



The World Summit on Food Security

With more than one billion people now suffering hunger, the international community met to reverse the situation and set the world on a path to achieving the realization of the right to adequate food.

The World Summit on Food Security took place at FAO headquarters in Rome from 16 to 18 November 2009 and brought together over 4 700 delegates from 180 countries, including 60 Heads of State and Government as well as representatives of governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs, the private sector and the media. Delegates met throughout the Summit both for a High-level Segment and for a series of four round tables, which addressed the following topics: minimizing the negative impact of the food, economic and financial crises on world food security; implementation of the reform of global governance of food security; climate change adaptation and mitigation; challenges for agriculture and food

security; and measures to enhance global food security, including rural development, smallholder farmers and trade considerations.

World leaders unanimously adopted a declaration pledging renewed commitment to eradicate hunger from the face of the Earth sustainably and at the earliest date.

Countries also agreed to work to reverse the decline in domestic and international funding for agriculture and promote new investment in the sector; to improve governance of global food issues in partnership with relevant stakeholders from the public and private sector; and to face proactively the challenges of climate change to food security.

To view the joint declaration approved by all members, please see: www.fao.org/wsfs/wsfs-list-documents/en/

The importance of forests and trees for the lives and livelihoods of men and women

A new guide – developed by FAO's Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division – highlights the importance of forests and trees for the lives and livelihoods of men

and women around the world. It also outlines FAO's new framework for making sure gender issues are taken into account in all of its work. Among the Organization's gender mainstreaming targets for 2008 to 2013 are to:

- include gender issues in socio-economic analysis and forest sector outlook studies, and encourage countries to provide sex-disaggregated data;
- promote methodologies for men and women to generate income from forests and trees in order to reduce poverty and to manage natural resources on a sustainable basis;
- develop and implement approaches that increase the participation of male and female stakeholders in forest-related processes and activities;
- promote equitable forest tenure systems through policies and laws that improve access to, and use and management of, forest resources for the benefit of men and women; and
- collect gender-disaggregated data on employment in public-funded forest research centres and graduation from forestry educational institutions.

(Source: *Gender equity in agriculture and rural development. A quick guide to gender mainstreaming in FAO's new strategic framework*. 2009.)

A VOLUNTEER'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Among the most important days in FAO's history were probably 16–18 November 2009, when the World Summit on Food Security was held.

Preparations for this historic event were under way months ahead, and staff members were invited to participate by volunteering their time and expertise. As a young student of food security I could not pass up this unique opportunity to witness world leaders convene and discuss ways to eradicate hunger from the Earth.

My task as a volunteer was as a meeting room assistant; I had to attend high-level round tables and bilateral meetings and it was very exciting for me to observe first hand important discussions on such crucial and pressing issues.

During these meetings, it was clear to me that, regardless of the inevitable slow and bureaucratic proceedings of such a high profile event, all the

participants felt the urgency to reach the common objective of finding ways to guarantee that everyone has access to the food they need. And this was probably the best memory I will take with me from this event. The atmosphere, especially between us volunteers, was that of knowing we were all working to reach this common goal regardless of our job or position during the summit. We all felt we were part of an effort to eliminate hunger around the world, even by simply making sure that the meetings ran smoothly.

I feel very fortunate to have experienced such a historic event. It not only gave me a unique opportunity to get a glimpse of what went on behind the scenes but it also reminded me of the wide role this Organization plays beyond our own everyday jobs: to improve the lives of the hungry and poor. (Contributed by: Agnese Bazzucchi, FAO volunteer, FAO's NWFP Programme.)

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FAO IN THE FIELD

New project on NWFPs and food security in Central Africa started

The FAO project "Enhancing the contribution of NWFPs to poverty alleviation and food security in Central African countries" (GCP/RAF/441/GER), financed by the German Government, began its activities in July 2009. Since then, the institutional project start-up has taken place in the three participating countries: Gabon, Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, where project activities will be supervised by three national project coordinators from FAO and three focal points from the respective ministries in charge of forestry.

The regional coordination of the project, based in Cameroon, takes advantage of another ongoing FAO project on NWFPs in Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, financed by the European Union (GCP/RAF/408/EC), by sharing the same office facilities. This allows close collaboration and synergy between the two projects, i.e. joint presentation at the 6th Plenary meeting of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership in November 2009, sharing of field experiences from Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo with new staff, or simply logistical aspects.

The next steps for the project in Gabon, Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic will be the start-up workshop, which will bring together project representatives from the respective ministries in charge of forestry and FAO, as well as other relevant stakeholders. In each country, two pilot sites will be chosen to strengthen NWFP-based small- and medium-scale enterprises to benefit local communities and to promote sustainable harvesting methods, i.e. for *Gnetum* spp. (*koko* in the Central African Republic, *fumbwa* in the Congo and *nkoumou* in Gabon), which is a key species in the local diet in all three countries.

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(Please see pages 43 and 44 – 45 for more information.)


THE XIII WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS
Forests in development: a vital balance

Every six years, delegates from around the world and representatives from academia, civil society and the private sector gather to discuss the state of the world's

forests, issues facing the sector and ways to manage forests sustainably. The event provides a forum to exchange views on trends and issues in forestry. It is also an opportunity to make recommendations to decision-makers and raise awareness among the public.

This year, the XIII World Forestry Congress, organized by FAO and the Government of Argentina, convened from 18 to 23 October in Buenos Aires, Argentina, attracting over 7 000 participants from 160 countries. The theme of the Congress – "Forests in development: a vital balance" – sought to address the social, ecological and economic aspects of sustainable forestry management in local, regional and global contexts. Over 60 panel sessions covering seven thematic areas were treated, tackling new and persisting challenges in forestry and development, including climate change, energy concerns, biodiversity loss and poverty.

One of the major outcomes of the Congress was a Final Declaration listing 27 strategic actions through which "the vital balance between forests and development

"The vital balance we all strive to achieve is not only in terms of the economic, environmental, social and cultural pillars of sustainable forest management. The challenge is far greater. The balance we seek is also in terms of our interface and collaboration with other sectors such as agriculture, energy, and water – where decisions affecting forests are often made."

FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf



can be improved". Among these was the imperative to initiate cross-sectoral actions at global, regional, national and local scales on some of the major issues facing humanity, such as climate change, bioenergy, water, biodiversity, food security and poverty alleviation, to reduce adverse impacts on forests. By addressing the multiple dimensions of sustainable forestry management and pressure arising from beyond the sector – including a changing climate, a growing population and economic turmoil – participants agreed forests would play a vital role in alleviating poverty and safeguarding biodiversity, as well as provide a broad range of goods and services for present and future generations. Moreover, "by considering forests as an integral part of wider economic and social development goals," said FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf, "we will make giant strides in our efforts to reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition". The Congress also stressed that the environmental, economic and spiritual value of forests to human societies has not been fully recognized. In a message to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the XIII World Forestry Congress stated: "Forests harbour two-thirds of all land-based biodiversity and provide critical ecosystem services and goods, including water, food and income from over 5 000 commercial forest products. Forests sustain the cultural and spiritual identity of billions of people, foremost among them the indigenous peoples and local communities".

While the Congress acknowledged that sustainable forest management alone might be insufficient to address the many challenges facing humanity, it declared that managing forests sustainably contributes to achieving the vital balance between human beings and nature that is needed for sustainable development.



Featuring among the discussions at the Congress was also a panel dedicated to NWFPs, their traditional uses and socio-economic impacts in the context of biodiversity conservation, small-scale forest enterprises and community forestry and trade. A number of speakers presented studies on the global situation of several NWFPs and their potential to benefit the livelihoods of local communities. Among them, Floriano Pastore (please see Box below for an extract from his paper), from the University of Brasilia/International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Brazil, cited the case of natural rubber from the Brazilian Amazon, saying that extractive NWFPs face boom and bust cycles with initial production expansion being followed by contraction when demand exceeds natural production capacity and transfers from native forests to domesticated crops or alternative products.

The Congress also sent a strong message ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, stressing "the need to reduce poverty as a driver of deforestation and to safeguard the rights of indigenous peoples and forest-dependent

communities". The message emphasized the important roles that the private sector and civil society play in climate change adaptation and mitigation. The issues of climate change, REDD (reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) and the potential of carbon storage in fact generated the greatest interest at the Congress, particularly from Latin American countries, for their potential to increase investments in sustainable forest management through the climate regime. Dr William Jackson, Deputy Director-General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), told the Congress: "climate change has catapulted forests on to the international agenda after years of languishing in the dusty corridors of UN meetings".

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Small forest enterprises, big players

Locally controlled small and medium forest enterprises (SMFEs) provide livelihoods for forest communities around the world. Investments in commercial forest rights and legal frameworks, as well as capacity building for businesses along the whole forest product value chain, are some of the essential steps needed to address poverty and reduce deforestation. These were among the issues discussed at a round table session focusing exclusively on NWFPs and SMFEs on 22 October during the World Forestry Congress.

The session, moderated by FAO Forestry Officer Sophie Grouwels, drew over 200 participants. A number of guest speakers took the floor during the round table to discuss ways in which natural forest products could contribute to poverty alleviation and reduce deforestation. Among them, a study of a marketing strategy adapted to the development of the trade for dried *fumbua* (*Gnetum africanum*), produced by a Cameroonian SMFE for the domestic and European [ethnic food] market, was discussed. The traditional use and nutritional value of the species were explored, alongside its sustainable commercialization.

The session concluded with several main recommendations among others: to stimulate the integration of SMFEs within the public sector; disseminate market information to SMFE producer associations; support the sector's commercialization at national level; develop the market; and stimulate collaboration with commercial associations and service providers. During the round table, participants recommended that small producers should become more proficient and increase their knowledge in wood and non-wood processing technology to increase efficiency in the manufacturing sector. Finally, enhancing the certification of wood products and supporting research to have an overview of the entire SMFE value

THE SPECIAL ROLE OF NTFFPS IN MAINTAINING HARMONY BETWEEN USE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF TROPICAL FORESTS

A paper presented at the XIII World Forestry Congress discusses the importance of tropical forests for our common future, arguing that their health depends on addressing the social and environmental issues faced by the communities that live in forests. These communities extract products from the forest for their livelihoods; understanding this production system is essential to formulate approaches in dealing with the complex issue of forestry sustainability in all of its dimensions, says Floriano Pastore, the author of the paper.

Pastore presents an empirical conceptual model for the extraction cycle of NTFFPs and discusses the main features of this activity. This model is composed of four stages: (i) Origin: the

beginning of the production cycle; (ii) Propagation: division of trade and work; (iii) Conflict: consumption increases at a faster rate than production; and (iv) Solution: when the way out of domestication, substitution or synthesis provides the resolution of the problem and the extractive production loses competitiveness. Also presented are the elements for developing the production of timber, NTFFPs and environmental services based on joint actions by private companies, communities, governments and NGOs. In such a model, NWFP-dependent communities play an important role in the harmony between multiple uses of the forest resources and conservation of tropical rain forests, says Pastore.

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chain(s) were stressed as vital. (*Source: Forest Energy Forum. Summary report on small and medium forest enterprises. 22 October 2009.*)

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Working towards the sustainable use of bushmeat

The loss of tropical forest fauna is reaching critical levels, with commercial bushmeat hunting contributing to the scenario. The overexploitation of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians in many tropical and subtropical countries has global implications. Up to 75 percent of tropical tree species, for instance, depend on animal seed dispersal. Many tree species will no longer be able to reproduce without their seed dispersers, affecting ecosystem services. In turn, the degradation of forest ecosystems makes national and local economies weaker and more vulnerable to adversities such as climate change. The bushmeat trade – by increasing contact between humans and wildlife – also contributes to the spread of infectious diseases such as the Ebola and Nipah viruses. Above all, this biodiversity loss has impacts on food security for indigenous peoples and local communities.

In response, the Convention on Biological Diversity's Liaison Group on Bushmeat held its first meeting, in collaboration with FAO, the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), in Buenos Aires from 15 to 17 October 2009, in conjunction with the XIII World Forestry Congress. The meeting's objective was to develop policy recommendations for the sustainable use and conservation of bushmeat species.

In a joint statement to the World Forestry Congress, the group proposed a series of critical recommendations to decision-makers. Among these is the *sustainable management of wildlife*, which includes providing incentives and alternatives to hunters, traders and

consumers. In response to *climate change*, the group recommended that mechanisms such as REDD+ take into account the importance of wildlife for healthy ecosystems and for the permanence of forest carbon stocks and forest adaptation capacity. Empowering local communities to manage and account for local resources in their own best interest was also stressed as key to managing bushmeat sustainably. At a policy level, the group urged for frameworks that involve the full participation of all stakeholders and for relevant sectors to be strengthened.

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Forests in development: a vital balance

The United Nations proclaimed 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, and people all over the world are working to safeguard this irreplaceable natural wealth and reduce biodiversity loss. This is vital for current and future human well-being. We need to do more.

We are an integral part of nature; our fate is tightly linked with biodiversity, the huge variety of other animals and plants, the places in which they live and their surrounding environments, all over the world.

We rely on this diversity of life to provide us with the food, fuel, medicine and other essentials we simply cannot live without. Yet this rich diversity is being lost at a greatly accelerated rate because of human activities. This impoverishes us all and weakens the ability of the living systems, on which we depend, to resist growing threats such as climate change.

The International Year of Biodiversity is a unique opportunity to increase understanding of the vital role that biodiversity plays in sustaining life on Earth. Therefore, during this year we invite you to:

Learn

- About biodiversity in your city, region and country
- How your consumption patterns and everyday actions may impact on biodiversity, sometimes in distant ecosystems

Take action in 2010 and beyond, because

- Biodiversity is life
- Biodiversity is our life

Speak

- Make your views known to the government and the private sector
- Share your knowledge with people around you
- Send us your success stories so we can share them with the rest of the world

Act

- Make responsible consumption choices
- Support activities and organizations that conserve biodiversity
- Join a local environmental NGO or organize your own activities that will help biodiversity
- Be creative and find solutions to biodiversity loss
- Send us your pictures, artwork, videos and other creations, and we will share them with the world

Throughout the year, hundreds of events and celebrations have been organized worldwide by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its partners, starting on 11 January 2010 in Berlin with the launch of the International Year of Biodiversity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE EVENTS AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Up to 80 percent of protein intake in rural households in Central Africa comes from wild meat.