



External Advisory Group on Forests Strategy Implementation

Background and Terms of Reference

Background

For the implementation of the Bank's new forest sector strategy and the extent to which this is supported by the new forest operational policy, Bank Management would benefit from advisory inputs from a group of qualified individuals selected from a wide cross-section of stakeholders and interest groups involved in the forests sector.

The Bank has consulted widely with stakeholders and interest groups involved in the sector, or with strong knowledge of it, for suggestions on the composition of such an advisory group, its mode of operation, the coverage of its deliberations, and the manner in which its inputs should be utilized by the Bank and others.

Group Selection and Composition

Most of those consulted on this matter agree that to be effective as an adviser to the Bank, the Advisory Group will need coherence, and that implies the number of members of the Panel should be kept relatively small. Members of the Advisory Group will be selected on the basis of their personal expertise and experience: they will not be expected to *represent* the views of any major constituency or group with interests related to the forests sector. An effort will be made to have good coverage within the group of the expertise and experience needed to address issues seen as important by major stakeholders and other interest groups. There should also be a balance of developed and developing country presence on the Advisory Group, and, as far as possible, coverage of the major regions of Bank operations.

Ideally, the Advisory Group should be constituted to ensure that at least one member can reasonably claim to have such familiarity with issues and concerns as seen by:

- *Client governments* (preferably to include both high forest cover and low forest cover countries with strong interest in forest sector issues);
- *Indigenous people* living in or near forest lands with legally documented or customary land tenure or use rights to forest lands;
- *Local communities* other than indigenous forest dwelling groups, living in or near forests with high dependence upon them;
- *Civil society*, including the range of social and environmental NGOs, but also foundations and other charitable or public institutions with strong interests in forests and forest dependent people;
- *The private sector*, from small and medium forest enterprises to large scale domestic and international investors in the forests sector;
- *The international forest community* to include intergovernmental panels, research and education/technical networks and
- *Multilateral and bilateral agencies* involved in international forest dialogue and assistance.

Terms of Reference

Objective

- The basic objective of the Advisory Group is to provide the Bank, through the Vice President, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Network.(ESSD) with independent advice on major issues of implementation of the Bank's new forest sector strategy

Modus Operandi

- The Vice President ESSD will provide to the Group, from time to time, at the Bank's discretion, information on forthcoming Bank investments, economic and sector work and other activities relevant to the sector, including new regional forests or natural resources strategies, Bank wide reviews of forests issues and relevant country assistance strategies. Information will also be provided on relevant major Bank initiatives related to forests, such as the Bank-WWF Alliance, The Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund, PROFOR, the multilateral Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the Bank's participation in the United Nations Forum on Forests and other international interactions.
- The Advisory Group will review the information provided for purposes of preparing recommendations to the Bank. The Bank will make its best efforts to provide the Group with supporting information the Group wishes to review in order to provide their independent advice.
- The Advisory Group will also consider reviewing any special matters referred to it by the Vice President (ESSD).
- The Advisory Group will provide written reports on the results of each of its reviews, including recommendations to the Bank, to the Vice President, ESSD. Neither the Group nor any of its members will disclose the recommendations or parts thereof until the Bank has had an opportunity to review and comment on the recommendations to the Group. In normal course, the Bank will review and comment on EAG recommendations within one month or would seek a mutually agreed time-frame for its response.

Conditions of Work

- Group members will participate personally in at least one meeting of the Advisory Group per year, and provide their advice on major matters brought before the Group. They may express their advice as part of the Group, or individually. Given that Group members are selected to participate in their respective individual capacity, use of alternates for attendance at meetings will not be accepted.
- Group members will agree that all knowledge and information not already within the public domain which they acquire from the World Bank or its employees or which is considered confidential under the World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information will be treated as strictly confidential, not to be

directly or indirectly disclosed by any member to any person whatsoever except with the World Bank's written permission.¹

- The Group member in possession of non-public information obtained in the course of the Group activities shall not use such information in furtherance of any private or personal interest, other than in the context of providing advice to the Bank.
- The Vice President, ESSD, will determine the use and distribution of Group recommendations. Bank operational and other units which receive this material will utilize it as they determine appropriate.
- Advisory Group members will be encouraged to utilize their networks and contacts to inform their inputs into the deliberations of the Advisory Group.
- If a Group member has a personal or financial interest in a matter brought to the Group's attention, he/she will be refused from participating in or considering the matter and the Group report should highlight this refusal.

Initiation of Activities and Method of Operation

The Advisory Group will commence operations as soon as the Vice President, ESSD, determines that an acceptable Group has been formed, and advises the members of the Group accordingly. At that point:

- The Bank will prepare information as described under Terms of reference above, and forward this to the Group.
- The Advisory Group will operate primarily through electronic means, meeting at least once per year. The group meeting frequency, place and time will be determined by the Group.
- ESSD will provide the Advisory Group with secretariat support.

¹ For further information, see World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information, BP 17.50 (January, 2003), and also Bank guidelines on appointment of consultants.