

Submission by Japan
On paragraph 45 of the UNFF11 resolution

The strategic plan for the period 2017-2030

The Strategic Plan (hereinafter referred to as ‘SP’) must involve setting goals, determining of actions to achieve said goals, and mobilizing resources to execute those actions. In this context, the following elements should be included in the SP:

1. Goal-setting

First and foremost, in order to formulate the SP, all Member States need to recognize the “strategy” of the UNFF; i.e. paragraph 3 of the UNFF11 Resolution. The UNFF must function as an effective platform for policy development, dialogue, cooperation and coordination on issues related to all types of forests.

The main goal of the SP should be to coordinate the formulation and implementation of various policy measures at the national level. If too much time is spent on the negotiations of draft resolution texts, then those sessions will fail to produce an environment that leads to a constructive policy dialogue, and devolve into a ‘talk shop’.

For example, concerning the establishment of the Global Fund, it is necessary that Member States share the common understanding that the lack of financing is the primary bottleneck to achieving our global objectives on forests. Against this backdrop, the SP must make it clear that our goal is to transform the UNFF into a viable system which can produce tangible results towards the achievement of our global objectives on forests. This was the reason why the Member States decided in the UNFF11 Resolution to restructure UNFF sessions and to enhance intersessional work to maximize their respective outputs.

2. Determination of actions

The targets to be achieved by 2030 are already defined as the ‘Global Objectives on Forests’ in Section IV of the UN Forest Instrument. Likewise, actions to be taken at the national level are already identified as ‘National Policies and Measures’ in Section V of the UN Forest Instrument.

In order to achieve these targets, it is necessary for all Member States to submit their national progress reports as the basic information for UNFF sessions. Furthermore, those national progress reports need to assess how policy objectives on forests are being achieved, and analyze hindrances to sustainable forest management in the implementation of national policies and measures.

The sessions and intersessional activities of the UNFF should both focus on interactive policy dialogues based on national progress reports, aiming to exchange feedback, advice, ideas and inspiration among the Member States so that they can further develop and improve their national policies. Capacity building in member states is also necessary for monitoring, assessment and reporting on social, economic and environmental aspects related to their forest policies.

Composing Criteria and Indicators (C&I) process synthesis reports will provide useful material for the deliberations at the UNFF. In particular, a Global Forest Indicators Partnership needs to be established as a coordinating body to make better linkages between C&I processes and UNFF activities. This will help maintain consistency between the country progress reports and the forest related indicators set on a global scale under the SDGs.

3. Mobilization of resources to execute the actions

Key stakeholders should play an active role in the sustainable management of forests, and therefore should participate in UNFF meetings. It is important, therefore, that not only the Member States, but also the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), other major groups, and other implementing agencies, such as international aid agencies, which have a lot of experiences, knowledge and expertise, all be involved. It is also necessary to mobilize resources in support of the sustainable management of forests.

The quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020

In accordance with paragraph 6(f) of the UNFF11 resolution, odd-year sessions are to focus on discussions on implementation and technical advice, followed by sessions in the following year to come up with recommendations. Based on this framework, Japan proposes that the Member States should concentrate on two of the four goals set out in the Global Objectives on Forests agreed at UNFF6 in the following manner; "Reverse the loss of forest cover through Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)" at 2017-2018 sessions, and "Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits" at the 2019-2020 sessions.

In addition, the scope of the Global Forest Indicators Partnership needs to be discussed in order to better align it with the C&I processes and the review on progress towards the achievement of SDGs indicators. Guidance on reporting on SDGs indicators should be elaborated in line with the review process of the SDGs, including the High-level Political Forum.