

## Summary Group Session 3: Forest governance and biodiversity

Group session 3 was attended by about 35 participants and facilitated by Lambert Okrah (Major Groups Partnership on Forests). Presentations by Herbert Christ (GIZ) and Chris Buss (IUCN) followed by additional remarks by Nalin Kishor (PROFOR/WB) set the stage for a lively discussion on the interactions between biodiversity conservation and forest governance.

Noteworthy aspects of the discussion:

Participants agreed that the principles of governance of forest landscapes equally apply to the governance of biodiversity conservation. Therefore the following observations and recommendations are not limited to the interactions of biodiversity conservation and forest governance but refer to forest governance issues in general.

Participants noted the fragmentation of forest issues in the international debate, and that major stakeholders were, up to now, not sufficiently involved in all aspects of the international debates – insufficient participation notably of civil society & private sector.

Participants also agreed that governance reform processes take time and that this is not always acknowledged in political decisions, where quick results are favoured. At the same time these reform processes are vulnerable to shifts in political priorities.

Based on these observations key recommendations emerging out of the discussions were:

- Political continuity of governance reform processes benefits from strong stakeholder involvement in the reform process at the local and national levels. With a strong support base at the local and national level these processes are less likely to be abandoned by new local or national governments. Political continuity can also be strengthened through linking national processes with regional policy frameworks and international commitments.
- The new International Arrangement on Forests should include a common platform where all major forest stakeholders all brought together, including other international arrangements with relevance to forests.
- This platform should be replicated at the regional, national and local levels.
- The above replications (particularly national fora) should build upon existing platforms such as NFPs, or those created during REDD+ or FLEGT processes.