

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the Bureau of the Thirteenth Session
2 October 2017 (10:00 - 12:30), UNHQ, New York

Participation

Bureau Members: Ambassador Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob (Malaysia), Ambassador Macharia Kamau (Kenya), Ms. Luciana Melchert Saguas Presas (Brazil), Ms. Maureen Whelan (Canada), Mr. Tomas Krejzar (Czech Republic)

UNFF Secretariat: Mr. Manoel Sobral Filho, Mr. Hossein Moeini Meybodi, Mr. Peter Gondo, Ms. Barbara Tavora-Jainchill, Ms. Mita Sen, Ms. Njeri Kariuki, Mr. Ryo Nakamura, Mr. Tomasz Juszcak, Mr. Ryosuke Ujihashi, Ms. Yan Lang

Others: Mr. Arthur A. Andambi (Kenya), Mr. Ridzwan Shahabudin (Malaysia)

Summary of Key Actions/Decisions

1. **The Bureau agreed to send a letter to Members of the Forum to: (i) encourage their high-level participation in UNFF13; ii) remind Member States of the importance of announcing their initial Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs) at UNFF13; and iii) encourage countries to consider highlighting the roles and contributions of forests in progressing towards the achievement of SDG15 and other forest-related SDGs, including through the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF), in their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to be submitted to the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).**
2. **The Bureau agreed to request two meetings with the President of ECOSOC, one before and one after UNFF13, to ensure that the relevant UNFF13 outcome is taken into account and reflected in the planning and preparation of the 2018 HLPF and its outcome document.**
3. **The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting in early December 2017 through electronical means.**

Provisional Agenda
First Meeting of the Bureau of the Thirteenth Session
2 October 2017 (10:00 – 13:00), UNHQ, New York

- 1- Introduction of the UNFF13 Bureau Members**

- 2- Adoption of the provisional agenda**

- 3- Preparations for UNFF13**
 - a. Date and venue of UNFF13**
 - b. Key issues for consideration of UNFF13 and inclusion in its organization of work**
 - c. UNFF13 official documentation**
 - d. Activities carried out by the UNFFS in preparation for UNFF13**
 - i) Secretariat Note Verbale (July 2017)**
 - ii) Preparations for organization of four expert group meetings**
 - iii) GFFFN related activities**
 - iv) Update on the CPF Conference**

- 4- Next meeting of the Bureau**

- 5- Other matters**
 - a. Status of trust fund resources for participation of representatives from eligible countries at UNFF13**

1. Introduction of the UNFF13 Bureau Members

Mr. Manoel Sobral-Filho, Director of the UNFF Secretariat, opened the meeting and welcomed members of the UNFF13 Bureau. Ambassador Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, Chair of the UNFF13 Bureau, introduced himself and invited the members of the Bureau and the Secretariat to introduce themselves. The Secretariat added that the Secretary of the Forum was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments.

2. Adoption of the provisional agenda

The provisional agenda of the first meeting was adopted.

3. Preparation for UNFF13

a. Date and venue of UNFF13

The Secretariat referred to the ECOSOC decision, based on which, the thirteenth session of the Forum would be held from 7 to 11 May 2018 in New York.

b. Key issues for consideration of UNFF13 and inclusion in its organization of work

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on key substantive and operational elements in preparations for UNFF13, highlighting the scope of items contained in the UNFF13 provisional agenda. These key items included, among others: i) policy dialogue on the thematic and operational priorities, priority actions and resources for the period 2017-18; ii) the UN system-wide contributions to the implementation of the Global Forest Goals(GFGs) and targets; iii) voluntary announcement of the Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs); iv) development of the communication and outreach strategy for the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF); v) progress on the implementation of the UNSPF; vi) progress on the development of global forest indicators; vii) progress on activities and the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN); and viii) measures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the GFFFN.

Some of the Bureau members expressed their concern that the outcomes of UNFF 12 had not been reflected in the 2017 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) documents and outcomes. It was noted that the Secretariat, the UNFF 13 Bureau as well as member states have a role to play in increasing visibility of forests at the 2018 HLPF. The Bureau held a discussion on the need and possible ways to elevate the role of forests in achieving the SDGs through UNFF13 in view of the current opportunities, including the theme and SDGs under review at the 2018 HLPF, as well as the 2018 CPF Conference on Halting Deforestation and Expanding Forest Cover. The ideas discussed included: i) a ministerial roundtable during UNFF13; ii) side event(s) during the 2018 HLPF; iii) a special event on forests by the President of the General Assembly in conjunction with the 2018 HLPF; and iv) a UN conference on forests.

Specifically, the Bureau agreed to organize a ministerial roundtable during UNFF13 to hold high level policy discussion on forests, in advance of the HLPF2018. The Bureau also considered the need to closely work with the President of ECOSOC to ensure that the relevant UNFF13 outcome is taken into account and reflected in the planning and preparation of the 2018 HLPF and its outcome document. The

Bureau agreed to continue to develop ideas and explore possibilities to organize high-impact event(s), as outlined in the previous paragraph.

The Secretariat also briefed the Bureau on the themes for the analytical studies which have to be prepared for UNFF13, as per the provisions of the UNFF12 resolution. These studies will focus on forest ecosystem services, forest and water, forest and energy, and forest and sustainable consumption and production. Forest and global partnership for sustainable forest management will be dealt with as a cross-cutting element in all these studies. The Bureau took note of the themes for the analytical studies which would constitute the basis for the thematic discussion at UNFF13, along with the proposals on the thematic themes of UNFF12. Some of the Bureau members stressed the importance of redefining the concept framework of forests in the post 2015 international environmental agenda in view of their centrality in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

c. UNFF13 official documentation

The Secretariat provided a preliminary list of official for UNFF13. These will include provisional agenda and annotation, three Reports of the Secretary-General and three Notes by the Secretariat. The Secretariat added that the provisional agenda and most of the official documentation for UNFF13 would be ready by late February in light of the UN requirements for official documentation.

d. Activities carried out by the UNFFS in preparation for UNFF13

i. Secretariat Note Verbale (July 2017)

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the information transmitted to Members of the Forum in July 2017 regarding the UNFF13 preparations via a Note Verbale, including on: i) organizational matters; ii) voluntary announcements of VNCs; iii) involvement of Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders; and iv) contribution to the 2018 HLPF.

The Bureau noted the importance to ensure high-level participation in UNFF13 in view of its focus on policy matters and synergies with the 2018 HLPF. The Bureau also noted the importance to remind Members of the Forum to consider voluntarily announcing their initial VNCs at UNFF13, and encourage them to consider highlighting their progress towards the achievement of SDG15 and other forest-related SDGs, including through the implementation of the UNSPF, in their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the 2018 HLPF.

ii. Preparations for organization of four expert group meetings

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on its planned activities to organize expert meetings on: i) Regional and Sub-Regional contribution to the implementation of the UNSPF (20-21 November, Nairobi, Kenya); ii) Major Groups and other Relevant Stakeholders' contribution to the implementation of the UNSPF (20-21 November, Nairobi, Kenya); iii) Monitoring, assessment and reporting to the Forum (21-23 November, Nairobi, Kenya); and iv) communication and outreach strategy for the UNSPF.

The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the information and emphasized the importance of having a solid and complete proposal of the UNSPF communication and outreach strategy for consideration at UNFF13.

iii. GFFFN related activities

The Secretariat provided an update on the recent GFFFN-related activities, including the current status of establishing a UNFFS branch office on GFFFN in China. It was added that an expert group meeting could be held on the guidelines for the operation of the GFFFN in January 2018, once, there is more concrete information on the resources that will be available to fund the GFFFN activities.

iv. Update on the CPF Conference

The Secretariat provided an update on the current status of preparations for the upcoming CPF Conference on Halting Deforestation and Expanding Forest Cover which is tentatively scheduled to be held from 20-22 February 2018, FAO HQ, Rome.

4. Next meeting of the Bureau

The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting in early December 2017 through electronical means, to be followed by an in-person meeting in conjunction with the CPF Conference (20-22 February 2018, FAO HQ, Rome).

5. Other matters

The Secretariat informed the Bureau on current status of the UNFF trust fund, noting that no pledges had been received to provide travel supports for UNFF13. The Bureau noted the importance of raising funds in a timely manner to enable the widest possible participation of Members of the Forum in UNFF13. The Bureau was also informed that, in the event of availability of limited resources, most probably, the travel support will be limited to air tickets which is consistent and similar to the practice established in HLPF, as well as functional commissions of ECOSOC.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.