Ex-post Evaluations in 2026

[Document CRF(LVIII)/5]

The Secretariat suggested potential thematic groupings of ex-post evaluations for 2025-2026 for Committee's consideration. The short list included the following 3 thematic groups:

Community Participation in SFM (2 completed projects)
Forest Rehabilitation / Landscape Restoration / Secondary Forest Management (6 completed projects)
Mangroves (1 completed project)

Specifically, the delegate of Colombia noted that an ex-post evaluation on mangroves would be useful, especially to explore the potential of this ecosystem for designing further initiatives for the Green Climate Fund.

The Committee selected PD 696/12 Rev.2 (F) "Community Based Restoration and Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests of the Rewa Delta, Viti Levu, Fiji", for ex-post evaluation for 2026.

Item 11 - Review of Projects, Pre-projects, and BWP Project-based Activities in Implementation

[Document CRF(LIXI)/3]

To expedite proceedings, in accordance with the Section VI of Annex A to Decision 4(XXV), the Committee was informed that Committee discussions and Secretariat updates were limited to the following projects, pre-projects and activities:

- Had implementation problems.
- Key recent developments.
- Requesting additional funds.
- Requesting extension of more than six months beyond the original duration; or
- Requesting essential major modifications of the work plan and budget.

11.1 <u>Projects and Pre-projects in Implementation</u>

The Committee took note of the status of projects and pre-projects that had been approved by the Council, as contained in Document CRF(LIX)/3, categorized as:

11.1 projects and pre-projects in implementation (seventeen projects).
11.2 BWP project-based activities in implementation (two projects).

Interventions were made on the following projects:

1) PD 712/13 Rev.3 (F) Enhancing the Implementation of Landscape Management of Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) in Riau Province of Sumatra Island, Sumatra - Phase I (Indonesia)

The Secretariat reported that this project was divided into two phases to match available funding. The project started in April 2023 with financial support from the Republic of Korea.

The Secretariat noted that the new Riau Provincial Governor signed the establishment of the new Management Coordination Board of GSK-BR as a key governance mechanism and the project's phase I activities were completed successfully by September 2025.

The delegate of the Republic of Korea expressed its sincere appreciation to the executing agency and the Secretariat for the successful implementation of this project and acknowledged the importance of GSK-BR and of its newly established governance mechanism in Riau province.

The Indonesian delegation expressed its sincere appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea and the ITTO for its continued assistance and noted that this project was designed to contribute to the realization of GSK-BR's management objective and basic functions. The Indonesia delegation expressed that this project would make a significant contribution to the development of forestry in Indonesia and hoped to receive the latest information on the funding for phase II.

2) PD 764/14 Rev.3 (F) Enabling Customary Landowners to Participate Effectively in Community Forest Management Schemes Within 6 Pilot Areas of PNG (PNG)

The Secretariat reported on the satisfactory technical completion of the project, the lack of compliance by the executive agency on financial reporting and the unsatisfactory review of the financial audit report for the period of 1 January 2021 to 19 April 2024 submitted in August 2025. Based on violation of article 5.03 of the project agreement, the Secretariat recommended the termination of the project.

The delegate of Japan thanked the Secretariat for its recommendation and recognized Secretariat's efforts to address financial reporting, stating that the Government of Japan plays great importance on accountability to its taxpayers and requested the Secretariat continue encouraging the executing agency to resubmit an audit report that fully complies with ITTO standards rather than proceed with termination.

3) PD 849/17 Rev.2 (F) Increasing Commercial Reforestation Competitiveness in Costa Rica (Costa Rica)

The Project Coordinator, Diego Camacho, made a presentation before the Committee on the implementation of the project highlighting the outputs achieved so far, including a financing scheme that combines payment for ecosystem services with a soft loan; a silvicultural package that published silvicultural manuals for selected species along with flyers on pests control; genetic silvicultural trials; and development of value-added timber products prototypes which could be sold domestically for uptake by the forest industry.

The presentation of the Project Coordinator was followed up by a video showcasing some aspects of project implementation and its outputs.

The delegate of Costa Rica expressed its gratitude to ITTO, the Governments of Japan and the United States of America, highlighting that the project has contributed to the development of national policies on timber production and marketing to support small-scale producers. The financial scheme mentioned in the Project Coordinator's presentation has been well received by stakeholders. It aims to increase women participation in rural activities, with a favorable interest rate for applicant women. More project proposals have been crafted to build on the project outputs.

The delegate of the European Union thanked the Project Coordinator for his presentation and asked about integration of biodiversity concerns within the project. The Project Coordinator replied that emphasis was given to native species in the promotion of forest plantations, thus ensuring conservation of the species. He noted that there is a positive interaction with birds and wildlife in forest plantations which has been documented but not yet published.

The delegate of Guatemala congratulated the Project Coordinator and noted that INAB has a strong collaboration with the executive agency to strengthen a monitoring system for forest plantations and demonstrate the profitability of forest plantations, he expressed interest in having access to project outputs. The Project Coordinator indicated that outputs will be posted on the ITTO website for further dissemination.

4) PD 916/21 Rev.2 (F) Pilot Sustainable Management Systems for Secondary Natural Forests in the Collective Afro-descendant Community Territory of the Bajo Calima Community Council, Municipality of Buenaventura, Colombia (Colombia)

The representative of the Executive Agency, Omar de Melo, made a presentation before the Committees on the implementation of the project, highlighting outputs achieved so far including the established of demonstration restoration plots of 35 hectares with 28,000 trees of native species; training of 50 teachers and 40 forest producers (66% of which are women) on forest landscape restoration, along with silvicultural research. The Project Coordinator stressed the active engagement of the community, who determined the species to be used in the restoration plots. A significant impact is empowering community organization with two organized groups who actively participated in the production of seedlings and the establishment of demonstration plots; and an organized group of women who have become leaders managing their own initiatives.

The Project Coordinator expressed its gratitude to ITTO, the Government of Japan and Colombia's Ministry of Environment for its support towards the project. The presentation was followed by a video showcasing project implementation.

The delegate of Colombia expressed its gratitude for the financial support of the donors for this project and to the Executive Agency for working with Afro-descendant communities to build a better future for the country. He noted that the project is supporting government policy on green economy and invited members to visit Bajo Calima.

5) PD 927/22 Rev.2 (F) Development of an Information System on the Potential of Wood and Carbon to Support Sustainable Forest Management in South Kalimantan, Indonesia (Indonesia)

The Indonesian Delegate informed the Committee that there are currently some administrative matters being addressed to facilitate the project's implementation. Following an internal coordination meeting within the Ministry of Forestry, two key actions were recommended:

i) To prepare a strategy for the upcoming Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting, which will be convened shortly; and
ii) To hold a coordination meeting with the Directorate General of Treasury at the Ministry of Finance to obtain further administrative and financial guidance.

Indonesia remains committed to resolving these matters promptly to ensure the smooth commencement and effective delivery of the project's objectives.

6) PD 932/23 (F) Assessment and Dissemination of Knowledge and Experience for Ex-Situ Conservation and Plantation of Caoba in Northern Coastal Area, Peru (Peru)

The delegate of Peru expressed its gratitude to ITTO and the government of the Republic of Korea.

7) PD 945/25 (F) Emergency Actions to Secure Forest Conservation and Livelihoods of Traditional Communities in the Brazilian Federal Conservation Unit Verde Para Sempre (Brazil)

The delegate of Brazil expressed its gratitude to ITTO and the Government of Japan for its financial support which shows Japan's commitment to the sustainable development of the Amazon. She announced that Embrapa (the executive agency) recently received an award from FAO for its contributions to sustainable forest management, work was carried out under previous ITTO projects.

8) PP-A/59-352 Community Empowerment in Forest Management and Forest Landscape Restoration in Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia (Malaysia)

The delegate of Malaysia expressed its deep appreciation to ITTO and the Government of Japan for its financial support. She confirmed that the project completion report has been submitted to the Secretariat, which will be followed by the final audit report once completed.

9) PP-A/60-367 Critical Upliftment of Local Livelihoods: Urgent Actions for Community-Based Conservation and Development in Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia (Malaysia)

The delegate of Malaysia expressed its appreciation to ITTO and the Government of Japan for funding this project. She confirmed the reception of the second instalment and stated that the project will be completed on time.

10) PP-A/60-368 Strengthening the Resilience of Indigenous Mayan Communities in Tropical Forests of the Yucatan Peninsula through the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Context of the Maya Train Project (Mexico)

A video on project implementation was presented before the Committee, followed by a brief report from the Secretariat which highlighted that the aim of the project is to raise awareness of traditional knowledge—in particular of Mayan communities—for the sustainable management and use- of biodiversity while promoting local livelihoods.

11.2 BWP Project-based Activities in Implementation

1) PP-A/54-331A Promoting Quality Timber Production in Smallholders and Community-based Teak and Other Valuable Species Plantations in the Tropics (BWP Activity 3)

The Delegate of India took the floor to clarify that the usual teak plantation rotation practiced previously in India was very high at 60-70 year rotation in forest, but now in the agroforestry sector, India is promoting short rotation teak plantations with 15 or 20 years of rotation due to improved breeding techniques that produce fast growing and high-yielding seedlings that are available for farmers to plant and receive faster financial returns on their investment.

Item 12 - Projects, Pre-projects, and BWP Project-based Activities Awaiting Implementation Agreement
[Document CRF(LIX)/3]

1) PD 944/25 (F) Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment of Potential Investment Areas (PIAs) within Forest Land in the Philippines (Philippines)

The Secretariat shared the status of this project, which was approved in December 2024 during ITTC60 and was fully funded by the Government of Japan. The review of draft project agreement was initiated in February 2025, with a progress discussion held on virtually on 4 April 2025.

According to the Philippines government's legislative process, the project agreement needs to be approved by government authorities, including the Office of the President - process which could take around 10 months. The ITTO Secretariat maintains monthly communications with the project proponent; the project agreement was endorsed by the DENR-Foreign-Assisted office in June 2025 and is currently under review by DENR Undersecretaries as of September 2025.

The delegate of the Philippines expressed its sincerest gratitude to the Government of Japan for funding this project. The delegation conveyed that the approval of the Special Presidential Authority (SPA), which authorizes the Philippines' Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources to sign the implementation agreement for this project, is still pending. In this context, the Philippines delegation requested an extension of the project duration considering the delays incurred from the internal approval process of the government of the Philippines.

The delegate of Japan noted that the contribution to this project comes from Japan's emergency response budget, thus requiring prompt implementation. He noted that a request of extension will require further consultations within the Japanese Government and asked the executing agency to submit a formal request of extension to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs through ITTO Secretariat for consideration by the Government of Japan.

Item 13 - Projects and Pre-projects Awaiting Financing
[Document CRF(LIX)/3]

In accordance with ITTC Decision 2(X), Council approved projects which have not been funded within a validity period of 20 months may be revised and resubmitted to the (Committee) Council. Failing resubmission, the Project will lose its status as an approved Project and fall under the sunset provision.

Projects with an asterisk (*) will become sunset between the 59th and 60th CRF Sessions.

The Chairperson emphasized the importance of ITTO projects to the conservation and sustainable forest management of tropical forest and local communities. He informed the Committee that 13 projects

are awaiting financing and encouraged the members and other donors to finance these projects. [All the projects awaiting finance are listed on pages 7-8 of CRF(LIX)/1 Rev.1].

1) PD 712/13 Rev.3 (F) Enhancing the Implementation of Landscape Management of Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) in Riau Province of Sumatra Island, Sumatra - Phase II (Indonesia) [$248,154.00]

2) PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo - Phase II (Togo) [$282,624.16]

3) PD 930/22 Rev.2 (F) Ecological Restoration and Sustainable Management of the Sitatunga Valley Natural Community Park in Benin (Benin) [$453,376.00]

4) PD 936/24 Rev.1 (F)* Protection and Restoration of Forest Lands for Water Catchment, Regulation and Recharge in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, Guatemala, as a Climate Change Adaptation Measure to Ensure Water Supply for the Guatemalan Population (Guatemala) [$496,959.10]

5) PD 938/24 Rev.1 (F)* Sustainable Management of Production Forests Driven by Traditional Communities in the Brazilian Amazon (Brazil) [$678,531.00]

6) PD 939/24 Rev.2 (F) Generation of Fundamental Information for the Second Cutting Cycle in the Amazon Rainforest (Brazil) [$498,400.00]

7) PD 940/24 Rev.1 (F)* Strengthening Effective Forest Area Designation and Customary Rights in East Nusa Tenggara Province as a Precondition of Achieving Sustainable Forest Management (Indonesia) [$599,555.00]

8) PD 941/24 Rev.1 (F)* Capacity Building for Private and Community Tree Farmers in Relation with the Sustainable Management of Forest Plantations in Southern Benin (Benin) [$537,712.00]

9) PD 942/25 Rev.2 (F) Developing Silvicultural Management Models for Forest Restoration Based on the Use of Seed Trees for the Establishment of Natural and Artificial Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru (Peru) [$1,061,040.00]

10) PD 949/25 Rev.1 (F) Strengthening Governance Systems and Local Regulatory Frameworks for the Resilience and Sustainability of Municipal and Community Forests in Western Guatemala (Guatemala) [$459,086.96]

11) PD 950/25 Rev.1 (F) Support to Local Communities for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Mountain Forests in the Sub-Northern Region of Togo (Togo) [$505,008.00]

12) PPD 206/25 Rev.1 (F) Restoration and Sustainable Management of Gallery Forests in the Mono Delta Biosphere Reserve in Benin (Benin) [$92,640.00]

13) PPD 208/25 Rev.1 (F) Study for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Forest Resources in the Mô Plain, Togo (Togo) [$98,000.00]

The delegate of Indonesia expressed its appreciation to the Government of Australia for providing funding for phase II of project PD 712/13 Rev.3 (F), which has made substantial progress. Phase II intends to build on the outputs of phase I and requested an update on financing of the second phase.

The delegate of Brazil noted the importance of project PD 938/24 Rev.1 (F) for food security and bioeconomy and expressed its hope for the financing of the project.

The Chairperson informed the Committee that five concept notes relating to CRF are awaiting the expression of interest and encourages the members and other donors to have a look at these concept notes and consider them for financing and full proposal development. They are available on ITTO website through the following link: https://www.itto.int/council_committees/projects/

Item 14 - Concept Notes Awaiting Expression of Interest by Potential Donors

1)	CN-24034	Building Resilience Capacity for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation by Promoting Community Forest Landscape Restoration in Kratie and Mondulkiri Provinces in Cambodia (Cambodia)
2)	CN-25035	Apoyo para la realización del "IX Congreso Forestal Latinoamericano – John Leigh Vetter", Lima – Perú (Peru)
3)	CN-25037	Enhancing Sustainable Community-Based Forestry Enterprises for Climate Resilience in the Northern Mountainous Region of Vietnam (Vietnam)
4)	CN-25038	Promoting Climate-Smart Agroforestry to Enhance Sustainable Community-based Forestry Enterprises in Sumbawa Island, Indonesia (Indonesia)
5)	CN-25039	Structural study and carbon sequestration for sustainable management and biodiversity conservation in sub-deciduous tropical forest ecosystems in the northern coastal region of Nayarit, Mexico (Mexico)

The delegate of Costa requested clarification of two concept notes submitted to ITTO which seem not to be reflected in the report. The Secretariat responded that CN-25041 is being considered by the Committee on Forest Industry, while the proponent of CN-3647 is yet to send a revised version addressing the comments of the screening process of the concept note.

Item 15 - Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026

Ms. Christiane Epse Anzan (Côte d'Ivoire) was elected as the Chairperson of the CRF for 2026. The Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for 2026 will be announced by the Consumer Caucus at a later date.

Item 16 - Dates and Venues of the Sixtieth and Sixty-first Sessions of the Committee

The Sixtieth Session of the Committee will be held in conjunction with the Sixty-second Session of the International Tropical Timber Council in 2026.

The Sixty-first Session of the Committee will be held in conjunction with the Sixty-third Session of the International Tropical Timber Council in 2027.

Item 17 - Other Business No comments from the floor were received under this Agenda Item

Item 18 - Recommendations to the International Tropical Timber Council

The Committee emphasized the importance of ITTO projects to the conservation and sustainable forest management of tropical forest, Indigenous People and local communities and recommends to Council the projects and CNs pending financing.

Item 19 - Report of the Session

[Document CRF(LIX)/6]

The Committee accepted this Report for submission to the Council.

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

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Panama City, Panama

REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

FORTIETH SESSION OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Item 1: Opening of the Session

1. The Vice- Chairperson of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA), Ms. Cassandra Price of Australia, in the absence of the Chairperson Mr. Pyoabalo Alaba of Togo, welcomed all delegates to the Fortieth Session of the Committee.

Item 2: Adoption of Agenda and Organization of Work

2. The Vice-Chairperson referred to the Provisional Agenda, as contained in Document CFA(XL)/1. She opened the floor for comments. As no issues were raised, the Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda.

3. The Vice-Chairperson proposed that the Committee take up the agenda items as listed in the Provisional Agenda. The Committee accepted this approach.

Item 3: Admission of Observers

4. The Vice-Chairperson advised the Committee that the Council had admitted all applicants, as shown in Document ITTC(LXI)/Info.3, which listed states and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations applying for observer status. This was accepted by the Committee.

Item 4: Draft Biennial Administrative Budget for the Years 2026 and 2027

5. The Secretariat referred to the Draft Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium, as contained in Document CFA(XL)/2 dated 11 July 2025, which was circulated to Members in July 2025.

6. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the 2026–2027 biennium budget had been constructed using the United Nations official exchange rate for July 2023 of USUS$1 = Yen 144.24 and that the exchange rate would not be revised at the time when the Committee considered the budget, in accordance with the Council decision at its Forty-fourth Session.

7. The Secretariat reported that the total budget for 2026 was estimated at USUS$7,102,185, a decrease of US$2,093 compared to the approved budget for 2025. The total budget for 2027 is estimated at US$7,104,278, and with no change for 2027 compared to the budget of 2025. Therefore, there is no nominal increase for the overall 2026 ‑ 2027 budget compared to the approved budget for 2025. However, as in previous years, no contingency is included in the proposed Administrative Budget for the financial year 2026 and 2027 and hence unexpected shortfalls in the budget, such as exchange rate fluctuations, inflation, delays in paying assessed contributions and unforeseen personnel change, may need to be financed from the Working Capital Reserve (WCR).

8. As per the above, the “Basic Administrative Costs” for the 2026–2027 biennium indicated a decrease of US$2,093 in 2026 and no change in 2027 compared with the budget of 2025. Costs such as separation and recruitment of staff have decreased compared to 2025 when several senior staff retired, while costs for E. Special Activities and F. Data Processing have been increased to allow for the Secretariat to increase its visibility and impact in various conferences/fora and to update some of its older IT infrastructure.

9. The “Core Operational Costs” were budgeted at US$1,000,000 each for 2026 and 2027 which was the same amount compared to the budget of 2025. There was a decrease in the Expert Meetings budget to reflect the change in the frequency and mode of meetings, while the Outreach budget had been increased to enhance outreach efforts.

10. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the assessed contributions of Members for the 2026–2027 biennium were attached as Annex III in Document CFA(XL)/2.

11. The representative of Japan requested clarification on (a) the significant reduction of installation costs included in section B of the budget as well as (b) the increase in section E "workshops and meetings". On section B, the Secretariat reported that the 2025 budget had included costs for retirements of several senior staff members and the recruitment of their replacements during that year under installation costs, while a similar situation was not expected in 2026-27. On section E, the Secretariat explained that the budget for workshops and meetings were those not included in project funding, including meetings and statistical workshops of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and also technical assistance workshops and capacity building under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to help members with the challenges of managing listed species. The representative of Japan acknowledged that the increase and decrease were balanced and thus resulting in no overall increase.

12. The representative of the European Union (EU) appreciated the clear layout of the budget and noted the lack of any major changes compared to previous years. He asked whether the proposed budget of the continued work of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) could be covered from the budget line of section E "workshops and meetings", and for more details on what kind of meetings/work was proposed for the PWG in 2026.

13. The Executive Director (ED) noted that producer member participation in the work of the PWG had so far been sub-optimal and that a primary intention of the proposed extension was to allow more consultations on the topics considered in 2025, along with other new/emerging topics. She noted that an in-person preparatory committee meeting to consider a 2026 report of the PWG could be combined with the next Council Session, and that proposed expenses would include items associated with meeting facilities such as audiovisual equipment and interpretation. The EU requested clarification on whether the proposed meeting linked to the Council session would be formal or informal, and if informal, whether interpretation would be required. The ED noted that language abilities amongst producers required interpretation at all meetings to ensure adequate participation. The EU also asked about the duration of the proposed meeting and asked if a shorter meeting might reduce costs. The Secretariat noted that some costs were fixed, hence not directly proportional to meeting length. Brazil supported a meeting linked to the ITTC and suggested surveying members to find out why they had not participated in PWG until now. She felt that regional meetings might ensure better participation, as would timing meetings to avoid inconvenient dates such as public holidays.

14. The EU stressed that it needed to know whether a proposed preparatory meeting on a new ITTA would be formal or not. The ED responded that all meetings prior to negotiations under UNCTAD would be informal. The EU also asked if it would be possible to run such a meeting in parallel to the ITTC, either by reducing the length of the ITTC session or other alternative arrangements. This possibility should be considered by Council when considering the decision on the extension of the work of the PWG.

15. As there were no further comments from the floor, the Committee approved the Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium, as contained in Document CFA(XL)/2 Rev.1.

Item 5: Review of Contributions to the Administrative Budgets

16. Document CFA(XL)/3 dated 16 September 2025 detailed the status of members' contributions to the Administrative Budgets for the financial years from 1986 to 16 September 2025, including assessments, receipts, interest charges, and arrearages in contributions. In 2025, US$1,053,999 had been received from producer members, out of a total net assessment of US$3,280,248, and US$3,492,193 had been received from consumer members, out of a net assessed amount of US$3,881,391.

17. The arrearages in contributions to previous years' budgets from producer members amounted to US$9,795,084 and arrearages from consumer members amounted to US$478,051. The amount outstanding from the present year's assessment was US$2,226,249 for producer members and US$389,198 for consumer members. The document also showed the status of arrearages in contributions affecting eligibility to submit project proposals and countries that had become eligible to submit project proposals/concept notes under Decision 4(LIX). As of the date of the meeting, there were no countries that have become eligible to submit project proposals/CNs under this Decision. Arrearages in contributions from former members of the Organization amounted to US$1,707,006, bringing the total outstanding arrearages to US$14,595,587. Madagascar and Indonesia had made payments of their 2025 contributions after the production of Document CFA(XL)/3.

18. The delegate of the Republic of Korea expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for its efforts to implement Decision 4(LIX). She noted Korea's pledge to a Cameroonian project was subject to Cameroon regularizing its arrears payments under the terms of Decision 4(LIX) and asked for an update. The ED reported that Cameroon had been contacted twice but to date no progress had been made in developing a payment plan. Efforts will continue to work with Cameroon in this regard.

19. The delegate of Japan expressed concern about the extent of arrears and requested the Secretariat to undertake strict budget control and cost-cutting to ameliorate this problem to the extent possible. The delegate of the EU shared Japan's concern and urged the Secretariat to continue to engage with members. He felt that this topic should be taken up in the discussions on a new ITTA. He also asked for more information on the extent of the problem and efforts to address it.

20. The ED summarized her efforts to engage with members on arrears, including making personal contacts and reminding members of the assistance provided by ITTO in the past. Three official reminders are sent to all countries in arrears each year. The EU asked if there had been any discussions with donors continuing to provide funding to members in arrears from other instruments. The ED responded that bilateral and multilateral funding sources and those overseeing these funds are often different, making such coordination difficult.

21. The delegate of Brazil noted that it was becoming more difficult to justify the need to pay contributions to ITTO given the lack of project funding. The ED observed that Brazil's membership of ITTO was under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which was very supportive, and that Brazil was an exemplar of innovation as the largest producing country. She added that there was currently one, albeit small, project ongoing in Brazil. The delegate of Brazil stressed that her country would continue to strive to meet its obligations.

22. The Committee took note of the discussions on the above document and urged the Secretariat to continue its work to resolve the problem of arrears.

Item 6: Current Status of the Administrative Account

23. The Secretariat introduced Document CFA(XL)/4, which detailed the status of the Administrative Account, together with estimated expenditures for the current year and new disclosures required under the Financial Rules on bid and tender processes, sole suppliers, bad-debt write-offs, approved banks and financial institutions, and matters related to the administration of the Administrative Account.

24. Document CFA(XL)/4, dated 16 September 2025, reports on the status of the Administrative Account for the financial year 2025, together with the estimated expenditure for the current year.

25. Section A of page 1 of the document shows that the estimated total expenditure for the financial year 2025 would amount to US$5,921,468. The total contributions received from both producer and consumer members amounted to US$4,546,193, and arrear payments received in 2025 amounted to US$672,476, as

of the day of the report. Together with contributions expected to be paid by members before the end of 2025, it was anticipated that a deficit in the amount of US$628,481 would accrue in 2025. This amount would be deducted from the WCR. The assessed contribution collection rate for year 2025 was 63.48% of the total assessment of US$7,161,588.

26. Section B shows that the current year's arrears in contributions amounted to US$2,615,447. Total outstanding contributions for the period 1986–2024 amounted to US$14,521,269.

27. Section C shows the Special Reserve Fund of US$2,500,000, which was to be utilized only on Council approval in the event of liquidation of the Organization.

28. Section D shows that the resources of the WCR were estimated at US$7.9 million by the end of 2025.

29. Section E shows an interest income balance of US$468,895, which was to be used by the Executive Director for hiring consultants in accordance with the Financial Rules, Rule 5(10). The document also contains details of expenditure for each budget item and where savings were to be made.

30. Annex 1 contains information required by the Financial Rules to be brought to the attention of the CFA. This includes a list of procurement greater than US$100,000; sole suppliers; bad debts that were written off; and banks and financial institutions approved by the Council.

31. The delegate of the EU reiterated his concern on the impacts of arrears on the health of the working capital reserve. He requested information on how the working capital reserve could be sustained, including possible adjustments to the budget. The ED indicated it is not advisable to reduce the administrative budget without negatively impacting the work of the Organization. The EU asked about options for addressing arrears when transitioning from the ITTA 2006 to a new agreement, for instance, to write off existing arrears for members. The ED suggested that this topic be taken up in Council due to its importance to all members.

32. The Committee took note of the above document.

Item 7: Resources of the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund

33. Document CFA(XL)/5 dated 15 September 2025 on "Resources of the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund" captured the current balance of funds under the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund.

34. In accordance with the Terms of Reference of the CFA, as contained in Decision 7(LII), the CFA shall "review the assets and liabilities of the Organization and make recommendations to the Council on prudent asset and cash flow management and levels of reserves needed to carry out its work". Document CFA(XL)/4 serves as a reference for reviewing the assets and liabilities of the Administrative Account, and this document was prepared as a reference to review the assets and liabilities of the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund.

35. The balance of funds under the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund was US$15,041,918, of which US$10,172,493 were funds committed to specific projects and activities. The unearmarked funds and the Sub-account B of the Bali Partnership Fund, which had a balance of US$137,889, may be allocated to projects/activities by the Panel on Sub-Account B of the Bali Partnership Fund, which would convene during the week.

36. The delegate of Japan requested clarification on the committed funds of over US$10 million. The Secretariat indicated that the amount included funds transferred by donors to ITTO that have not yet been disbursed to approved projects/activities.

37. The Committee took note of the document.

Item 8: Auditor's Report for the Financial Year 2024

38. Document CFA(XL)/6 on the "Financial Reports Prepared in Accordance with ITTO Financial Rules and Procedures (Annex 4)" contained two reports required to be submitted by the ITTO Auditing Standard: The Executive Summary of ITTO's Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 prepared by the ITTO Management; and ITTO's Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024, audited by the Independent Auditors.

39. The audit was carried out by Ernst & Young Japan, which was appointed by the Council in November 2017 and reappointed in November 2022 to audit the accounts of the Organization for the financial years 2022 and onwards. It carried out the financial audit for the period ending 2024 during March to June 2025.

40. The audited financial statements provided information on the financial position and performance of ITTO for the fiscal year ended 31 December 2024 (FY2024).

41. For ITTO's project accounts in FY2024, new voluntary contribution pledges of US$4.3 million were announced at the Council session, and total project cost expenses during that period were US$4.6 million from projects mostly funded prior to FY2023. Total Administrative Account assessed contribution revenues were US$7.2 million, of which US$1.7 million was not received during FY2024 and was accounted for as assessed contributions receivable (arrears).

42. The Council adopted Decision 5(LIV) at its 54th Session in November 2018 on enhancing the Organization's financing architecture and fundraising. Additional fundraising approaches were to be piloted and new streamlined project cycles and programmed themes were to be developed from 2019, in accordance with this decision. Information on revenue and direct and indirect costs associated with implementing this pilot were reported in the financial statements.

43. Other highlights included the following:

- The surplus for the FY2024 Statement of Financial Performance was US$1.5 million due to differences in the timing of recognizing revenue and expenses (i.e. the entire Administrative Budget is recognized as revenue in the year that the assessments are due, but only expenses incurred in the same year are recognized as expenses in that year's budget), and reduced personnel costs due to a number of vacancies.

- Advance transfers to projects increased by US$0.4 million between 2023 and 2024. This was mainly due to projects making more progress in 2024 and increasing funds transferred to executing agencies in accordance with respective project agreements.

- Deferred revenue decreased by US$1.3 million between 2023 and 2024. This is mainly due to projects pledged in prior years making progress in 2024.

44. Document CFA(XL)/CRP-1, "Management letter prepared by the independent auditors for ITTO management", comprises a letter submitted to the CFA meeting in accordance with the ITTO Auditing Standard and contains information on matters affecting the completeness or accuracy of the accounts and other matters that should be brought to the notice of the CFA that the auditors identified during their audit.

No significant items were identified in ITTO's latest audit. The auditors provided their satisfactory opinion on ITTO's financial statements, noting that the financial statements were prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), with no material misstatements or issues.

45. As per the recommendation at the Thirty-ninth Session of the Committee, the CFA's responsibility includes oversight of ITTO's internal audit activities and assessing the performance of its independent internal audit function. The Committee was invited to examine document CFA(XL)/CRP-2 (Internal Audit Report 2024) and assess the performance of the internal audit function. As noted in the report, ITTO's control environment and governance practices provided adequate mitigations to the most significant risks and the auditors did not identify any recommendations with critical or high ratings at this time. As there were no issues raised, the Committee concluded that the performance of the internal audit function was adequate as contained in document CFA(XL)/CRP-2.

46. The delegate of the EU appreciated the work of the auditors and congratulated the Secretariat on a clear and concise report.

47. As there were no further comments from the floor, the Committee recommended to the Council that it approve the "Financial Reports Prepared in Accordance with ITTO Financial Rules and Procedures (Annex 4)" on the Accounts of the Organization for the financial year 2024, as contained in Document CFA(XL)/6.

Item 9: Extension of the Tenure of a Senior Management Staff Member

48. The Executive Director recommended to the Committee to consider the extension of a senior management staff member (Director of Operations, Dr. Gerhard Breulmann) upon reaching retirement age in 2026 as provided for under Regulation 7.4 of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the ITTO. The recommendation was made in accordance with Rule 709 of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the ITTO, with consideration of factors such as the immediate needs of the service, the performance record of the staff member, and the availability of a suitable replacement. She noted that this would be the third retirement of a long-standing senior management member in the past two years and that the position of the Director of Operations was a key one. She requested that an extension of one year be approved, to July 2027 and said that the recruitment process for a successor would commence in late 2026 or early 2027.

49. The delegate of Japan supported the ED's recommendation and asked whether a Council Decision was necessary. The ED responded that a recommendation from the CFA would be sufficient for Council adoption.

50. The delegates of Canada, Australia, the EU, and Brazil supported the recommendation to extend the tenure of Dr. Breulmann until 31 July 2027.

Item 10: Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026

51. Ms. Cassandra Price of Australia was elected Chairperson of the Committee for 2026. The producer caucus will announce the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for 2026 at a later date.

Item 11: Dates and Venue of the Forty-first and Forty-second Sessions

52. The Committee agreed that its sessions may be held on the same dates and at the same venues as the Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions of the Council.

Item 12: Other Business

53. There was no other business discussed by the Committee.

Item 13: Recommendations to the International Tropical Timber Council

54. The following recommendations were provided by the Committee to the Council:

1) to approve the Biennial Administrative Budget for the financial years 2026 and 2027, as contained in Document CFA (XL)/2 Rev.1, in the amount of US$7,102,185 and US$7,104,278, respectively;
2) to approve the Financial Reports prepared in accordance with ITTO Financial Rules and Procedures (Annex 4) for the financial year 2024, as contained in Document CFA(XL)/6;
3) to take note of the list of disclosures required by the Financial Rules, as contained in Annex 1 of Document CFA(XL)/4, and endorse the list of sole providers and approve the list of banks and financial institutions; and
4) to approve the extension of the tenure of Dr. Gerhard Breulmann, Director of Operations, for 12 months beyond his current retirement date, to 31 July 2027.

Item 14: Report of the Session

55. The Committee adopted this report.

ANNEX V

REPORT OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG)

DOCUMENT: ITTC(LXI)/2

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27-31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

REPORT OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG)

AT ITS THIRTY-NINTH MEETING

16 October 2025
Virtual meeting

Thirty-ninth Meeting of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG)
Virtual Meeting, 16 October 2025

1. The Thirty-ninth Meeting of the IAG was convened virtually on Thursday, 16 October 2025 at 9:00 pm (JST), chaired by the Executive Director in the absence of Mr. Carlos Espinosa Peña (Panama), Chairperson of the Council. The meeting was attended by Mr. Björn Merkell (Sweden), Chairperson of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF); Dr Muhammad Zahrul Muttaqin (Indonesia), Producer Spokesperson; Ms. Masami Fukata (Japan), Representative of the Host Government of the Headquarters; Ms Sheam Satkuru, Executive Director (ED); other observer colleagues from Japan (Ms. Yoko Yamoto, Mr Hiroyuku Saito, Mr. Tomoyuki Honda and Ms. Akiho Tsurugi); and senior members of the Secretariat. Mr. Pyoabalo Alaba (Togo), Chairperson of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) was absent along with the Chair of the Council as noted above.

   Ms. Kenneth T. Almarines (Philippines) also attended the meeting on behalf of Mr. Ray Thomas Fernandez Kabigting (Philippines), Chairperson of the Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets (CEM) and the Committee on Forest Industry (CFI) who is unable to attend both the IAG meeting and the Council session. Ms. Almarines will be nominated to replace Mr. Kabigting as Chairperson of CEM and CFI at the start of the Council Session.

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 61
   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(LXI)]
      - Adoption of the Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium [Decision 2(LXI)]
      - ITTO Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2026-2027 [Decision 3(LXI)]
      - Matters Pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 4(LXI)]
   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-eighth Meeting held virtually on 26 November 2024, as contained in document ITTC(LX)/2 dated 29 November 2024.

B. Update on preparations for ITTC 61

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, already available on the ITTO website.

5. The IAG received a briefing on the provisional agenda for the 61st Session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC).

6. *Item 1: Opening of the session.* The Secretariat provided the details of the dignitaries expected to speak at the opening session and 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 15 producer members with 585 votes and 21 consumer members with 638 votes had registered, meaning that if all those registered arrive in Panama 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 29 consumer votes and an additional 4 producer countries with 82 votes). Quorum for subsequent days would still require registration from an additional 4 producer countries. The IAG noted that there was a week remaining for additional registrations to come in and/or for members not attending to allocate votes to a member that will be in Panama. Mr. Merkell noted that the EU members were in the process of delegating votes to members who would attend. The ED also noted that African members have special difficulties in obtaining necessary travel documentation due to the absence of Panamanian embassies or consulates in the African region.

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 noted that there has been no change to the membership since the last meeting of the IAG.

10. *Item 5: Proposed Distribution of Votes for the 2026-2027 Biennium.* The Secretariat will report on the proposed distribution of votes for 2026-2027. The information is available in the Annex of the Council Agenda (Document ITTC(LXI)/1).

11. *Item 6. Admission of observers.* The information on observers is listed in Documents ITTC(LXI)/Info.3 and ITTC(LXI)/Info.4. The Secretariat informed there are no new observers applying to attend this 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 Council document of the IAG report will be posted 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: ITTO Biennial Work Programme.* A general overview will be provided by the Secretariat to Council on the implementation of the 2024-2025 Biennial Work Programme (BWP), and additional presentations will be made to the Council and Committees on selected BWP activities under other agenda items, including the ITTO Fellowship Programme. The Draft ITTO BWP 2026-2027 is contained in Document ITTC(LXI)/7 (containing only ongoing activities carried over from the 2024-2025 BWP) will be presented to Council for consideration.

18. *Item 13: 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 (Document ITTC (LXI)/8).

19. *Item 14: Special Account and Bali Partnership Fund*. The Bali Partnership Fund (BPF) currently has a balance of USD 138,000 and the Panel on Sub-account B is expected to convene during the session.

20. *Item 15: 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(LXI)/10).

21. *Item 16: Reports of the Committees.* The reports will be presented by the respective Chairpersons on the final day of the session (Friday).

22. *Item 17: Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council for 2026.* The Vice-Chairperson for Sixty-first Session of ITTC (nomination pending by the consumer caucus) will be nominated, by convention, by the Producer Spokesperson as the incoming Chair. The producer caucus is to propose a new Vice-Chairperson, who, by convention, will be nominated by the Consumer Spokesperson.

23. *Item 18: Dates and venues of the Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions of the Council and the associated Sessions of the Committees*. The Secretariat informed that the Sixty-second Session will be held in Yokohama, Japan and the Sixty-third Session of the Council will be held in Africa.

24. *Item 19: Decisions and report of the session.* The draft decisions are discussed below (under agenda item F).

25. *Item 20: Closing of the session.* There was no discussion on this item.

C. Status of Parties to the Agreement

26. The IAG was informed on the current status of the parties to the ITTA, 2006. The ED reported that there had been no change to the membership since the last meeting of the IAG. There are 76 parties to the Agreement, comprising 39 consumer members, including the EU, and 37 producer member countries.

D. Status of contributions to the Administrative Account

27. The Secretariat reported on the status of contributions to the Administrative Account to the Advisory Board at its most recent meeting. 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, 11 of the 37 producer members paid their contributions for 2025, with an outstanding balance of USD 2.23 million (out of USD 3.28 million), and 36 of 39 consumer members paid, with an outstanding balance of USD 389,198 (out of USD 3.88 million). In total, 47 of 76 members paid their 2025 contributions, amounting to USD 4.54

million out of USD 7.16 million. This was a collection rate of 65%. The ED noted that discussions were underway with 3 countries in arrears on payment plans but that several others with substantial arrears show no sign of settling their debts to the Organization. This was particularly worrying for countries which had in the past been active members of ITTO (including paying assessed contributions on time) but had more recently appear to have lost interest in the Organization.

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

28. The Secretariat noted that several Council officer positions are still pending nominations. These are Council Vice-chairperson, to be proposed by the consumer caucus. By convention, the Vice-chairperson of the Council chairs the joint session of the committees scheduled on Tuesday, 28 October 2025 and the Fellowship Selection Panel. The ED reiterated the urgency for the Consumer Spokesperson liaising with the consumer caucus to propose a Vice-chairperson to the Council. The ED also noted that the Consumer Spokesperson (Ms Aysha Ghadiali from USA) was unlikely to attend the session due to the US government shutdown and a (temporary) replacement would need to be arranged within the consumer caucus. Mr. Merkell indicated that Ms. Rata Muda of New Zealand would serve as the Consumer Spokesperson for this session and that a Vice-chairperson of Council would hopefully be identified early in the session.

29. The IAG took note of the urgent vacancies for the Sixty-first Session of ITTC and also noted that four nominations each were required from the Consumer and Producer caucuses for the Credentials Committee. Three nominations from the Producer caucus (one from each region) and Consumer caucus were pending for the Panel on Sub-account B and the Bali Partnership Fund. It usually comprises Japan, the USA, Switzerland and one representative from each of the producer regions. Nominations were also needed for new Vice-Chairpersons for the Council and Committees in 2026.

30. Mr. Zahrul indicated that nominations for Subaccount B membership will be discussed during the first Producer caucus meeting at Council.

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

31. 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(LXI)]
ii. Adoption of the Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium [Decision 2(LXI)]
iii. ITTO Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2026-2027 [Decision 3(LXI)]; and
iv. Matters Pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 4(LXI)].

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

32. 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.

Adoption of the Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium [Decision 2(LXI)]

33. The representative of Japan raised concern about the potential withdrawal of US funding from ITTO in 2025 and possibly beyond, including from the administrative budget and pointed out we cannot always rely on Working Capital Reserve. She asked whether a reduction in the administrative budget for 2026-27 should be considered to take account of the potential loss of US funds. The ED noted that US's assessed contribution is around 5% of the total assessed contributions and actual funds received to the administrative account were usually about $2 million less than the approved budget and that the Secretariat has been able to operate at current levels within the amount usually

received. She expected the same for 2025 regardless of whether US funds were forthcoming and the IAG agreed that the draft budget could be considered by the CFA and Council at the level proposed by the Secretariat (which is, as usual, a zero percent increase from the previous biennium and many bienniums prior).

ITTO Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2026-2027 [Decision 3(LXI)]

34. The representative of Japan recommended re-inserting a sentence used in Decision 3 (LIX), indicating that the BWP would be implemented in collaboration with the CPF and other partners in the final draft decision to be considered by Council. This change has been made in the version of the draft Decision appended to this report.

Matters Pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 4(LX)]

35. The ED noted the progress of the PWG and the recommendation to extend its mandate contained in the draft Decision. The representative of Japan noted that we can say that the elements were finalized as the PWG report clearly stipulated, but there were still some differences of opinion on the Co-Chairs' recommendations on Elements to Consider, so was in favour of extending the continuation of the PWG but expressed some concern on the proposed costs contained in the draft Decision. Mr. Merkell noted there were still many issues outstanding for the PWG to consider, and that there had been less than optimal participation in the PWG, especially from producer members. The ED reiterated some of the outstanding issues that might usefully be taken up by the PWG in 2026 and indicated that every effort would be made to minimize costs. The proposed costs were extracted and adjusted from the PWG Roadmap approved by Council in December 2024 in Document ITTC(LX)/5.

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

i. Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LXI)]
ii. Adoption of the Administrative Budget for the 2026-2027 Financial Biennium [Decision 2(LXI)]
iii. ITTO Biennial Work Programme for the Years 2026-2027 [Decision 3(LXI)]
iv. Matters Pertaining to Article 44 of ITTA, 2006 [Decision 4(LXI)].

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

G. Other Matters

38. There were no other matters.

H. Adjournment

39. The Thirty-ninth meeting of the IAG was adjourned at 21:45 pm 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.

The full text of the draft BWP 2026-2027 can be found in Document ITTC(LXI)/7.

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC(LXI)/…
xx October 2025

Original: ENGLISH

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 – 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

Draft DECISION 2 (LXI)

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2026 AND 2027 FINANCIAL BIENNIUM

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling the Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO, Rule 3.3, which stipulates that Council shall approve and adopt the budget for the Administrative Account through a Council Decision;

Decides to:

1. Approve and adopt the Biennial Administrative Budget for the Financial Years 2026 and 2027 as contained in document CFA(XL)/2 Rev.1, in the amount of US$7,102,185 and US$7,102,278, respectively.

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INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC(LXI)/…
xx October 2025

Original: ENGLISH

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 – 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

Draft DECISION 3 (LXI)

ITTO BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE YEARS 2026-2027

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Appreciating the work of the Secretariat in liaising with Members, the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) and the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) in preparing its proposal to Council on the Biennial Work Programme for the years 2026-2027;

Noting further that activities listed in the Annex to this Decision are derived from the following: (a) ITTA, 2006; (b) the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026; (c) the four ITTO Committee Reports to the Sixty-first Session of Council; and (d) previous Council Decisions;

Decides to:

1. Adopt the Biennial Work Programme for the years 2026-2027 as contained in the Annex to this Decision;

2. Authorize the Executive Director to seek voluntary contributions from Member Countries and other funding sources to finance implementation of the activities listed in the Annex;

3. Request the Executive Director to implement and/or facilitate the implementation of activities in the approved Biennial Work Programme for the years 2026-2027, as contained in the Annex;

4. Request the Executive Director to ensure that future activities to be funded outside the core budget are formulated as Concept Notes and included in the database, or as Council Decisions, in order to assess Member priorities and donor interest and financing, prior to being incorporated into the Biennial Work Programme (BWP).

5. Request the Secretariat to continue to indicate in the BWP how each activity aligns with the Programmatic Line(s);

6. Request the Executive Director to continue close collaboration with members of the CPF and other international partners in implementing the BWP for the years 2026-2027; and

7. Request the Executive Director to report to Council on the progress in implementing the Biennial Work Programme for 2026-2027 during the Sixty-second and Sixty-third Sessions of the Council.

ANNEX

BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2026-2027 TO BE INSERTED BELOW
IF COUNCIL AGREES TO DECISION

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC(LXI)/…
xx October 2025

Original: ENGLISH

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
27 – 31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

Draft DECISION 4 (LXI)

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 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;

Noting the work and recommendations of the intersessional working group established under Decision 4(LVII) and extended under Decision 4(LVIII), 5(LIX) and 4(LX) to assess the need for negotiation and/or further extension of the ITTA 2006, as contained in Document ITTC(LIX)/5;

Further noting Decision 5(LIX), operative paragraph 4, making the virtual intersessional working group open-ended and renaming it as Preparatory Working Group (PWG);

Recognizing the need to plan for the expiry of the ITTA, 2006 by allowing adequate time and resources for preparing any subsequent agreement;

Further recognizing the work and recommendations of the PWG presented at the 61th Session of the Council;

Recognizing the voluntary contribution of Japan and the USA to date supporting the preparatory work;

Decides to:

1. Extend the mandate of the Preparatory Working Group (PWG) until the 62nd Session of the Council in 2026;

2. Request the PWG work in line with the revised Roadmap in Document ITTC(LXI)/4 to finalize the identification of elements to consider for the future negotiation based on discussions among Members and through analysis, in close collaboration with the Secretariat;

3. Request the Secretariat to post the minutes of PWG meetings, within 4 weeks of each meeting, on the ITTO member portal for transparency and awareness for all Members;

4. Request the PWG to submit a report, including all the deliverables, to the ITTC62;

5. Encourage all Members to be actively engaged in the open-ended PWG to enhance inclusivity in the preparatory work for the future negotiation; and

6. Noting the estimated costs of US$290,000 for the implementation of this Decision, request the Executive Director to seek voluntary contributions to meet these requirements, and authorize the Executive Director to use funds from the Working Capital Reserve in the absence of sufficient voluntary contributions.

* * *

ANNEX VI

REPORT OF THE JOINT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEES

DOCUMENT: ITTC-JC(LIX)/2

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC-JC(LIX)/2
31 October 2025

ENGLISH ONLY

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

JOINT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEES

FIFTY-NINTH SESSION
27-31 October 2025
Panama City, Panama

REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL

FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE

JOINT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEES

Report on JOINT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEES – ITTC 61st

Item 1 - CSAG Panel Discussion

The ITTC-61 theme of the 2025 ITTO Civil Society Advisory (CSAG) Panel Discussion was: "Advancing Sustainable Tropical Forest Management: Integrating Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihoods under the ITTA and Global Biodiversity Framework". The discussion was chaired by Ms. Cassandra Price (Australia) and moderated by Evelyn Jimenez, Office of Environment for Indigenous Peoples of the Panamanian Ministry of Environment.

The objective is to explore the growing role of sustainable forest management in achieving biodiversity conservation and enhancing sustainable livelihoods, aligned to the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

PRESENTATIONS SUMMARIES

1 **Forests in the Global Biodiversity Agenda: Insights from UNFF Major Groups at CBD SBSTTA-27.** Speaker: Fernanda Rodrigues, UNFF Women Major Group / Rede Mulher Florestal (Brazil)
- Reporting of forests in the Global Diversity Agenda needs to unify indicators at national level to respond to the diversity of frameworks but there is lack of financial resources to collect and process data, and to implement actions on the ground
- Adaptation to climate change is key in the context of forests
- SFM is key to biodiversity conservation: spatial planning (landscape approach) is very important in this context considering set aside areas and management areas
- Improve communication to larger audiences around the importance of SFM to forest biodiversity conservation as well as to promote socio-economic development and benefits were informed
- Focuses on implementation and on action that really generate benefits on the ground are key in the context of an international environment with many different frameworks

2 **International Timber/NTFP Trade and Its Implications for Biodiversity: Challenges and Opportunities.** Speaker: Karen Noboa, TRAFFIC
- Tropical forests hold 40%+ of terrestrial biodiversity and support millions of livelihoods
- 1 in 5 people rely on wild plants, algae, and fungi for food and income
- Forests are threatened by unsustainable extraction, land-use change, and weak governance
- Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) balances conservation and development
- Trade can either drive pressure on forests or serve as a solution if managed sustainably
- Unsustainable trade causes habitat loss, species decline, and undermines conservation
- Poorly managed trade reduces access and long-term benefits for communities
- Sustainable trade incentivizes conservation, supports local economies, and strengthens supply chains
- Key challenges: weak governance, fragmented policies, insecure tenure, limited capacity, short-term market incentives
- TRAFFIC tackles: illegal/unreported trade, low transparency, regulatory gaps, and pressure for cheap, uncertified products
- Solutions: inclusive SFM frameworks, certification and traceability, community-based management, remote sensing, digital tools, AI risk analysis
- TRAFFIC projects: promote legal, sustainable trade, biodiversity-friendly harvesting, and community empowerment; tools include dashboards, guides, and risk assessments
- Recommendations: strengthen governance, integrate trade and biodiversity data, scale up verification tools, promote certified supply chains, support sustainable livelihoods, reduce demand for illegal products.

3 **Global Biodiversity Framework and the role of women in Sustainable Forest Management: Cases from Cameroon, Togo, and Benin.** Speaker: Rose Pélagie Masso, REFACOF

- Women play a vital role in biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management
- In Africa, women are at the heart of agricultural activity and are increasingly involved in the sustainable management of forest resources
- Women are well aware of the importance of forests for their lives, their families, their communities, and humanity as a whole
- Source of food, income, medicine, shelter, cultural practices and beliefs, etc.
- Challenges: a lack of funding to scale up landscape restoration initiatives, which contribute to biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and improved livelihoods
- It is urgent and imperative to support rural women in their efforts to manage forests sustainably
- REFACOF has committed to planting 20 million trees as a contribution to the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and is seizing this opportunity to reach out to development partners to support it in achieving this ambitious but possible commitment

4 **Community-Based Landscape Approaches to Biodiversity and Livelihoods: A Model from Indonesia.** Speaker: Christine Wulandari, FKKM, Indonesia

- Landscape-based forest management is necessary for both humans and the environment to support the sustainability of the earth
- Evidence from the field i.e. Lampung and Aceh show that communities in upland, midland, and downstream areas have specific skills in managing forests and biodiversity based on landscapes
- The Indonesian government has regulations for landscape-based forest management from upstream to downstream, namely Multi-Forestry Business or *Multiusaha Kehutanan* (explained in Government Regulation no. 23/2021)
- Management in conservation areas is regulated in Laws 32/2023

5 **Sustainable Forest Management in Panama's Production Forests: A Model for Conservation and Improvement of Livelihoods in Indigenous Territories.** Speaker: Ramón Chiari, Forestry Directorate, Ministry of Environment, Panama

- Panama is working toward a conservation model in which production forests are managed under principles of sustainability, social inclusion, and respect for biodiversity
- The legal and institutional framework (Constitution, General Environmental Law, Forestry Law) supports the rational management of natural resources and community participation in forest governance
- Production forests cover more than 800,000 hectares, of which around 700,000 are located within indigenous territories
- Indigenous communities manage 170,000 hectares under approved management plans
- Tangible benefits generated by community forest management include:
    - Improvement of housing and basic infrastructure
    - Creation of community enterprises and social funds
    - Reforestation and restoration of degraded areas
    - Strengthening of indigenous leadership and local technical capacity
- Significant challenges: partial compliance with management plans, weak monitoring and control, and the need to strengthen technical capacities and traceability mechanisms
- The institutional response is structured through new alliances and projects:
    - Collaborative Conservation Agreement for State Heritage Forests (2024–2034)
    - GEF-8 Project "Critical Biomes – Darién"
    - Collaborative Conservation Project (MiAMBIENTE)
- These efforts integrate restoration, FSC certification, community monitoring, and innovative financial mechanisms, promoting a shared governance approach among the State, communities, and the private sector.

DISCUSSION AND INTERVENTIONS

1. The EU representative thanked all presentations that shared examples, stories, experience and so much good work is going on and heard a lot of things that the EU really warmly supports. In relation to the CBD, the big issue is with the global review of implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) that will be discussed at the Conference of the parties, the COP 17 in October 2026 in Armenia. The first opportunity is to assess progress on the KMGBF. He invited everyone to engage in this process because it can help a lot to strengthen implementation. This is not a process which finger points who is doing well and who's doing bad. It's non-punitive, non-intrusive. It's really an opportunity. From his perspective, the EU really wish to work with all parties to see how that process can also support the work under the ITTO. It was said that there were challenges with the indicators which is a difficult matter. It is expected that the seventh national report will not be perfect by the deadline of February. Based on existing materials, it should be seen as a work in progress. This system is set up not to repeat every four years. There was discussion also on an expanded program of work on forest biodiversity. There was a bit of discussion on the terminology sustainable forest management, conservation and restoration. He thought it is well understood that sustainable forest management includes conservation and restoration.

2. Canada thanked panellists for the informative presentations and European Union for the intervention. A quick follow up question for Ms. Fernanda regarding the CBD and colleague from EU who raised this towards the end of his intervention was if there are any thoughts or insights on the CBD Convention on Biological Diversity program of work and how it is seen under some of the activities of UNFF and the ITTO that are being negotiated and if there's any insights could be shared.

3. Fernanda Rodrigues (CSAG-Brazil) was very grateful for the EU's comments on this. Regarding the revision of the CBD Forest program, it will be the third revision but there is still no agreement if it will be revised due to uncertainties on what the priorities will be. She said that because there are many programs of work, some parties state that there is a need to review the program of work before revising the forest program. There is no consensus on how the secretariat should really conduct the revision - the text is under brackets and will be decided at COP 17. Regarding the interlinkage between the other conventions and agreements, the CBD is seeking to increase these interconnections between the different frameworks mainly through indicators aimed at streamlining the national reports. They already have a standardized online tool to report progress.

4. New Zealand thanked the panellists for the fantastic presentations and for really highlighting how sustainable trade and sustainable forest management complement the work of many CBD's sister organizations. She wants to reiterate, call on all members here, colleagues at home. If parties are not part of this CBD revision of the forestry program of work, she called to get in touch with them and communicate the message that our panellists have worked very hard to bring forward today powerful ways to protect biodiversity, by enabling people, and enabling sustainable trade. And that ties very strongly with our work here at the ITTO.

5. Panama agreed with the comment made by the EU and New Zealand. The delegate noted that a month ago, a meeting of the FAO Commission was held in Panama. During the meeting, it became evident that in some countries of the region (though not all), there is a clear separation within ministries between those working on forest management and those working on biodiversity. Similar situations have also been observed in countries outside the region. The delegate emphasized the importance of ensuring active participation in discussions under the CBD, given the strong connection between forestry management and biodiversity conservation. These issues cannot be treated in isolation, as sustainable forest management is integral to the conservation of biodiversity.

6. The EU representative emphasized the CBD process for the expanded program of work on forest biodiversity. What has been negotiated is an addition to the existing program. experts considered

existing progress and considered, what is missing and needed to be part of the global biodiversity framework. There is indeed also a wider discussion on how to review all the other programs of work.

7. The ITTO Executive Director was invited to give remarks. She thanked all the insights, views and thoughts, and evidence of work that's been done in the field and shared. She addressed a couple of matters that were raised by delegates from ITTO member countries and wanted to provide the assurance that the ITTO is very much engaged in reporting on the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMBGF). ITTO had submitted one report on the KMGBF implementation in early October, and this was the submission of case studies and information on traditional knowledge innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities in support of the Global Report. ITTO had probably three or four different requests to help the CBD prepare this Global Report. A recent request received focused more on collaboration and cooperation. It is unfortunate that the CBD SBSTA was being held just before the ITTC-61. Due to the Secretariat being small, ITTO could not spare any professional staff to attend the CBD SBSTA. ITTO has sent a draft ITTO-CBD MOU to the CBD Secretariat for their review. The intention was to have signed that MOU between the CBD and the ITTO last week. Unfortunately, the CBD Secretariat was incredibly occupied with the CBD SBSTA and they were unable to get clearance from their legal office in time. The MOU will tentatively be ready before the end of this year. We are also very mindful that there is a paragraph in the CBD prior to the last CoP which incorporated ITTO's inputs on the sustainable use of biodiversity and the sustainable use of forest products in order to regenerate biodiversity in either production forests or in natural forests. And the last thing she wanted to say is that the ITTO is a very active member among the 16 members of the CPF.

CSAG statement

Ms. Fernanda Rodrigues (CSAG-Brazil) read out a prepared statement to participants attending the CSAG Side Event. This statement is appended as it was presented in Appendix A.

Theme for 2026 CSAG Panel Discussion

The CSAG decided to defer its decision on the theme for the 2026 CSAG Panel Discussion. A theme will be conveyed to the ITTO Secretariat in advance of the next ITTC.

Item 2 – Policy Work under the Committees

a) Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management

1. Monitor Progress in the Application of Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management [Activity 5, ITTO BWP 2024-2025] and adapting the 2006 ITTO Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management to African context/Dissemination and information sharing in ITTO member countries in Africa [Activity 5, ITTO BWP 2024-2025].

   The Secretariat highlighted the training workshop on criteria and indicators (C&I) held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2024, noting that its report and presentations are available on the ITTO website. The Secretariat also pointed out that further funds were needed to organize two additional C&I workshops in Africa, one for African anglophone and another for African francophone members.

2. Revision of the ITTO Guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests [Activity 7, ITTO BWP 2024-2025].

3. The Secretariat introduced the prototype of the Tropical Integrated Fire Management Toolkit. The Toolkit's primary goal is to establish an online clearinghouse of curated existing fire knowledge resources specifically focused on tropical forests. It will serve as a single, reliable access point for practitioners,

policymakers, and researchers, structured around the internationally recognized 5Rs Fire Framework (Review and analysis, Risk reduction, Readiness, Response, and Recovery).

4. Three regional consultants have been engaged, resulting in the collection of over 400 resources currently undergoing validation. The Toolkit focuses on practical information such as guidelines, training manuals, legislative frameworks, and weblinks to significant decision-making tools. The prototype design emphasizes user-friendliness, scalability, and optimization for various devices.

5. A "Contribute knowledge resources" function allows users to submit materials; however, all submissions will require Secretariat's curation to maintain database integrity. The Secretariat anticipates the first version to be released publicly in the first quarter of 2026. The Secretariat expressed its gratitude to the governments of United States of America, Japan, and Canada for their contributions to this initiative, and noted that additional financial resources are needed for the Toolkit's long-term upkeep and optimized functionality.

6. The Secretariat explained that ITTO leads on a new CPF Joint Initiative on "Integrated Fire Management (IFM) in Tropical Forests," with partners including FAO, GFMC, RECOFTC, and UNFF. ITTO holds a specialized niche focusing on tropical IFM issues.

7. Colombia appreciated ITTO's collaboration with other organizations in the fire sphere and highlighted the upcoming Call of Action on Integrated Fire Management and Wildfire Resilience at CoP30 being led by the efforts of Brazil in collaboration with FAO.

8. The delegate of Canada expressed support for the IFM Toolkit, noting that wildfires remain a priority for many members. In this context, Canada and the G7 developed the Kananaskis Wildfire Charter to raise global awareness on the prevention, response, and recovery from wildfire. Regarding the long-term management of the tool, Canada requested clarification on the expected contributions for its upkeep and maintenance. Canada also suggested exploring the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for maintenance and updates. Finally, Canada sought clarification on the planned collaboration between the Secretariat and the FAO Global Fire Management Hub.

9. The Secretariat clarified that ITTO's Toolkit is the first of its kind, and if the Hub develops a global clearinghouse, it will hopefully reference ITTO's Toolkit as a component rather than duplicating the effort. Earlier this year, ITTO hosted a side event on Tropical Fire at the Global Fire Management Hub Plenary. The conclusion of the side event recommended to the GFMH that a Tropical Fire Working Group be established. The GFMH Secretariat responded that they would like to focus on the first three already identified Working Groups during this upcoming year, before additional Working Groups are added. The hope is if such a WG is established, that ITTO will take a leading role.

10. The Secretariat also acknowledged the member's request to incorporate references that address the ecological role of fire and Indigenous Peoples' knowledge. It was noted that regional consultants were instructed to include communities in their stakeholder advisory groups, suggesting that some of this knowledge may have already been captured. The Secretariat also noted that the volume of resources "mined" using AI was significantly greater than without its use. However, the Secretariat stressed that AI is still evolving, and some level of human screening by experts remains necessary.

11. The delegation of Brazil introduced the Amazon Regional Observatory (ORA), which provides real time early warning information and fire training in the Amazon, and encouraged ITTO to seek ways to work with them. The Secretariat confirmed that a link to ORA's website will be included as a resource in the Tropical IFM Toolkit.

12. The delegate of India highlighted the recommendations from its Country Led Initiative (CLI) presented in 2024 at the UNFF and requested that these recommendations be taken into consideration by the Council

and within the Toolkit. The Secretariat reaffirmed that the clearinghouse's purpose is not to duplicate the work of other organizations or innovations in fire management. Instead, the Toolkit is designed to be a one-stop for effective dissemination of available resources to practitioners, policymakers, and communities.

13. The representative of Satellites on Fire stressed the urgency and importance of ITTO's Toolkit. The company introduced its early warning fire detection system which is supported by AI and satellites. The Secretariat recognized the leaps in technological innovation to address fire management needs, including the increasing number of applications available for use.

14. Regarding other fire related activities, ITTO organized a side-event during the 2025 Global Fire Management Hub Plenary focusing on responding to changing fire dynamics and needs in the tropics; participated in the RECOFTC-hosted Southeast Asia Fire Dialogue in May 2025 and will be a partner in the Southeast Asia Fire Mechanism; and participated in the recent UNFF Country Led Initiative on Fire hosted by the Government of Türkiye in October 2025. ITTO continues to participate in the quarterly meetings of the Wildfire International Fire Liaison Committee.

15. Developing and Operationalizing ITTO's Policy Guidelines to Members [Activity 8, ITTO BWP 2024-2025].

16. Dissemination of the ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics [Activity 8 (b), ITTO BWP 2024-2025].

17. The Secretariat recalled the ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration developed in collaboration with several partners under the Joint Initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration which were published in 2020. The Secretariat informed that a series of virtual workshops were carried out between 2021 and 2023 to disseminate the guidelines in Asia and Latin America.

18. The Secretariat noted that for Africa, physical workshops have been identified as the most suitable vehicle for dissemination and that with the funds received in late 2025, there are plans for conducting the two workshops in 2026, one for anglophone and another for francophone members.

19. Support for Women's Groups with Gender Empowerment and Forest Land Restoration in Togo [Activity 8 (c), ITTO BWP 2024-2025].

20. The Secretariat presented a video that showcases the activities and achievements of activities conducted under a previous phase in Togo. The Secretariat informed the Committee that two Biennial Work Programme based activities on forest landscape restoration led by women will be reported at CRF59, one in Togo to be declared as completed and another ongoing in Benin, both funded by Soka Gakkai. The Secretariat concluded by noting the potential of replication of the activity to empower other women groups in Africa.

21. Joint ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity/ Biodiversity / Programme document 2024–2025 in relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework [Activity 9, ITTO BWP 2024-2025].

22. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the ITTO/IUCN guidelines for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical timber production forests, first published in 1993 and revised in 2009, are being updated to incorporate new knowledge and guidance. ITTO has engaged a consultant to assist in this process and held an expert meeting to get feedback on the first draft of the updated guidelines in Mexico in June 2025, with a second expert meeting expected to take place in Asia in the first quarter of 2026.

23. The Secretariat noted that under the current memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, ITTO published a brochure highlighting how the Organization's projects contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF); submitted a case study on traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technology of Indigenous Peoples and local communities for the global report on collective progress in the implementation of the KMGBF; and provided inputs to the CBD's Strategic review and analysis on their current expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity in the context of the KMGBF. The Secretariat also participated in the CBD's Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI)'s 'Global Workshop on Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative' in Korea in August 2025.

24. To conclude, the Secretariat informed the Committee that ITTO is currently working with CBD Secretariat to renew the existing MoU which expires at the end of this year. The Secretariat further noted that under the current MoU, funding has predominantly come from ITTO funding for the projects implemented under the ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative. Thus far, the MOU has not strengthened the Organization's ability to access CBD financing mechanisms (GEF and Kunming Biodiversity Fund). The Secretariat expressed its gratitude to the governments of Canada, Australia, Japan, Korea, and the United States of America for the funding which allowed for the work conducted under this BWP.

25. Following the report by the Secretariat, the delegate of Colombia noted the collaboration between CBD and UNFF and informed that Colombia participated in a consultancy under this collaboration. The delegate stated that Colombia wishes to highlight ITTO's fundamental role in promoting biodiversity conservation in sustainably managed tropical forests.

26. The delegations of Canada and the European Union took the floor to express their appreciation for the Secretariat's report on this topic.

27. Cooperation and consultation with CPF, UNFF and others [Activity 10, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

    The Secretariat informed the Committee on its active engagement with the Collaborative Partnership on Forest (CPF) and other organizations, which allows a broader dissemination of the Organization's policy and field work and the recognition of the key role of tropical forest and tropical timber in international processes. The Secretariat highlighted the following activities undertaken in 2025:

    - Active participation in UNFF country-led initiatives hosted by the governments of Morrocco (Community Based Forest Management) and Türkiye (Fire)
    - The development of a new ITTO-AFoCo Joint Programme on "Advancing Nature Based Solutions through Sustainable Based Community Based Timber and Forestry Based Enterprises".
    - Revitalization of ITTO's engagement with ASEAN and participation in the ASEAN Working Group (WG) on Forest Management and ASEAN WG on Forest Products Development.

    Following the report by the Secretariat, the delegate of Indonesia took the floor to express the importance of ITTO's collaborative work within the CPF.

28. Collaboration on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) [Activity 11, ITTO BWP 2024-2025]

    The Secretariat informed the Committee that despite the lack of recent funding pledged for this activity, ITTO was able to participate in the Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) Advisory Group; Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire; and the FRA Task Force in further refining the definition of "forest degradation", utilizing remaining funds received in prior funding years. The Secretariat encouraged additional contributions to continue the work in the next biennium.

b) Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets

1. Legality frameworks

The Secretariat reported on developments relating to legality framework in 2024-2025, including four major legislative instruments: the EU Timber Regulation/EU Deforestation Regulation, the U.S. Lacey Act Amendments, the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act of Australia and the Clean Wood Act of Japan, which are regulations geared towards monitoring and controlling the flow of timber into their domestic markets. In addition, the update also covered legislative developments in other important timber markets, namely: the Korean Revised Sustainable Use of Timber Act, Ghana's FLEGT License, as well as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The Delegate of Colombia took the floor and informed the Committee that, with regard to the upcoming COP20 CITES, there are proposed amendments that include certain species of interest to member countries, though not specifically to Colombia. The Delegate noted that, based on the activities and discussions throughout the reporting period, there has been notable engagement from the organization on this matter. In light of the forthcoming COP meeting, the Delegate inquired whether there are any recommendations that should be taken into consideration.

The ITTO Secretariat responded that one of the key proposals to be addressed during the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP) concerns Brazilwood (Paubrasilia echinata), submitted by Brazil, which seeks to transfer the species from Appendix II to Appendix I of CITES. Additionally, there are two species from Africa, namely Afzelia bipindensis and Pterocarpus soyauxii proposed by group of countries from the Congo Basin region, for removal from Appendix II. The Secretariat further noted that these species had only been proposed for inclusion in the appendix II during the previous COP meeting held in Panama in November of 2022.

The ITTO Secretariat further informed the Committee that another species from India, proposed for listing by the European Union, was not supported by India. As part of the CITES consultation process, ITTO is regularly requested by the CITES Secretariat to provide technical comments on species proposed for listings by parties before any COP. Accordingly, ITTO convened a meeting to review and discuss the comments submitted by the European Union and other proponents. During the consultation process, several members provided their inputs, which were consolidated and subsequently transmitted to the CITES Secretariat as ITTO's official comments and observations for consideration during the upcoming COP meeting. Members were informed that they may access the detailed comments submitted by ITTO for reference.

The Secretariat also noted that another proposal concerned a conifer species from Argentina. However, as ITTO's mandate does not extend to coniferous species, the Organization did not provide any comments or observations on that proposal.

The Delegate of Malaysia reaffirmed the country's strong commitment to promoting the legal and sustainable trade of tropical timber. Since 2013, Malaysia has implemented the Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS), which comprises MyTLAS in Peninsular Malaysia, the Sabah TLAS, and the Sarawak Timber Legality Verification System (STLVS). These systems ensure that all timber produced complies fully with national laws and regulations. Building on this foundation, Malaysia completed a comprehensive study in August 2025 aimed at further strengthening its TLAS. The study focuses on harmonizing the existing regional systems into a unified national TLAS, thereby enhancing legality, traceability, transparency and sustainability. This initiative underscores Malaysia's proactive approach to aligning with international due diligence requirements and reinforces its position as a trusted and responsible supplier of legally and sustainably sourced tropical timber.

The Delegate of Indonesia reaffirmed the country's commitment to strengthening its Forest Legality Framework through the Enhanced Timber Legality Assurance System (ETLAS+) - Timber Legality Verification System (SVLK+). Indonesia continues to promote the legal and sustainable trade of tropical timber through active participation in international fora, including APEC EGILAT. Key initiatives include the full implementation of the SVLK, development of the Timber Legal Area Guidance Template, and ongoing contributions to regional and global dialogues. These efforts demonstrate Indonesia's dedication to sustainability, transparency, and good regulatory practices in the forestry sector. Furthermore, Indonesia continues to actively contribute to the implementation of ITTO projects that promote sustainable forest management (SFM) and help address the funding gaps that cannot be fully met through natural resource revenues alone.

2. Certification, traceability, and transparency

The Secretariat reported on recent developments in forest certification, traceability and transparency in ITTO producer member countries, covering the period of 2024-2025. In 2025, the total area of certified forests (FSC + PEFC) in ITTO producing member countries was 46.4 million hectares, accounting for 8.5% of the world total. The number of chain of custody (CoC) certificates in ITTO producer countries was 8,674 in 2024 (11% of the world total), an increase of 13%.

The FSC certified forest area in ITTO producer countries reached 26.4 million hectares which was 16% of global FSC certified area, while the PEFC certified area reached 19.9 million hectares, accounting for about 6.7% of the world total of PEFC. Eight (8) ITTO producer member countries that have PEFC certified areas were: Malaysia, Brazil, Indonesia, Congo, Gabon, Vietnam and Thailand.

Malaysia continues to strengthen forest certification through the Malaysian Timber certification scheme or MTCS. As of September 2025, 5.78 million hectares of natural forest and about 146,000 hectares of forest plantations have been certified under The MTCS together with 387 companies holding. This achievement reflects Malaysia's steadfast commitment to sustainable forest management and responsible timber production.

The Delegate of Australia stated that Australia takes the legal and sustainable trade of timber very seriously. Australia has recently reformed its legal logging laws, which place due diligence obligations on importers and processors to assess and mitigate the risk of illegally logged timber. Under these laws, importing illegally logged timber is a criminal offense, and certification is now formally recognized. The Delegate expressed appreciation for updates from the ITTO Secretariat and key trading partners, including Indonesia and Malaysia, on their efforts to ensure timber legality and sustainability. Australia also highlighted its strong focus on traceability in timber supply chains.

The Delegate of Panama provided an update on forest certification in the country. Panama is in the process of obtaining forest certification for approximately 155,000 hectares managed in eastern Panama and the Darien region. This initiative is part of the Government's efforts to consolidate sustainable forest management nationwide.

The Delegate of Colombia reaffirmed the country's commitment to supporting forest communities and implementing a system of sustainable forest concessions. Colombia continues to work with Afro-descendant and Indigenous communities to expand access to forest concessions and promote sustainable forest management.

The Delegate of India highlighted the country's robust national legislation on legal and sustainable forest management, which classifies all timber, whether inside or outside forests, as forest products. India has long relied on the National Working Plan Code for scientific management of forest resources and has implemented felling and transit regulations. In alignment with sustainability and legality standards, India launched the Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme (IFWCS), known as

PRAMAAN, in December 2023. Additionally, India is developing tools for timber traceability and waste management, transitioning from the National Transit Park System to the National Transit Management System, which will cover all stages from plantation through harvesting and timber movement.

3. EGILAT and ITTO collaboration

The Joint Session of All Committees considered this item. The Secretariat reported the participation of ITTO in the following APEC-EGILAT activities:

- The 27th APEC-EGILAT Plenary Meeting, Gyeongju (Korea), 26-28 February 2025. ITTO presented the progress of programme in line with legal and sustainable supply chains, entitled 'Sustaining legal supply chains of tropical wood and wood products'. The ITTO has also provided an update on its efforts to support the use of sustainably produced tropical timber in domestic markets of member countries through Japan funded Sustainable Wood Use (SWU) projects implemented in Viet Nam (completed), Thailand and Indonesia (to be declared complete at this Session).
- The 28th APEC-EGILAT Plenary Meeting and Workshop on Enhancing Enforcement and Legal Timber Trade, Incheon (Korea), 28-30 July 2025. In the workshop organized by the Government of Malaysia and the Government of Korea, ITTO made a presentation entitled 'Sustainable Tropical Forest and Legal Supply Chains – Pathways to 2030'. In the plenary meeting, ITTO provided an update on ITTO's efforts to support the use of sustainably produced tropical timber in domestic markets of member countries through Japan funded SWU projects implemented in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and India.

c) Committee on Forest Industry

1. Promotion of sustainable wood use in domestic markets

The Joint Session of the CEM and the CFI considered this item. The progress of the sustainable wood use (SWU) projects, funded by the Government of Japan, implemented in Thailand (PD 926/22 Rev. 1 (I)); Indonesia (PD 928/22 Rev.1 (I)); and Malaysia (PD 935/23 Rev. 1 (I)) were reported to the Committees by the respective project coordinators.

The Delegate of Japan congratulated the Ministry of Forestry of Indonesia, Kasetsart University, and the Royal Forest Department of Thailand on the successful completion of important projects. Japan expressed hope that the results of these projects will continue to be disseminated, further promoting sustainable production and consumption and contributing to the improvement of domestic markets in both Thailand and Indonesia.

The Delegate of Canada expressed appreciation for the specific examples presented by the panellists regarding sustainable wood product markets and the promotion of sustainable wood use in domestic markets. Canada emphasized that this remains a national priority and encouraged the Secretariat and Council members to continue building on the work of existing initiatives, such as the Forest and Climate Leaders Partnership. The Delegate noted that at COP30 in Belem, Canada will co-chair the Forest Pavilion, which will address issues highlighted in the case studies and presentations, and looks forward to engaging with Council members during the event.

The Delegate of Korea expressed sincere thanks to the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the project in Malaysia. Korea looks forward to the project's effectiveness in enhancing and diversifying domestic consumption and promoting local markets for sustainable wood and wood products.

The Indonesian Delegate reiterated its strong commitment in implementing and sustainably developing the legality frameworks and Forest and timber certification and traceability by SVLK+. Indonesia has demonstrated a strong commitment to APEC EGILAT forum through several concrete actions, including the implementation of the Timber Legality Verification System (SVLK+), participation in the development of the Timber Legality Guidance Template for Indonesia, and active contributions to APEC EGILAT meetings. Indonesia affirms its commitment to good regulatory practices, including in the forestry sector, to support sustainability and competitiveness. Furthermore, Indonesia has actively contributed in implementing ITTO Project to support SFM and to fill the funding gap due to budget limitation of the government budget

The committees take note of the views expressed and will reflect the agreed and will reflect all the results and updates on this policy work area.

Item 3 - Annual Market Discussion 2025

The theme of the 2025 Annual Market Discussion organized by the ITTO Trade Advisory Group (TAG) was: "The Timber Industry Reimagined: Lessons from Market Struggles and Sustainability Efforts". The Market Discussion was chaired by Ms. Ashley Amidon and Dr. Ivan Tomaselli (TAG Co-Coordinators).

The speakers, and the titles of their presentations, were as follows:

Ms. Emily Fripp Efeca (UK)	*Promoting Sustainable Tropical Timber Products Trade and Changing Consumer Perception: A New Phase*
Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai Vietnam Timber & Forest Products Association	*Learning from Viet Nam : How to Develop Value-added Tropical Timber Industry*
Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero Cámara Forestal Madera e Industria de Costa Rica	*The Future of the Tropical Timber Industry in the Central America Region – Towards a Comprehensive Agenda for Sustainability, Competitiveness and Legality*
Mr. João Baldasso CIPEM (Brazil)	*Forest Plantations in Latin America: Contributions to Ensure the Sustainable and Competitive Global Supply of Tropical Timber*
Ms. Tullia Baldassarri INTERHOLCO AG	*The Tropical Forest Industry in Africa: Efforts to Promote Integrated Social, Environmental and Economic Development*

The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer session with members of the Council. Following the event, Ms. Ashley Amidon (TAG Co-Coordinator) presented the TAG Statement (Appendix B). Presentations made during the 2025 ITTO Annual Market Discussion and the TAG Statement are available at http://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations.

Summary of presentations

Ms. Emily Fripp, Director, Experts in Sustainable Forest & Agricultural Advice (Efeca), UK
Promoting Sustainable Tropical Timber Products Trade and Changing Consumer Perception: A New Phase

Emily Fripp, the founder and Director of Efeca, provided a reflection on the current status and trends and the global tropical timber market. She also offered thoughts on the broader, evolving landscape of forest-related markets, consumers and the opportunities and challenges that this brings.

To begin with she flagged that forestry is no longer about timber, forests play a fundamental role in managing the earth's climate, nature and biodiversity while providing an income for local communities, businesses and the global economy. This presents both opportunities and challenges for the international forestry sector.

"Today, the sector is facing complex geo-political issues and uncertainty. However, the tropical timber trade is a resilient and adaptable sector. It survived three major economic shocks and many tropical producer countries remain value-added players in the export trade. The sector's ability to adapt will become increasingly important".

Tropical timber production is increasingly supplied by plantations, with natural forest supply predicted to decline further. Smallholders and agroforestry systems will become increasingly important given the limited possibilities for expansion of large-scale plantations.

Forest managers, producers, regulators and local communities operate in an increasingly complicated, evolving landscape. This has driven a change from a focus where forest value was placed solely on timber and forest products. Now there is growing recognition of the holistic nature of forests, the many services they provide, and the numerous actors involved. This adds to the complexity of our operating space, bringing with it challenges, but equally huge opportunities.

Success in meeting future challenges will hinge on five pillars of innovation; Financial, leveraging public and/or private finance to be invested within the forestry sector; Social, multi-stakeholder collaboration, including co-creation processes to create contextual solutions; Policy development and implementation at different levels for example by embracing overarching goals and guidelines and Compliance with governance and institutional mechanisms and technological advances.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai
Vice President and Secretary General, Vietnam Timber & Forest Product Association (VIFOREST), Viet Nam
Learning from Viet Nam: How to Develop Value-added Tropical Timber Industry

In his presentation, Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai, distilled key lessons from Viet Nam's experience that can inform other tropical countries in their efforts to develop a sustainable, efficient and high-value timber industry.

He pointed out that Viet Nam, once widely criticised for overexploiting its natural forests, has achieved a remarkable transition from dependence on domestic natural forests to sustainable plantation forestry and from being a raw material exporter to becoming one of the world's leading suppliers of value-added wood products.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment the value of wood and wood product exports in the first six months of 2025 reached US$8.21 billion, an increase of almost 9% compared to the same period in 2024.

To advance, Viet Nam is developing its timber industry to be sustainable, efficient and high-value by focusing on advanced technology, improving the legal timber supply chain and shifting to higher-value production.

Key strategies include increasing the use of legal and certified timber, modernising processing facilities, boosting domestic production and promoting research and design to meet international market needs. Viet Nam is increasing plantation areas and fostering private and community-based plantations.

Mr. Jaime Sotela Montero, President, Cámara Forestal Madera e Industria de Costa Rica (CFMI), Costa Rica
The Future of the Tropical Timber Industry in the Central America Region – Towards a Comprehensive Agenda for Sustainability, Competitiveness and Legality

The tropical timber industry in Central America is facing a historic turning point. Natural tropical forests and forest plantations represent an ecological, social and economic asset of great strategic value. However, their continued existence depends on the ability of the region's countries to harmonize sustainable use with competitiveness and trade transparency, Mr. Montero said.

Central American countries have made progress in forest governance, sustainable forest management, certification, traceability and responsible trade systems. Some have modern legal frameworks and recognised certification while others face informal markets and weak oversight.

To overcome this scenario a regional vision is required where legality, sustainability, traceability and profitability coexist under the same value logic. The challenge is also cultural, repositioning tropical timber as a material of the future associated with the bio-economy and green construction.

The State has an essential role as a guarantor of forest sustainability and in this regard, Costa Rica is seeking a model of institutional coordination and public policy aimed at sustainable public procurement and developing the 'green economy', improving competitiveness, innovation and added value production and creating public-private partnerships and international cooperation.

Mr. João Baldasso
Center for Wood Producing and Exporting Industries of the State of Mato Grosso (CIPEM) (Brazil)
Forest Plantations in Latin America: Contributions to Ensure the Sustainable and Competitive Global Supply of Tropical Timber

Mr. Baldasso began his presentation with an explanation of the structure and objectives of CIPEM, the Mato Grosso Timber Production and Export Industries Center, which brings together eight forest-based employers' unions (523 individual companies).

The aim of CIPEM is to organise and strengthen the forest sector in Mato Grosso and throughout Brazil. CIPEM is at vanguard of sustainable forest management in Brazil, and it sees a huge potential in exploiting medium and low-density Amazonian species that are currently ignored by the market. Baldasso asserted that the Amazon region offers the opportunity to develop profitable and ecologically sound forest plantations, focusing on its native species.

In 2024 Brazil's forestry exports generated approximately US$17 billion of this US$11 billion came from plantation forest pulp. The forest sector in Brazil today is dominated by plantations. Eucalyptus and pine are the major drivers of wood exports with the pulp and paper industries being key consumers. Over the past 30 years forest plantation productivity has nearly doubled with a lower cost base in Brazil compared to some traditional exporters thereby providing a significant competitive advantage.

The presentation includes a wealth of statistics and data on the distribution of plantations, species and end uses. He determined that the adoption of forest certification and compliance with legal frameworks are essential for market access.

The area of forest plantations in Brail continues to expand. Currently there are around 10 million hectares and in 10 years this is forecast to grow to 15-16 million hectares with an investment of US$70 billion and the potential creation of about 200,000 job s in rural areas.

As the area of plantations expand there needs to be a parallel expansion of processing capacity and development of an efficient physical infrastructure.

Baldasso recommended that to build on the success so far achieved it would be advisable to focus on productivity and prioritise plantations located close to domestic markets, integrate plantations for energy production with agro-industrial end users, strengthen legality, traceability and certification, mobilise green finance and invest in R&D to improve genetics, forestry techniques and product development.

Ms. Tullia Baldassarri, Communication and Marketing, INTERHOLCO AG, Switzerland
The Tropical Forest Industry in Africa: Efforts to Promote Integrated Social, Environmental and Economic Development

Ms. Baldassarri introduced the company she represents, Interholco, a supplier of 'Sustainable Hardwood – Made in Africa'. She explained the company manages a 1.16-million-hectare forest concession in the Republic of Congo which is FSC and PAFC certified.

The industry in Congo, she explained, has been challenged to achieve the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', (Industry 4.0) to be advanced by analytics, automation and advanced manufacturing technology backed-up by skill up-grading. This, says Ms. Baldassarri, can elevate the 'Made in Africa' brand.

To close the loop the timber sector needs allies linking achievements in the forest with external expectations, not to just to legitimise what companies do but to understand where and when they meet external expectations for social, environmental, economic and regulatory performance and compliance.

She added that when wood is harvested for the common good it becomes an agent of innovation and that social innovations emerge from interactions among stakeholders to construct solutions to social needs.

She said, for the future there are three milestones to be met: a halt in deforestation, restoration of degraded forests and continued promotion of sustainable forest management.

In conclusion Ms. Baldassarri quoted the following she attributed to Dr. Qu Dongyu, Director General FAO of the United Nations, "Protecting, Restoring and Managing forests are cost-effective options to provide multiple benefits for both people and planet".

Discussion and interventions
The delegation from Colombia made an intervention, asking the panellists how to overcome challenges related to engaging forest communities and sustaining income. Colombia is consolidating its forest economy and linking it with biodiversity and is concerned that due to a long delay (7+ years) before timber yields income that they will be replaced with non-timber forest products that are needed for short-term livelihood. The delegate asked how local communities can be motivated and supported in maintaining forest-based livelihoods, especially in remote areas like the Congo Basin.

Mr. Jaime Montero explained that success is based on three main factors: Environmental services payments since the 1990s provide continuous cash flow to forest users, established by national law and not dependent on external donors, Promotion of agroforestry and diversified forest supply chains with private sector participation, and Private partnerships between forest owners and companies facilitate deforestation control and sustainable procurement. He also emphasized planning reforms carefully to prevent land-use conflicts.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai explained that forest protection is linked to food security — when people have enough food, they stop shifting cultivation. Vietnam is now a leading rice exporter, which allows focus on forest protection and many farmers have diversified their livelihoods. He also added that Vietnam receives USD 150 million annually for forest communities from hydropower and ecotourism users. This has resulted in successful forest regeneration and reduced deforestation.

Ms. Tullia Baldassarri highlighted participatory approaches in forest concessions, especially related to Indigenous and local peoples, who are consulted under Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles. Engagement begins two years before logging to prevent conflicts. Grievance mechanisms exist and communities choose their own local benefit projects.

The delegate from Malaysia made an intervention focused on the trade-offs between forest carbon and sustainable forest management (SFM). There is a concern that Carbon markets currently yield less revenue than traditional forest-based industries, and asked panellists' views on balancing both.

Ms. Emily Fripp noted that carbon should be an additional income source, not a replacement. She also noted that opportunities exist at national, plantation, and smallholder levels (especially through agroforestry). She also placed an emphasis on credibility and robust MRV (monitoring, reporting, verification) systems.

Mr. Jaime Montero noted that an optimal model combines SFM revenues + carbon markets to ensure steady cash flow. He noted that relying only on carbon income is unsustainable.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai noted that carbon trade and wood trade should complement each other, and he warned against overpromising profits from carbon credits. Vietnam earned USD 50 million from its first carbon credit sale via the World Bank but urges patience.

The delegate from China commended Vietnam and suggested deeper China–Vietnam collaboration through ITTO and trade frameworks (e.g., ASEAN, SAP). They also supported expansion of the BMIC (Bamboo and Forest Products Market Information Center) initiative for reducing small enterprise costs. The also praised African forest initiatives and expressed interest in sharing best practices.

Mr. Ngo Sy Hoai agreed and called for understanding from the U.S. and noted that developing countries supply quality furniture to U.S. consumers.

The First Women's Network made an intervention, thanking Mr. Joel Baldasso for supporting gender inclusion. They cited a mentorship program for 300 women in Brazil's forest sector and noted that women now represent 18% of the workforce. They also emphasized importance of equity and inclusion, not just participation numbers.

The Republic of Korea's made an intervention which highlighted the need for traceability and legal timber systems and introduced Korea's DNA-based verification system to detect illegal timber. They also called for education, infrastructure, and information exchange among ITTO members.

The European Union's made an intervention, explaining the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) proposal context and recent delay due to IT system capacity concerns. The EU aims for a smooth rollout rather than premature launch. They also Introduced new EU initiatives for biodiversity credits, complementing carbon markets and promoting investment in biodiversity protection.

Ms. Ashley Amidon as moderator thanked all participants, noting lively exchanges and constructive ideas on forest sustainability, community livelihoods, and balancing environmental and economic priorities.

Trade statement

Ms. Ashley Amidon (TAG) read out a prepared statement to participants attending the Market Discussion. This statement is appended as it was presented in Appendix B.

Theme for 2026 Annual market discussion

The Trade Advisory Group (TAG) decided to defer its decision on the theme for the 2026 Annual Market Discussion. A theme will be conveyed to the ITTO Secretariat in advance of the next ITTC.

Item 4 - Report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal for Project Proposals
Document ITTC/EP - 60]

The Joint Session of All Committees considered the report of the Sixtieth Virtual Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals. With the absence of the panel members attending the Council Session, Dr. Gerhard Bruelmann from the Secretariat presented the report, as contained in document ITTC/EP-60 (presentation available at https://www.itto.int/ittc-61/presentations/).

The Sixtieth Panel appraised eleven (11) proposals. The Panel noted that:

- Eight (8) Project Proposals (73 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1); and
- Three (3) Project Proposal (27 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponent for essential revision, rated as category 2.

Item 5 - **Report of the Ex-post Evaluation Reports** [Document CRF(LIX/4)], [Document CRF(LIX/5)]

The Joint Session of Committees took note of the report of the assessment of the forest fire thematic group ex-post evaluation on two following completed projects: PD 741/13 Rev.3 (F) implemented in Peru and PP-A/53-323 implemented in the Congo Basin.

The primary purpose was to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the implementation of both completed capacity building projects to determine the successful and unsuccessful outcomes, the reasons of successes and failures, while highlighting the contribution of both projects towards the achievement of sustainable forest management good practices.

The consultant, Maria Soledad Jaime Arteaga made a presentation before the Committee on PD 741/13 Rev.3 (F), “Capacity building for the sustainable management of tropical dry forests on the north coast of Peru” reporting that while the project was an operational success, it did not bring the expected behavioral changes due to an economic disconnect between sustainable use of natural resources versus survival needs and lack of institutional continuity. The consultant pointed out that improvements could be made to project design by stressing that projects should not be designed for implementation but rather for a transformational change. The consultant concluded that the project was not a failure but a learning laboratory, as it laid out a crucial foundation and provided a clear roadmap for future initiatives.

The consultant, Jean Marcial Bell, presented the ex-post evaluation of the BWP based-activity PP-A/53-323 “Capacity building for the implementation of legal and sustainable supply chains in the Congo Basin countries”. The consultant noted that unfortunately outputs were not sustained after project completion, limiting the positive impacts of the project. The consultant suggested the creation of a post-project mechanism for follow up for future similar projects. The consultant concluded by stating that capacity building in legal and sustainable supply chains is urgently needed in the Congo Basin and suggested a remobilization and update of the training manual produced under the project.

Following the presentation by the two consultants, the delegate of Panama asked Ms Arteaga for a brief reflection on how to face the challenges mentioned in the project implemented in Peru. The consultant replied that projects need to be designed for long-term sustainability and not only for accountability. This requires a deep understanding of political realities and scenarios for adequate planning into the future and ensuring that outcomes are assumed and continued by the project beneficiaries.

The delegate of Peru noted that project PD 741/13 Rev.3 (F) was implemented between 2017 and 2019, which was followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and inquired if that influenced the lack of project sustainability. The consultant informed that impacts of the pandemic were considered for the ex-post evaluation assessment and that the lack of appropriation of project outcomes by stakeholders was independent of the pandemic. For example, there was no posting of project publications on SERFOR's webpage nor of the good practices documented by the project for future replication.

The delegate of the European Union thanked the consultants for their presentation, noted the value of independent evaluations and inquired how the Secretariat incorporates lessons learned into project manuals and guidelines. The Secretariat replied that recommendations from ex-post help members to improve project design (a bottom-up approach that differs to other organizations), thus contributing to building in-country capacity on project formulation. The Secretariat stressed that when project manuals or guidelines are developed or updated, lessons learned from project implementation and recommendations from ex-post evaluations are considered.

The delegate of Colombia, noted that executive agencies in implementing countries are normally smaller agencies not comparable to GEF or GFC implementers, reason for which is important for national governments to create links with its implementors and strengthen governance, as Colombia is doing with the University of Tolima, which has help in crafting relevant policy.

The Secretariat highlighted the necessity of national governments' commitment to sustain project outcomes. One of the consultants suggested the use of mid-term evaluations to ensure sound project design and sustainability of project outcomes.

Item 6 - **Other Business**

The Joint Session of All Committees took note presentations of two private sectors from Peru (Arena Verde and La Selva), under the theme: "Sowing the Future Together - Opportunities for land restoration and commercial forest plantations in conjunction with large-scale agro-industrial crops".

Arena Verde Arena Verde is a carbon-neutral agricultural company, due to its offsetting actions, developed a plantation project for high-value commercial species in the north coast of Peru, especially in the Lambayeque Region (Morrope). The company has more than 2000 hectares of additional land available for mahogany and other timber species in an area adjacent to its forest reserve and its agricultural operations. The project demonstrates a balance between agricultural operations, the forest of native species of the north coast, and high-value commercial timber species.

La Selva, as the implementing agency, made a presentation of an ITTO project PD932/23 (F) entitled 'Assessment and dissemination of knowledge and experiences for ex-situ conservation and plantation of Caoba (Swietenia macrophylla; King) in Northern Coastal Area, Peru. The Caoba, which grows in the tropical rainforest, is of great commercial value, but is now listed as an endangered species on CITES by illegal logging and forest pests. This project was designed to prepare the foundation necessary to address the endangerment and increase its utilization. The biggest achievement of this project is to create and distribute reports that systematize knowledge and experience through successful case analysis, and it is expected that this will help expand investment for the ex-situ conservation and utilization of Caoba in the mid to long term period.

Appendix A

Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) Statement to the ITTO 61st Council

Securing a Future for Forests and People

Honourable Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Secretariat, and Colleagues,

As the International Tropical Timber Council convenes in Panama, at a moment when the Preparatory Working Group advances the roadmap for a successor to the ITTA (following its extension to 2029), we face a defining opportunity. The ITTO can now align its mission with the urgency of the climate, biodiversity, and equity crises. CSAG affirms that a sustainable tropical timber trade is indispensable—but only if it is intrinsically tied to the health of natural forests, the rights and security of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), including Women and Youth, and transparent governance.

1. Safeguarding Natural Forest Integrity
Natural tropical forests are irreplaceable. CSAG calls on ITTO to reaffirm Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in natural forests as the core of its mandate and to channel the new financing architecture toward strengthening these systems. The Council should ensure that a majority of funds directly support SFM and community-led conservation, and that Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets are embedded in ITTO's Strategic Action Plan.

2. Advancing Rights, Equity, and Local Livelihoods
Securing IPLC including rural women tenure and participation is the most effective safeguard against deforestation. CSAG urges the Council to adopt Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) as a non-negotiable prerequisite for all ITTO-funded activities and to establish a dedicated funding window for IPLC and women-led enterprises within the Programme Line on Forest Landscape Restoration and Resilient Livelihoods.

3. Ensuring Transparent and Credible Markets
Global timber and NTFP markets demand traceability and accountability. CSAG calls for public disclosure of key project and concession data, the creation of a joint CSAG–TAG mechanism to address deforestation-free supply chains, and the co-design of the Annual Market Discussion to include women- and community-led enterprises as central actors in legality and sustainability.

4. Strengthening ITTO's Effectiveness for 2030 and Beyond
Predictable financing, robust monitoring, participatory and inclusive governance remain critical. The forthcoming Successor ITTA must embed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), establish measurable targets for expanding natural forest areas under community-led, sustainable, and legal management, and position ITTO at the vanguard of integrating forests into global climate, biodiversity, gender justice and human-rights goals.

In closing, tropical forests stand at a crossroads. The trade in sustainably managed tropical timber can be a cornerstone of climate and biodiversity solutions—if it unites ecological integrity, social equity, and responsible markets. CSAG stands ready to work with all Members to ensure this Council marks a true turning point toward a stronger, more equitable, and strategically future-focused ITTO.

Thank you.

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APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF THE TRADE ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)
Presented at the 2025 Annual Market Discussion by
Ashley Amidon (TAG)
28 October 2025

Chair, Honored delegates and guests

Our industry stands at a crossroads internationally. Across the globe, we are navigating a period of profound uncertainty. Tariffs, retaliatory trade measures, declining consumer confidence, and intensifying regulatory burdens are creating a complex environment for those working to keep the tropical timber trade both sustainable and viable. As a result, we have entered a period of existential threat to forests, the trade, and ITTO.

Within the Trade Advisory Group these issues have been the focus of active and ongoing discussion. Today, I would like to highlight four key areas of concern that are shaping our future.

The first is Global Trade policy. TAG sees proposals and actions around the world that seek to limit market access, such as new tariffs on timber and wood product imports. Our members are deeply concerned that such measures will restrict market access, disrupt supply chains, and weaken global confidence in tropical timber. Worse still, these actions could accelerate the use of alternative, non-renewable materials in construction and design — materials that often carry a higher environmental cost than wood.

The 2025 FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment confirms that more than 50% of forests worldwide are now covered by long term management plans, which support forest sustainable management and use. Yet this narrative is not one understood by consumers or specifiers.

Frequent and unpredictable changes in trade policy, coupled with broader geopolitical tensions, are creating an unstable environment for wood and wood product exporters. This volatility makes it increasingly difficult to plan investments, maintain steady operations, and build long-term business partnerships.

The broader application of reciprocal tariffs further underscores the continuing risk for furniture, building materials, and other downstream product categories. Such measures will seriously weaken market demand, compounding existing pressures on both exporters and manufacturers throughout the value chain.

TAG urges policymakers to consider the broader implications of these policies — not only for trade, but for forests, for local communities, and for the credibility of sustainable forest management itself.

We are observing a global drift towards both higher tariffs and non-tariff barriers — and this threatens the very viability of the legal, sustainable tropical timber trade and makes diversification impossible. Forests retain their value to local communities only when they generate sustainable economic returns. If the ability to trade that timber is constrained, we risk creating incentives for forest conversion to agriculture or other land users. We urge all those involved in trade policy to think of the long-term harm that will be done to both businesses and forests if these policies continue.

TAG calls for trade frameworks that prioritize sustainable forest management — ensuring both continued market access and the long-term protection of the world's tropical forests. In short, TAG believes that good trade policy is good forest policy.

TAG would also recommend that the Trade Barriers study completed by ITTO in 2004 be revised and updated with actionable recommendations on how ITTO can help ease those barriers.

Our second concern is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, or CITES. Many TAG members view recent developments under CITES as a serious business risk.

We fully support the intent of the Convention — ensuring that international trade in wild species remains sustainable — but we also emphasize that any new tropical timber listing proposals must be grounded in sound science and developed through transparent consultation with all range states. We also remain concerned that every COP, the list of species proposed and included increases, yet there is almost no additional investment in management and scientific authorities to cope with an increased workload. This has the effect of significantly delaying or even halting trade.

TAG remains deeply concerned about the long-term direction of CITES policy and its cumulative effect on legal, sustainable timber flows. We therefore strongly urge and recommend that future CITES proposals be brought before the ITTC for discussion as was intended. This would allow member countries, industry, and civil society to provide full and meaningful feedback before decisions are finalized.

The third topic is the EU Deforestation Regulation. TAG is aware that the EU is contemplating an additional delay and urges decisive action. Uncertainty affects planning and actions by both governments and the private sector. TAG's concerns remain as they have been since the passage of EUDR in that compliance pathways are still unclear for many operators — particularly small and medium-sized enterprises and that there is a risk of uneven rollout across member states.

TAG emphasizes that effective implementation depends on clear and consistent communication, transparency, certainty, and a defined pathway for implementation and enforcement. We urge the European Commission to continue providing clear guidance, training, and capacity-building support across the supply chain.

Our shared goal should be purposeful regulation that prevents deforestation without undermining legal and sustainable trade, or penalizing those who are already following best practices.

Finally, TAG remains very concerned over consumer and specifier attitudes towards timber in general and tropical timber in particular. Combined with economic headwinds and trade barriers globally, the industry is facing a prolonged period of upheaval. We want to ensure that that prolonged upheaval does not become a prolonged decline. Therefore, TAG has decided to form a working group internally to discuss the causes of the progressive decline in the international tropical timber trade and bring recommendations to the Council in the immediate future.

In conclusion, the Trade Advisory Group remains firmly committed to collaboration: Our industry is a bulwark against deforestation, not a driver, and we look forward to working with governments, civil society, and our partners throughout the private sector to halt land conversion.

We all share a common goal — to ensure that the global tropical timber trade continues to be a force for good: a force that supports livelihoods, sustains forests, and contributes to the world's transition towards renewable, climate-positive materials. We believe we have a strong story to tell about the good forests do for both the economy and the environment. We urge members to work with us as trade policy and regulations are developed and implemented so that together, we can support tropical forests.

Thank you.

Note: TAG can be contacted at ti@itto.int

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