

XIV World Forestry Congress

Concept Note

UNFFS Side Event on

The International Arrangement on Forests beyond 2015

Monday 7 September 2015, 12:45 - 14:15

Hall 2D, Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, Durban, South Africa

Background

In May 2015, Member States at the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF11) adopted a resolution on the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) beyond 2015. Through this resolution Member States decided to strengthen the overall IAF, in particular with regard to implementation and financing, and coherence and consistency with the post 2015 development agenda, while extending the IAF to 2030. Countries also strengthened the Forum and its Secretariat, and agreed to develop a strategic plan for the IAF (2017-2030) with quadrennial programmes of work beginning with 2017-2020.

The new IAF comprises the following components:

- The United Nations Forum and Forests (UNFF) and its Member States;
- The Secretariat of the UNFF (UNFFS);
- The Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF);
- The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN); and
- The UNFF Trust Fund.

The main objectives of the IAF are to: (i) promote the implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM) of all types of forests, in particular, the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests; (ii) enhance the contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the post-2015 development agenda; (iii) enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels; (iv) foster international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels; and (v) support efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, which was renamed as the UN Forest Instrument, in order to achieve SFM.

These objectives should be achieved through the individual and collective actions of Member States, international, regional and sub-regional organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders. UNFF11 also adopted a Ministerial Declaration which highlights how SFM is vital to transformative change and to addressing development challenges including poverty eradication and economic growth, food security and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

To this end, Member States decided to strengthen long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF's objectives; operate in a transparent, effective, efficient and accountable manner, and provide added value and contribute to enhanced coherence, cooperation and synergies with respect to other forest-related agreements, processes and initiatives.

Member States also decided that the core functions of UNFF are to: (i) provide a global platform for policy development, dialogue, cooperation and coordination on issues related to all types of forests; (ii) promote, monitor and assess the implementation of SFM, in particular the UN Forest Instrument and the achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs), and mobilise, catalyse and facilitate access to financial, technical and scientific resources to this end; (iii) promote governance frameworks and enabling conditions at all levels to achieve SFM; (iv) promote coherence and collaborative international policy development on issues related to all types of forests; and (v) strengthen high-level political engagement, with the participation of Major Groups and other stakeholders, in support of SFM.

In addition, UNFF11 laid the foundation for the Forum to play an active role in contributing to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, and to the implementation, follow-up and review of the forest-related aspects of the post-2015 development agenda, including its forest-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets. The Forum will integrate the forest-related SDGs and targets into the UN Forest Instrument.

In this regard, UNFF11 encouraged strengthening strategic partnerships between the Forum and relevant forest-related international, regional and sub-regional entities, Major Groups and CPF. In particular, UNFF11 decided that the core functions of the CPF are to support the work of the Forum and its member countries; provide scientific and technical advice to the Forum; promote implementation of the UN Forest Instrument and the contribution of forests to the post-2015 development agenda.

In addressing catalyzing financing for implementation, Member States noted that a combination of strategies is required to access resources from all possible sources, including public, private, domestic and international, bilateral and multilateral. In this regard they decided to strengthen the UNFF Facilitative Process and make it more effective by upgrading it to the UNFF Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) with the main objective of mobilizing and enhancing countries' access to financial resources for forests.

Starting in 2017, the UNFF will meet annually, with an increased focus on monitoring, assessing and reporting on the UN Forest Instrument implementation, mobilising resources and sharing technical advice. UNFF sessions will assess progress in implementation of the Forum's resolutions and decisions, the UN Forest Instrument and the UNFF strategic plan. The purpose of this side event is to provide stakeholders with a more detailed presentation of the new IAF beyond and its implications for the future.

Objectives

The UNFFS event will provide an opportunity for focused discussions on key priorities, commitments and actions in support of the IAF beyond 2015, with special emphasis on the UNFF and the CPF.

The objectives include:

- To present the main outcomes of UNFF11 on the IAF beyond 2015;
- To solicit views from stakeholders on the way forward for the implementation of the UN Forest Instrument; and
- To explore opportunities for the CPF to contribute to the implementation of the UN Forest Instrument.

Expected outcome

It is envisaged that the deliberations will: (i) improved understanding by stakeholders of the IAF and its implications for the future; and (ii) provide a contribution to the discussions on the implementation of the UN Forest Instrument in the overall context of the development of a strategic plan for the period 2017-2030.

Modalities

The event will consist of an opening, interactive panel discussion and a closing. The panel discussion will be interactive. The moderator will invite short interventions from the panelists before opening the floor for questions and comments.

The Side Event Agenda:

Opening (12:45 - 13:00)

Welcoming remarks by H.E. Mr. Noel Nelson Messone, Chair of the UNFF11 and Minister for Forests, Environment and Protection of Natural Resources of the Gabonese Republic (tbc)

Opening statement by H.E. Mr. Senzeni Zokwana, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of the Republic of South Africa (tbc)

Interactive Panel Discussion (13:00 - 14:15)

Moderated by Dr. Manoel Sobral Filho, Director of the UNFF Secretariat

Panelists:

Mr. Robert Busink, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands

Ms. Paula Caballero, Senior Director of the Environment and Natural Resources Global Practice, the World Bank

Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl, Head of Forest Policy and Information, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria

Mr. Srećko Juricic, Vice-Chair of the UNFF11 and Head of Forestry Division, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Croatia

Ms. Eva Muller, Director of the Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Mr. Matthias Schwoerer, Head of International Forest Policy Division, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection of Germany

Closing (14:15)

Questions to guide the panel discussion include:

- What further actions are needed to advance SFM building on the main outcomes of UNFF11?
- What policies and programmes support the implementation of the UN Forest Instrument and forest-related SDGs and targets?
- How can CPF effectively promote implementation of the UN Forest Instrument and the contribution of forests to the post-2015 development agenda?

Participants in the event will be primarily those attending the World Forestry Congress in Durban. Target participants will include: (i) senior-level policymakers from the countries in charge of the national forest policies; (ii) representatives of subregional, regional and international organizations working in the forest-related areas; and (iii) representatives of Major Groups, including civil society, NGOs, academia and the private sector, scientists and forest practitioners.

The working language will be English.

Limited number of lunch and refreshments will be served.
