

January 24th, 2016
Dr. Manoel Sobral Filho
United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Two United Nations Plaza, DC2-2301
New York, NY 10017, USA

Dear Dr. Manoel Sobral Filho,

Enclosed is the submission on behalf of the Major Group Children & Youth in response to the call for views and proposals on the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) Strategic Plan for 2017-2030. The Major Group Children and Youth looks forward to participating in the next AHEG meeting and hopes the UNFF secretariat will consider youth values and proposals in the agenda for the IAF Strategic Plan for 2017-2030. Since UNFF 11 held in May of 2015, several large international events such as the UNFCCC COP 21, FAO XIV World Forestry Congress, and the finalization of the Sustainable Development Goals have influenced the international forest policy landscape. The Major Group Children & Youth hope the discussions at the upcoming AHEG meeting will take into account these international forestry initiatives and find opportunities to allow for enhanced participation and involvement of all Major Groups representing the interest of civil society.

Sincerely,

Anna Stemberger

International Forestry Students' Association
Major Group Children and Youth Focal Point

2015 Interlaken CLI Youth Values Statement

As youth of today, we value respect and resilience; we believe in equitable partnerships and transparency, and we assume unity in diversity. We envision holistic governance of our forests as part of multifunctional landscapes. We envision a world where people are given equitable access and rights, and there is respect for knowledge in all its forms. And finally, we envision a world in which youth are valued and can actively participate in the decision-making processes that affect our forests and landscapes.

Policy Proposal Ideas

The Major Group Children & Youth supports the policy proposals and agenda items outlined in the Major Groups Partnership on Forests submission. In addition, the Major Group Children & Youth recommends that

1. The UNFF establish a permanent subsidiary body tasked with staying current on emerging challenges, opportunities, and priorities within the forest sector, and to facilitate their timely inclusion in UNFF's agenda.
2. The UNFF Secretariat, Major Groups, CPF, and member states work on a communications strategy and actions to broaden UNFF participation.

Statement on the Global Objectives on Forests

The Major Group Children & Youth strongly supports the goals of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs). In the future IAF, we would like to see further actions and efforts to increase monitoring and evaluation on progress on the GOFs. This strengthened analysis would better inform priority actions towards achieving the GOFs. We would also like to explore opportunities for broader linkages with the landscape approach with considerations for agriculture in GOF #1 *“Reverse Forest Loss: Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.”*

Statement on SDGs

The Major Group Children and Youth would like to see strengthened collaboration between UNFF and other UN bodies, nation states, stakeholders, and CPF in the implementation of the forestry related Sustainable Development Goals. UNFF should focus in the areas of:

- Monitoring and evaluating progress on forestry related SDGs
- Promote awareness and implementation of the forestry related SDGs through publications and communication tools
- Support youth-led initiatives and youth inclusion in forestry related SDGs implementation

XIV WFC Durban Declaration 2050 vision for forests and forestry

The Major Group Children and Youth supports the XIV WFC Durban Declaration 2050 vision for forests and forestry whereas *“Forests are more than trees and are fundamental for food security and improved livelihoods. Forests are an essential solution to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Integrated*

approaches to land use provide a way forward for improving policies and practices to: address the drivers of deforestation; address conflicts over land use; capitalize on the full range of economic, social and environmental benefits from integrating forests with agriculture; and maintain multiple forest services in the landscape context. New partnerships among the forest, agriculture, finance, energy, water, and other sectors, and engagement with indigenous people and local communities are required."

Furthermore, MG Children and Youth asks for the inclusion of the following recommendation and actions as elements of the International Arrangement on Forests:

- 1. Better integrate forestry and related land-use policies.*
- 2. Seek cohesive solutions across sectors, regions and generations.*
- 3. Apply the landscapes approach and adaptive management on the ground within and across forestry and agriculture.*
- 4. Direct research and practices to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and societies.*
- 5. Initiate and support processes, and create enabling conditions, to prevent land-use conflicts and safeguard natural resources.*
- 6. Leverage existing information and guidance on integrated approaches and related frameworks and tools.*
- 7. Invest in participatory processes and create and maintain effective multi-stakeholder engagement platforms across sectors, with broad participation of indigenous people, local communities, youth and women.*
- 8. Establish new partnerships across the forest, agriculture, finance, energy and other sectors.*
- 9. Promote broad societal values and objectives and build the business case to guarantee engagement of the private sector and sustainable investments.*
- 10. Coordinate policies and develop adequate governance arrangements across sectors and at all levels.*

The focal points for the Major Group Children & Youth would like to thank the 56 youth who volunteered to participate in a survey for youth input on the IAF strategic plan for 2017-2030.