

UNCCD Response to the Survey

CPF members' views on contributions of forests to 2017 HLPF theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" and achievement of SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17

The 2017 session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is scheduled to be convened from 10 to 19 July 2017 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. In accordance with the General Assembly resolution 70/299, the theme will be "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goal 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17 will be reviewed in depth.

The twelfth session of UNFF (UNFF12) is scheduled to be convened from 1-5 May 2017. In accordance with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 2015/33, the Forum will deliberate on its contribution to the follow-up, review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including through contributing to the work of the HLPF. In addition, the ECOSOC President invited the Chair of the UNFF12 Bureau to provide substantive inputs to the 2017 HLPF showcasing its contribution towards the 2030 Agenda in general and particularly for the SDG and respective targets that are most relevant to the mandate of the Forum.

Against this background, the UNFF Secretariat is preparing a Note by the Secretariat to facilitate informed discussion on the subject matter to be held at UNFF12. The Note will highlight key issues in the following areas suggested for the Forum's forest-related inputs: i) assessment of the situation regarding the principle "ensuring that no one is left behind" at the global level; ii) identification of gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges; iii) valuable lessons learned on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity; iv) emerging issues likely to affect the realization of poverty eradication and achieving prosperity; v) areas where political guidance is required; and vi) policy recommendations on ways to accelerate progress in poverty eradication.

The accompanying questions seek the views of CPF members on the contributions of forests to the achievement of the SDGs goal 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17 in the context of the 2017 HLPF theme. A summary of responses will be included in the Note to help facilitate informed discussion on the subject matter at UNFF12.

Questions:

1. Please provide your organization's view on the key contributions of forests to "eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world".

More than 25% of the world's population relies on forest and tree resources for their livelihoods and most of them use trees on farms (e.g., agroforestry) to generate food and income. Moreover, many countries in the developing world rely on harvested fuelwood to meet as much as 90% of energy requirements as well as woodlands, often not recognized as forests, for livestock production.

Employment in the forestry sector (mainly harvesting and silvicultural operations, including the collection of woodfuel and NTFPs) contributes to society's economic, environmental and social welfare. Many forestry activities are carried out in rural areas, where there are often few alternative sources of employment, which makes such employment in these communities exceptionally important.

By helping countries improve governance and sustainable practices in their forest sectors, enforce laws and ensure local participation in the decision-making process, people and communities have a better opportunity to improve livelihoods and reduce poverty.

Drylands are found in most of the world's biomes and climatic zones constituting 41 per cent of the global land area. On the basis of satellite data, experts estimated that one-fifth of global forest cover is located in drylands. More than elsewhere, forests and agrosilvopastoral systems in drylands play crucial economic, social and environmental roles, including by improving the environmental sustainability and resilience in the wider landscape.

If well managed and properly valued, dryland forest and woodland ecosystems can help alleviate poverty and contribute to the food security and sustainable livelihoods of 2 billion people worldwide. Dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems are important for the very poor and vulnerable, providing a source of food and other essential materials in periods of food insecurity, such as during dry seasons or in the wake of natural disasters (e.g., drought) and conflict.

Dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems face serious threats, including degradation, fragmentation, and deforestation by various interrelated factors, such as climate change and climate-related disasters; policy and socioeconomic factors that lead to poor management and overharvesting; a lack of technical capacity; and a lack of understanding of the importance and vulnerability of dryland forest and woodland ecosystems. At least 3 percent of the world's dryland forests have been lost since 2000.

UNCCD's new initiative, land degradation neutrality (LDN), encourages the implementation of an optimal mix of measures designed to avoid, reduce and/or reverse land degradation in order to achieve a state of no net loss of healthy and productive land. Reducing desertification and forest conversion is a key component of LDN, contributing to protection of forests and their goods and services. By avoiding, reducing and reversing forest degradation, rural communities will enjoy greater employment opportunities afforded by collecting fire wood and NTFPs, grazing their livestock, and other social and cultural benefits of forests.

2. Please provide your organization's view on key contributions of forests to the achievement of Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

With relevant forest policy and management measures, countries should

- bring poor and marginalized people into the formal forestry sector with the offer of meaningful jobs,
- grant forest resource rights for sustainable harvesting of basic necessities and non-market products,
- where appropriate, support small scale forest product processing to diversify incomes,
- regulate hunting, gathering, and grazing in forests using participatory approaches

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

- encourage planting indigenous tree species with both market and ecological values,
- promote agroforestry, where appropriate, in particular to enhance the extent and quality of existing forest cover,
- conserve and manage forests as buffer zones and providers of essential ecosystem services such flood regulation, pollination, etc.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- Forests contribute to peoples overall health and well-being: physical, psychological and social well-being. To enhance these benefits, countries should undertake some specific activities to promote the use of the outdoors for health and recreation purposes.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- State forest agencies and the private should encourage gender equality in terms of education and training with the aim to establish a human resource pool that would allow more women to be professionals and senior managers, including jobs related to seed and seedling production, planting, and vegetation management.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

- In developing countries, small scale forest products processing for income diversification,
- In all countries, forested watershed are the most efficient infrastructure for water regulation and purification for both agricultural and urban use.

Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

- Reforestation and forest restoration activities of the least developed countries should be supported by international organizations and developed countries in line with national commitments under the Bonn Challenge and other regional initiatives,
- The technical/governance capacities and best practice knowledge base of the forestry sector stakeholders in developing countries should be increased with trainings and workshops organized and financed by international organizations and developed countries.
- This capacity building includes technology transfers such as digital mapping, forest planning, seed and seedling production, plantation, vegetation management, harvesting and thinning which should be shared with developing countries.

3. Please briefly describe the priorities and challenges to enhance the contributions of forests to the achievement of Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

- Tenure and resource rights
- Enforcement of rights and responsibilities

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

- NTFP, basic necessities and non-market foodstuffs
- Technical capacity, best practice SFM for suite of ecosystem services

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- Urban forestry, green spaces/belts for recreation, air quality and climate stabilization
- Poor land use planning due to corruption and greed

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- Educate, train and employ women in all strata of the forestry sector
- Enhance the human resource pool for public, private and community forestry

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

- Forested watersheds for both rural and urban populations
- Increasing demand for forest products and land use change

Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

- Financial assistance and capacity building for forestry sector stakeholders, including forest restoration activities within a landscape approach
- Financial resources, lack of awareness and governance, conflict and corruption