

Analytical study on pilot reporting cycle for UNFF, and development of a reporting system to monitor progress towards Global Forest Goals and targets, as well as forest related SDGs

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Background and Mandate

According to the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF), at every session the UNFF will consider “Monitoring, assessment and reporting: progress on the implementation of the strategic plan, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions”. In addition, “The Forum should assess progress in implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests in the context of its midterm and final reviews of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests, in 2024 and 2030. The assessment should be based on internationally agreed indicators, including relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators, that are relevant to the global forest goals and targets. The assessment should take into account voluntary national reporting on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests, the United Nations forest instrument, voluntary national contributions and the results of the most recent Global Forest Resources Assessment of FAO, as well as inputs from the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations and other partners within and outside of the United Nations system, including regional and subregional organizations and relevant stakeholders. To reduce the reporting burden, the Forum is to establish a cycle and format for voluntary national reporting by its members, taking into account the cycle of the Global Forest Resources Assessments and the Sustainable Development Goal review cycle at the global level. (E/RES/2017/4, paragraphs 67-69).

In Resolution 12/1, passed in May 2017, the UNFF “*Requests* the Forum secretariat to further revise the format for voluntary national reporting to the Forum on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions, on the basis of consultations with members of the Forum and other intersessional activities, the views expressed during the twelfth session and any pilot testing of the current draft format that may be undertaken with interested members of the Forum from the five regional groups”;

A pilot study is being carried out, including in particular a reporting format, filled in by a few volunteer countries. Experience with this format will be reviewed at the Expert Meeting on Reporting to UNFF, to be held on 21 – 23 November 2017, in Nairobi, Kenya. This paper will summarize the experience gained by pilot countries in testing of the reporting format and its usefulness for national and international monitoring and reporting on forests. Moreover, the study will assess the pilot format in terms of collecting information to assess progress in achieving the

Global Forests Goals (GFGs) and targets, and implementing the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI). It will also present some recommendations to the workshop for improving the format and the reporting process.

The paper has been prepared by an independent consultant and does not represent the official viewpoint of the UNFF secretariat, or any Government.

System of monitoring, assessment and reporting

The system of monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards implementing the UN Strategic Plan for Forests is presented in detail in the Secretary-General's report to UNFF 12 (E/CN.18/2017/3), so this information is not repeated here. Some of the key points are summarised below:

- The midterm review of the International Arrangements on Forests (IAF) will take place in 2024; in the context of this review, the Forum will assess progress in implementing the strategic plan. It would be desirable that this assessment could be carried out the basis of a well structured document, emerging from cooperative work between member states, and international organisations
- UNFF will review progress in implementation of the UNSPF in odd-year sessions, on the basis of voluntary national reports, combined with information from other sources, notably that generated through the SDG process (annual reporting) and reporting to Rio conventions. The next edition of the Global Forest Resource Assessment, the ultimate source of much of the quantitative data, will be issued in 2020 (FRA 2020).
- It was proposed that 2019 would be the starting point for the submission of voluntary national reports, with reporting in 2021, to coincide with the FRA results.
- Considerable efforts are in hand between agencies to harmonise the forest relevant parts of the SDG process, the FRA and other actors, with one aim of providing the best possible information on progress towards the Global Forest Goals and Targets, with the minimum reporting burden. A key tool in this respect is the Global Core Set of Forest Related Indicators, which is discussed below.
- The UNFF review in 2024 of progress in implementation of the UNSPF will be based on the information generated by the interagency cooperative process, and countries' voluntary reporting on their own actions to the same end.
- A format was proposed for countries' voluntary national reporting (annex to the SG report), and it was agreed to test it in a pilot application. The format is closely structured around the Global Forest Goals and Targets. It is the objective of this paper to review the experience with this pilot application.

UNFF 12 reviewed the format for voluntary national reporting on implementation of the UNSPF, and agreed that it should be the subject of a pilot application. Countries were invited to participate, and information has been brought together on which quantitative information will be available from international processes, notably the FRA, and where gaps remain. The workshop in Nairobi will review the results, on the basis of this paper, and prepare recommendations for improvements to the process, and in particular the format. Decisions on future work will be taken by UNFF 13 in May 2018.

Overview of national and international reporting requirements, processes and indicators

Forest related SDGs

A number of the SDG targets, notably 15.1.1 (forest cover), 15.2.1 (area of sustainably managed forest), are directly linked to forests, and many others include forest-relevant issues, alongside other issues. This is the case for instance, for 15.3.1 (share of degraded land), and 7.2.1 (renewable energy), protected areas, food security, extreme poverty, etc. process is in hand, under the guidance of an Intergovernmental and Expert Advisory Group (IAEG) under the UN Statistical Commission, to agree how all SDG targets should be monitored, with annual reporting, with agreed and operational metadata for each series. Full information on all goals, targets and indicators is available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>.

Indicator 15.1.1 will be monitored by net forest change rate, using concepts and definitions well known in the forest sector, notably those applied by FRA. Indicator 15.2.1 (on area of sustainably managed forests) presented major challenges to address the complex and balanced concept of sustainable forest management in an objective, quantifiable and comparable way, within the constraints of the SDG monitoring system. Indicator 15.2.1 will have five sub-indicators:

- Forest area net change rate
- Above-ground biomass stock in forest
- Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas
- Proportion of forest area under a long term forest management plan
- Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme

The elements of indicator 15.2.1 have been extensively discussed, at the technical and policy level, and represent a high level consensus on a basic minimum for measuring sustainable forest management in a broad, multi-sector context, although by no means adequate for monitoring progress towards the Global Forest Goals and Targets in a comprehensive way. Nevertheless, monitoring put in place for the specialised forest goals and targets should be fully compatible with monitoring of SDG indicators, notably 15.1.1 and 15.2.1. There is no possibility at present to modify the SDG monitoring system before the first reporting round is complete, after 2020.

Forest Resource Assessment (FRA)

The FAO Forest Resource Assessment has been monitoring trends in forests at the global level, since 1948. It initially focused on classic forest inventory parameters, notably forest area, growing stock and allowable cut, then focused on deforestation and its causes, but since 2005 has monitored sustainable forest management, and has been structured around the seven thematic elements and the regional criteria and indicator sets. It was used as the source of data for the Millennium Development Goal on forest cover. The most recent edition, FRA 2015, addressed the question of monitoring progress towards sustainable forest management. The next edition will be complete in 2020. An Expert Consultation in June 2017 specifically addressed the question of how FRA 2020 should contribute to the monitoring of progress towards the Global Forest Goals and Targets. This information has been taken into account when preparing this paper

Rio conventions

The Rio conventions also monitor progress towards the various goals and targets agreed, of which some concern forests. In particular:

- Five of the Aichi biodiversity targets (5, 7, 11, 14 and 15) are relevant to forests, of which two specifically mention forests (T5 Loss of natural habitats, including forests, and T7 Sustainable management of areas under ... forestry). T11 on protected areas coincides with Global Forest Target 3.1
- Carbon stocks and flows in forest ecosystems and harvested wood products are covered in the accounting guidelines and commitments under the UNFCCC, and the subject of detailed negotiation with respect to commitments on Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)
- UNCCD monitors progress in combating land degradation (which includes degradation of forest land), which is clearly linked to Global Forest Target 1.3 on restoring degraded forests

These processes, which are all members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, have been cooperating with forest focused agencies, including the UNFF secretariat and FAO to harmonise terms and reporting, essentially through the Global Core Set of Forest Related Indicators, which is discussed below

Regional processes on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management

Almost all countries in the world participate in one or more regional processes for criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management. Each process functions in a different way, but all have agreed a set of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, identifying the key factors in that region, and what should be monitored. Most processes have collected information structured according to the relevant indicator framework. Taken together, this represents a rich resource of ideas and data, as well as an implicit definition of sustainable forest management. The criteria structure is very similar in all regions, and formed the basis for the seven “thematic elements” identified by predecessors of UNFF. Some indicators appear in most regional sets, a clear indication that these parameters are significant in most regions.

Some of the regional C&I processes are cooperating with FRA through the Cooperative Forest Resource Questionnaire (CFRQ)¹, to harmonise definitions and reporting, thus improving data comparability and reducing the reporting burden. The experience of the regional processes has also been useful in constructing a global monitoring and reporting processes. Indeed, the UNSPF notes the desirability of improving regional and subregional cooperation, as a contribution to the implementation of the Global Forest Goals and Targets.

Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators

As a response to the complex situation described above (numerous forest related monitoring processes with independent mandates, but overlapping areas of concern), CPF is preparing a Global Core Set of Forest Related Indicators. An Organisation Led Initiative (OLI) as a contribution to UNFF in November 2016 “considered that a global core set of forest-related indicators, covering indicators for sustainable forest management, indicators for progress towards the forest related SDGs, targets and other internationally agreed goals on forests, and other indicators relevant for the UNSPF could be instrumental in streamlining reporting on forests and decreasing the reporting burden on countries. Such a global core set should address information needs of global forest related processes in a

¹ The partners in the CFRQ are, with FAO: the Central African Forests Commission, FOREST EUROPE, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Montréal Process and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

balanced way across the different sustainability dimensions, and include governance aspects addressing major forest-related issues.”

It is stressed that the objective of the Global Core Set is not to generate yet another set of indicators to compete with the existing sets, each of which has its own objectives, institutional framework, and geographic scope. Nor is it a new indicator set for sustainable forest management, parallel to the existing regional sets, SDG indicator 15.2.1 or the Goals and targets of the UN Forest Strategy. The aim is to articulate a core set with a limited number of indicators, which address efficiently the topics identified by the various high level fora, and thus focus data collection efforts on the questions of the highest policy importance.

Since the OLI there has been a process of consultation and discussion, notably at the FRA Expert Consultation in June 2017. The Global Core Set has not yet been finalised by the CPF, but the most recent version incorporating suggestions from the Expert Consultation is in Annex 2.

For most of the indicators in the Global Core set, reasonably satisfactory data are already available, through existing data collection processes, notably FRA. However, in a few cases, an indicator has been agreed which reflects a dimension which is, or should be, measurable, and is of political importance, but for which comparable, reliable, international data are not yet available. Thus the inclusion of a parameter in the Global Core Set does not yet indicate that data are available now. This applies in particular to GCS indicator 15 Number of forest dependent people in extreme poverty, which presents both conceptual and data collection problems, and in a lesser degree to indicators 4 (Area designated and/or managed for protection), 14 (area of degraded forest), 16 (financial resources from all sources for implementation of SFM), and 20 (Threatened forest dependent species).

The CPF will finalise the Global Core Set and submit it to UNFF in May 2018. Suggestions and recommendations by the Nairobi workshop will be transmitted to the CPF task Force on the global core set which will take them into account when finalising the global core set

Experience with the pilot reporting format

Objectives of the reporting cycle, and links between objectives and format

This section reports on experience with the pilot of the reporting format and discusses some issues which have arisen, from national comments or from preliminary analysis of the contributions received so far. On the basis of this discussion, recommendations for changes will be suggested, for the consideration of the workshop.

However, before starting this analysis, it is necessary to consider how the information being collected will be used, as the process of reporting should be designed to produce a desired output. In particular, does the reporting process aim to:

- develop and make available a body of knowledge on national implementation of the Strategic Plan and progress towards the Goals and Targets; or
- to provide a basis for a global synthesis, describing progress towards the Goals and Targets, for wide audience of policy makers, as well as those responsible for other forest-relevant policy areas?

Complementary objectives of a global synthesis report could also include:

- To promote the UNSPF across the UN system and among national governments
- To position UNFF as the authoritative voice on forest policy through informed analysis, based on national experience
- To boost communications and outreach efforts

Are these objectives mutually exclusive? After all, it might be said that the global synthesis must be based on national data. However, assuming at least 80 responses are received, as in the last reporting period, meaningful aggregation and overview becomes challenging because of the sheer weight of national information, and the perceived obligation to reflect in the final output all the information which has been collected. Furthermore, it is not acceptable to solicit a large amount of national level information on policy/institutional/financial/technical actions to implement the UNSPF, if these responses are not to be properly reflected in the final output.

Another dimension concerns the nature of the goals and targets, which are articulated at the global level. To achieve these targets, member states are expected to contribute in different ways, according to their national circumstances. This applies especially to Goals 1, 2 and 3, which specify outcomes at the global level, but less so to Goals 4, 5 and 6, which refer to actions to be taken by members or the international community. Thus, national reporting, which is of course the centre of the assessment exercise, is not sufficient by itself to monitor progress towards the Goals and Targets, especially if coverage is not complete, which is likely while reporting is voluntary, as is the case under UNFF.

Until now, UNFF, despite its central position in the UN system architecture on forests, has not produced a glossy flagship report along the lines of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, the IPCC reports or the biennial FAO publication State of the World's Forests. With regard to the latter, if UNFF were to produce a "flagship" report, UNFF would have to consult closely with other organizations, to avoid duplication, and focus on UNFF comparative advantage – or even join forces to produce a single study drawing on the strengths of each to provide an authoritative report on trends and policy implications in the context of the UNSPF, the Global Forest Goals and Targets and FRA 2020. At least one region, the UNECE Region (admittedly a region with a good statistical and institutional foundation), has already prepared a study on progress towards the Global Forest Goals², which demonstrated that such a report, based on quantitative data from international sources, and access to information on national policies and institutions, is technically possible.

The format, as it stands at the moment, is better suited to generating a series of comprehensive and structured national reports on implementation of the UNSPF. The Targets refer to the global level, so, to take the example of Target 1.1, a global target of an increase of 3% in forest area does not imply that every country's forest area would increase by 3%. In the absence of recorded commitments to voluntary national contributions, it would even be difficult to make objective statements at the national level as to whether or not there is progress towards the Targets, at least under Goals 1, 2 and 3.

To enable a global synthesis, it would be desirable to request shorter, more analytical, less detailed information on the actions taken by countries to achieve the targets, so that the analysts would be able to identify major trends and developments in the legislative/political, institutional, financial and technical/scientific actions taken by countries, and provide a global and/or regional synthesis. In the interests of global aggregation and synthesis, some pre-classification of the actions might help both to

² Forests in the ECE Region: Trends and Challenges in achieving the Global Objectives on Forests. ECE/FAO, 2015 (ECE/TIM/SP/37)

guide the respondents and to allow aggregation and synthesis, rather than a list of policy instruments, government expenditures and so on.

It seems that there is a trade-off between what could be called the “national reports” approach and the “global synthesis” approach, and that this should be recognised from the very beginning of the process. Nevertheless, one does not entirely exclude the other. For instance, a format designed to support the “global synthesis” approach with a few, relatively analytic questions, could also request comprehensive data on the various actions, notably national forest laws and programmes, which could then be made widely available, perhaps through a database, which could be regularly updated and which would be useful to many policy makers and scientists.

Information supplied by countries in the pilot of the reporting format

Responses received

Sixteen responses were received: Botswana, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, China, Gabon, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Finland, Malawi, Mauritius, Nepal, Philippines, Saint Lucia, and Switzerland. Of these, two (China and Finland) only provided comments on the format, while the others filled in the format for the pilot study. Jamaica and the Philippines filled in the format and provided comments on the format.

Coverage is satisfactory for Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, relatively weak for Europe, and absent for North, Central and South America. Only two of the ten countries with the largest forest resources in the world (China and Indonesia) responded. The pilot exercise may therefore be considered a satisfactory test of the format, but in no way can the answers be considered representative of wider regional or global trends, outside the responding countries

Coverage

The core part of the format is standard open-ended questions for each of the Global Forest Goals, which are quoted in full, for easy reference. For each Goal, respondents were invited to provide information on:

- actions in their country to move towards the Goal
 - legislative and policy action,
 - institutional action,
 - financial action ,
 - technical and scientific action,
 - other action,
- how the actions mentioned contribute to implementation of the UN Forest Instrument
- major challenges.
- examples of success stories,
- whether their country had announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to the goal.

Coverage of the core parts of the format was quite complete and evenly spread, as shown by table 1. Although fourteen countries responded by filling out the format, one only replied under GFGT 1, question A, with a general statement of policy. Thus, 100% coverage in table 1 may be put at 13 countries.

It is apparent from Table 1 that responses were received for most of the question from nearly all the countries participating in the pilot study.

Table 1

Number of responses, by GFGT and format question

	A. Law Policy	B. Institutions	C. Financial	D. Technical Scientific	2. Other	3. Support UNFI?	4. Main challenges	5. Success stories	6. VNCs
1	13	12	12	12	11	10	12	10	9
2	11	11	11	11	10	11	10	11	8
3	11	11	10	11	10	10	11	8	7
4	10	11	11	10	9	9	10	8	6
5	11	11	8	8	7	8	9	5	5
6	9	8	7	6	7	7	10	7	2

VNC: Voluntary national contribution

Coverage of GFGT 6 was a little weaker than that of other GFGTs, but this is not surprising as at least two of the targets in GFGT 6 are specifically directed at the international, not national, level. Coverage of the voluntary national contributions in table 1 is ambiguous as a “response” counted in the table may include reporting of a VNC or an answer saying there was no VNC, while some countries which had made no VNC left a blank. The issue of how voluntary national contributions could be treated in the format is discussed below.

The format also contains a number of supplementary questions (to GFGT 4, 5 and 6), to which respondents are invited to respond with Yes/no boxes, thus facilitating aggregation of answers given. There are also “other” questions, on gender equality and the International Day of Forests. The respondents were also invited to provide examples or provide background information. As table 2 shows, almost all of the respondents provided objective and usable answers to these questions, with slightly weaker responses to the questions on criteria and indicators, and on involvement of major groups.

Table 2

Number of responses to supplementary questions

Increased financial resources?	11
International cooperation for SFM?	12
Financing strategies for SFM and UNFI	12
Integration national SD plans and/or poverty reduction strategies	12
Steps taken to reduce trafficking	11
Mechanisms for cross sectoral coordination	12
Mechanisms for stakeholder involvement	12
Mechanisms to involve forest sector in cross sectoral land use coordination	12
Use of Criteria and indicators for SFM	6
Action to promote understanding and awareness	11

Involvement of major groups and stakeholders in implementation of strategic plan	9
Promotion of gender equality in forest sector	13
Observance of International Day of Forests	12

Scope and quality of responses

Many of the responses were comprehensive, clear and well documented with extensive background information, clearly presented. In fact, with minor editing, they could serve as free standing reports on forest policy and governance in the countries concerned for use by the general public and other stakeholders. Taken together, they would, if the pilot study is implemented at a global level with comprehensive responses from most countries, provide an excellent systematic account of forest sector policy and governance all over the world.

However, some challenges for analysis and synthesis do appear from the responses:

- There are numerous overlaps and duplications, between the information for the different goals and targets and between the “actions” listed under each. This is inevitable as the goals and targets are not independent of each other but interact. Typically, progress towards sustainable forest management in all its aspects will be addressed by a single forest law or national forest programme, which would then be cited under many GFGTs. Good governance, evidence based policy making, consensus forming and improved communication, among other things, will contribute to all of the goals and targets, and it is usually not possible to disentangle causes and effects, linking one policy instrument to a specific outcome or target. The goals and targets themselves are ambitious and broad in scope, and thereby difficult to link to any specific policy instrument (One country made a successful attempt to link the actions to specific targets, but was only able to do the for Goal 1.). The best indications of the cause-effect linkages were presented in answers to the questions “How do these measures contribute to implementation of the UNFI?” and “what are the major challenges?” which force the respondents to address the purpose and success of their country’s policy instruments. The question of the drivers of the major trends in the sector is of the greatest importance and interest at the global level, and has been frequently addressed by UNFF, but it will be hard to base such analysis on the information supplied through the format.
- The format focuses on national progress towards SFM, and national policy instruments. However, the global study which will be based on the information will address global, or regional trends, both in outcomes such as trends in forest area, harvest or threatened species, and in policy instruments such as NFPs or C&I systems. The challenge is to move from the comprehensive and detailed national information to something more general and analytic – without descending to lists which do not have any analytical input.
- Although most of the responses were comprehensive and clear, some replies were much longer than others, and some questions were interpreted differently by different respondents. In a few cases, respondents posed specific questions of comparability (e.g. does financing include REDD+?), but to generate clear guidance on such questions would imply a major effort of discussion and consensus forming, followed by briefing/interaction workshops with national correspondents, along the lines of FRA. If all answers were comprehensive and detailed, global level analysis would become rather complex and could even bias analysis towards the views of those countries which expressed their views in more detail. There is probably a need for more detailed guidelines and/or a process of briefing national

correspondents to ensure that all have the same understanding of what is expected, notably as regards the degree of detail required.

With regard to specific questions, a few issues became apparent on reading the answers to the format:

- When asked how the measures they had reported for that Goal “support the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument”, many respondents either said that all the measures promoted sustainable forest management/were in accordance with the objectives of the UNSPF, or made very general remarks. Few made specific links between the actions listed and the targets or goals. As a consequence, it will be challenging to identify drivers at the international level
- Several correspondents stated that they did not see the point of the question about technical and scientific action, considering that this was already covered by the various policy or institutional measures already listed.
- Respondents were invited to provide examples of success stories, and many did so. However, it will be difficult to make a synthesis of these examples. The best solution may be to make them available on the UNFF website, only referring to them in the paper itself

Availability of quantitative data

In order to reduce the reporting burden, and improve comparability of data, the format did not ask respondents for quantitative information on progress towards the goals and targets, as these would be supplied from existing international sources. This section of the workshop paper will show what quantitative data are available for use in the forthcoming reporting cycle, from what source, with what quality. It will also identify gaps, and action desirable to improve data quality and coverage.

The main source of quantitative data for the UNFF reporting cycle is the FAO Forest Resource Assessment (FRA). The latest FRA was issued in 2015, with data for that year; the next is scheduled for 2020, and will take the UNFF reporting needs, including the precise wording of the Global Forest Goals and Targets, into account in its planning. It is an official intergovernmental exercise, driven by an enquiry, with the conversion of national data to international standard definitions carried out in a rigorous and transparent manner. All data published by FRA have been endorsed by the ministry responsible for forests in the country to which they refer.

It is apparent that there are fundamental differences between monitoring trends for Goals 1,2 and 3, for which the targets are mostly formulated in terms of outcomes (e.g. change in forest area), and Goals 4,5 and 6, which mostly address the policy tools to be put in place. This difference is explicitly recognised and discussed in the Secretary General report on monitoring, assessment and reporting (E/CN.18/2017/3), para. 15. For Goals 1-3, objectively measured data on outcomes are the most appropriate monitoring approach, for Goals 4-6, where the targets mostly concern commitments to engage policy instruments or resources, monitoring of national policy instruments is more appropriate. The two sections are discussed separately below, although of course, all goals and targets have equal status, and should be monitored together.

Global Forest Goals 1, 2 and 3

There are twelve targets under these three Goals. For nine of these, quantitative data are available now, sometimes with more than one parameter to be monitored per target (when the target combines several objectives). Annex 1 shows, for each Target under these goals, what quantitative data are available to monitor trends. Workshop participants are invited to review the table (which is based on

the SG report), and suggest improvements, especially if a reliable international source of relevant quantitative data has been omitted.

Annex 3 presents data available for 2015 for most of the parameters identified. The intention is to show what type of information and trends might be available at the global and regional level, at present. For the great majority of these, FRA is the main source.

However, a number of questions arise for particular targets and the corresponding data:

- For 1.3, it is challenging to monitor trends for “degraded forests”, as there is as yet no consensus on definitions or measurement methods. An intense discussion on this is under way in FRA and GCS, linked also to UNCCD, for which the concept of “degraded land” is central.
- For 1.4, the concepts of “resilience” and “adaptive capacity” are also difficult to address in a standardised statistical way. FRA provides some data on fires and other disturbance, but there are still many problems of comparability and coverage. FRA 2015 requested data on other “disturbances” (e.g. insects, storms etc), but was not able to publish them, for data quality reasons.
- For 2.1, while “extreme poverty” is clearly defined in the SDG context, “forest dependent people” is not, and there are many different approaches. In fact, a recent article³ considers that “there are substantial divergences in who the term refers to, what each of its constituent words mean, and how many forest-dependent people there are globally” and proposes an 18 dimension taxonomy for analysis. The authors point out that “it is not intuitively obvious that either increasing or decreasing forest dependence in any of these dimensions is a policy objective that necessarily benefits the people in question or that is always desirable”. Data collection on the number of forest dependent people and their degree of poverty is not in place in a harmonised way, and would involve methods quite different to forest inventory, notably population surveys. Urgent action, on an intersectoral, multi-stakeholder basis, is needed if there are to be credible data on progress towards this Target.
- For 2.2, no credible statistical information is available on access of small-scale forest enterprises to financial services.
- For 2.3, although, there has been much discussion of the contribution of forests and trees to food security (see, in particular, SOFO 2016, which brought together much relevant information, although mostly on a case study basis), it is not yet possible to monitor in an objective way global progress towards this Target.
- In 2.4, a problem arises from the broad scope of the Target, which refers to the forest sector’s contribution to “social, economic and environmental development, among other things”. There is no specification of which contribution is meant. Therefore, a single indicator would not be sufficient, but a comprehensive list would be too long. It is proposed that three available data series be used: employment (social), share of forest sector in GDP (economic) and area of forest conserved for biodiversity (environmental). The workshop is invited to consider whether others should be added.
- The annex of the SG report suggests a number of sources of quantitative data, including some SDG indicators (9.3.1, 9.3.2, 2.3.1, 15.9.1). However, the SDG indicators mentioned are in

³ Who are forest-dependent people? A taxonomy to aid livelihood and land use decision-making in forested regions Peter Newton, Daniel C. Miller, Mugabi Augustine Ateenyi Byenkya, Arun Agrawal. Land Use Policy 57 (2016) 388–395 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2016.05.032>

some cases still classified “Tier III”⁴, and address issues which affect society as a whole, not just the forest sector (e.g. proportion of small-scale industries in total value added, Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size). These indicators certainly overlap with the relevant forest targets, but at present, it appears that they will not develop information specific to the forest sector, and are therefore not suited to monitor progress towards the Global Forest Goals and Targets.

Global Forest Goals 4, 5 and 6

These goals essentially address commitments to implement policy instruments at a national level, and as such cannot be monitored by the measurable outcomes. They are therefore suited to the approach used in the format, of inviting information from official national correspondents.

The format includes a number of “supplementary questions” focused on progress towards specific targets, notably targets 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.3, 6.4. These questions are sometimes in the form of tick boxes, which makes it much easier to aggregate answers. However, it is not stated directly in the supplementary questions which specific targets are being addressed. Thus the “supplementary questions” appear, at first sight, to be marginal, when in fact they are closely designed to elicit information on defined targets.

As shown above, most respondents provided specific answers to most of the “supplementary questions” and to the “other questions” (on gender equality and the International Day of Forests, which are not directly included in the goals and targets). However, there appears to be a risk of duplication between the standard structure (Law/policy, institutions, financial, technical/scientific), and the supplementary questions focused on particular targets. For instance the response under “financial action” for Goal 4 will certainly overlap with specific replies on Targets 4.2 and 4.2 (mobilising resources and forest-related financing)

The workshop may wish to consider how that part of the questionnaire could be streamlined. A possible solution would be to delete the open-ended standard questions for goals 4, 5 and 6, while maintaining the “supplementary questions”, but linking them clearly with the appropriate Targets. A final text box could invite respondents to provide any other information they considered relevant for Goal X. This would significantly reduce the reporting burden, and link the responses more closely to the Targets.

Some targets under Goal 6 refer to objectives which cannot be achieved by actions at the national level: target 6.1 refers to “forest-related programmes within the UN system”, target 6.2 refers to programme coordination between members of the CPF, and target 6.5 refers to involvement of major groups and other stakeholders in the implementation of the UNSPF. One solution, to avoid misunderstanding and unnecessary reporting, is to remove these targets from the formats for national reporting. Relevant authorities in the UN system, the CPF and the UNFF are best placed to report on the implementation of these targets. Countries may and do contribute to overseeing programmes, and the participation of stakeholders, but their action is quite indirect, so it is not necessary to invite all countries to report on national activity for these three targets.

⁴ No internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested.

Comments by countries on the format

Five countries, China, Finland, Indonesia, Jamaica and The Philippines provided comments on the format. They approved the format in general, and made some editorial corrections and proposals. Specific suggestions of substance are summarised below.

China

1. *Achievements made in achieving each goal could be added in the format under each Global Forest Goal.*
2. *Question 3 on actions supporting the implementation of the UNFI could be more specific to indicate the 25 measures on national policies and 19 measures on international cooperation contained in the UNFI, in order to avoid misunderstanding.*
3. *Actions in support of thematic areas for action associated with each goal listed in the annex of the UNSPF could be included.*
4. *As one action may contribute to achievement of several goals, such illustration could be added in the format to reduce duplication.*

Finland

- *Guidelines could be in a separate document or included in beginning of the reporting format*
- *Voluntary national contributions are still given too much emphasis in the format, and so we propose to delete the reference to them in the heading.*
- *In the reporting format only information which is **NOT** available from other sources should be asked.*
- *we would encourage the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the preparation of the national report, and it should even be asked in what kind of process the report was prepared*
- *Under each goal in the first and second question it is asked what types of action have been taken and what other actions is being taken by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others to advance or contribute and to support to the achievement of targets*
- *We feel that question 3 concerning how the actions listed in previous answers support the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument (UNFI) is irrelevant, as all actions supporting and promoting to the achievement of global forest goals and associated targets are contributing to the implementation of the UNFI.*
- *There are too many supplementary questions under goal 4 and they repeat what has already been asked in questions 1, 2 and 4-7. Especially supplementary questions 1 and 2 could be included in the guidelines*
- *We support the supplementary questions under goal 5 and we propose one additional supplementary questions concerning national forest policies, strategies and/or programmes*
- *it could also be considered whether all supplementary questions would be included in the detailed guidelines, as the same information would easily be given in question 1 under each goal asking A) legislative and policy actions, B) Institutional actions, C)*

Financial actions and D) Technical and scientific actions and in question 2 on other actions.

- *Voluntary national contributions need further discussion and clarification. At this stage it would be very difficult to answer the related question.*
- *The final question concerning gender equality should be reformulated like we commented before. “Since 2015, how has gender equality evolved (improved or deteriorated) in the forest sector your country?”*

Indonesia

Indonesia noted that the “ticking” of the boxes had to be done manually, and that the format should be improved in a technical way to make the respondents’ task easier

Jamaica

- *Overall the team found the questions clear and concise and relevant to the subject matter, though the structure and format of the format was a little difficult to manoeuvre.*
- *The team found Goal 3 and Goal 4 challenging to respond to as the terms ‘increase significantly’ and ‘mobilise significantly increased’ were difficult to measure or interpret. What would a significant increase look like? If we had an increase- how would we determine if it is significant? Significant to who? Consideration may need to be given to a quantitative measure for the targets associated with this goal.*

The Philippines

The Philippines would like to request a document which provides guidance when completing the reporting format in order for Member States to understand the rationale of each question and how it should be answered in relation to a Global Forest Goal.

The Forum must agree on definitions of some terms used in the draft reporting format and also in the United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests, in order for all Member States to have the same comprehension of the things discussed in the plan and in the Global Forest Goals. During the consultation with stakeholders, the words that need to be defined are:

- *Financial action*
- *Institutional action*
- *Financing strategies*
- *Forest dependent people*
- *Public – Private Partnership*

We would also like to request the Secretariat to clarify question no. 3 wherein the Member State is asked how the legislative, institutional, technical and financial actions support the implementation of the United Nations Forest Instrument since all the targets and thematic areas in each Global Forest Goal reflect the policies, measures, and actions set out in the United Nations Forest Instrument.

Finally, we would recommend that Global Forest Goal No. 6 is not applicable for national reporting; however, we were able to answer its supplementary questions.

Voluntary national contributions

According to the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, “members may, on a voluntary basis, determine their contributions towards achieving the global forest goals and targets, and other forest related commitments and goals and communicate their progress to the UNFF at regular intervals determined by the Forum .In order to avoid any additional reporting burden, such voluntary communications on their voluntary national contributions may be part of their voluntary reporting on the strategic plan

and the United Nations forest instrument” (see UNSPF paras 30, 31, 32 and 67). Furthermore, under the strategic plan, “Format for voluntary national contributions and voluntary announcement, where appropriate “is on the agenda for all of the forthcoming UNFF sessions Despite this mention in the UNSPF, no formal process has yet been put in place to announce voluntary national contributions or centralise information on them. At present therefore, no voluntary national contributions in the context of the UNSPF have been formally communicated.

As it stands at present, the format asks respondents “If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal X, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far”. The format contains no further background information about voluntary national contributions. In this box, some respondents referred to the main points of their policy instruments, repeating statements made earlier, while others stated that their government had made no commitments in this area. One country, Ghana, articulated formal voluntary national contributions to under each of the Goals: it is not clear whether these commitments have been recorded elsewhere than in this pilot format. Finland recommended to delete this question. This situation is difficult for respondents, who have either to announce that they have made no contribution or refer to a commitment made outside the frame of UNSPF, often, in the process, repeating their stated national policy objectives, mentioned earlier in the format.

Possible “final product”

In the context of the discussion above about the necessary links between the format and the final product – a report to UNFF on progress in implementing the strategic plan – this section proposes for discussion how a possible report might be structured and prepared. The workshop is invited to review these suggestions, and recommend how they should be improved.

Structure

The UN Strategic Plan for Forests is a complex document, with many facets. Ultimately UNFF should be informed, in a comprehensive and detailed way about progress on all facets. However, the most visible and important commitments, and those of greatest interest to policy makers inside and outside the forest sector are the Global Forest Goals and their associated Targets. It is recommended therefore that the flagship report focus strongly on the goals and targets, bringing together, for each, observed trends and actions taken by countries to support positive trends and oppose negative trends. There should also be a strong emphasis on the Voluntary National Contributions, provided consensus has been reached on this. The report should be in a position, to draw attention to areas where progress has been satisfactory as well as to areas where it has not, based on evidence supplied by countries, and analysed in a transparent and objective way, following the structures and concepts already developed and agreed in the UNFF context. The partners of UNFF, notably the other members of the CPF should be closely involved in preparing the study, as each brings its own specific point of view and expertise on challenges which are recognised as being complex and multi-sectoral.

Likewise, the report should aim to communicate to a wider audience, including the SDG process, and the Rio conventions, the successes and failures observed in the implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as the lessons learned

Of necessity, the focus of the report will be global, with differentiation by region. It will not be possible or desirable to analyse trends and challenges for individual countries, which carry, in any case, the ultimate responsibility for sustainable forest management in the country. Nevertheless, the reporting process will generate many success stories and lessons learnt from individual countries, which should not remain invisible. There might be two consequences:

- There could be short boxes throughout the report which highlight significant experiences at the national or subnational level, each with a link to a website where more background can be found
- All the national reports and success stories could be made available in a dedicated website, which can serve as a source of information for other countries and agencies, researchers and the general public

Methods

There are many analytical challenges in preparing an ambitious and complex report like the one proposed, including finding reliable data, linking it in a transparent and objective way to the agreed targets, describing the major developments underlying recorded trends, while taking account of different national circumstances, combining analysis of many different indicators in a wide range of fields into a broad picture of sustainable forest management, avoiding excessive praise or criticism etc. Thus, the process of data gathering and reporting on national developments (passing of forest laws, agreement on policy objectives, finding financial resources etc.) is only the first step in preparing a meaningful and useful report. This must be taken into account when planning the process: a team of well qualified analysts is needed, as well as strong strategic guidance by an advisory group or similar body, and significant resources. Last but not least, sufficient time must be set aside, after information gathering and national reporting, for analysis, drafting, peer review and formal approval. If this time and resources are not available, there is always a significant risk that the valuable data gathered is not used to its full potential. This would represent a significant opportunity cost to UNFF and the global forest sector as a whole.

Suggested timeline for a reporting system to monitor progress towards GFGTs

The following is suggested as an approximate timeline for the monitoring process, in reverse chronological order

2021: Review by UNFF of progress in implementation of Strategic Plan, based on the full study of progress towards goals and targets, issued well in advance of UNFF session, to enable review by experts, major groups and the official community

2020: Circulation to all national focal points of revised format for voluntary reporting; Workshop for national focal points on responding to format, aimed at developing common understanding of the format. Preparations start for full study: advisory group formed, lead authors identified, outline agreed etc. Analysis of information supplied by countries in response to revised format, and of data emerging from FRA 2020. Resources and team put in place for study

2019: UNFF prepares Secretary General Report and discusses the possibility of a “flagship report” based on voluntary reporting, and, if agreed, issues guidance for the full study.

2018: Circulation to all national focal points of revised format for voluntary reporting

2017: Format revised in the light of workshop discussion.

The workshop is invited to review and revise all aspects of this timeline, which might be submitted to the UNFF Bureau before the next session.

Recommendations for future steps and areas of possible improvement

of the reporting format

On the basis of the above, some changes to the reporting format are proposed. These mostly move the format in the direction of a “global synthesis” approach, without, however, abandoning the concept of a repository of national reports:

1. Voluntary national contributions should be clearly labelled as such, preferably in a separate part of the format, possibly with a breakdown by Goal and/or target. If this information is collected and made available in a separate process the questions on voluntary national contributions should be removed from the format.
2. On the basis of the workshop discussions, draft *more detailed guidelines*, and brief correspondents on what is expected of them. If possible a workshop should be organised to ensure there is a common understanding of the guidelines, and help respondents in their task. This approach has been used very successfully for FRA.
3. Reduce the *maximum length of the answers* requested to 100 words per box, and enforce this limitation in the format, making longer answers impossible.
4. Countries should be invited to provide, in addition to the compressed answers in the boxes, free standing *comprehensive descriptions of actions taken to achieve the goals*, attached to their answers. These free standing descriptions of national actions to implement the goals could be drawn on by the secretariat as necessary in drafting the report, and provide the core of a dedicated website where interested researchers or the general public could obtain comprehensive information implementation of the UNSPF
5. Collect examples of *success stories* in a separate part of the format, and ask respondents to say to which Goal/Target they contribute (one success story may contribute to several goals or targets). Create a website of success stories.
6. *Clarify* what is meant by “technical and financial action”
7. State at the beginning, in non-formal language, what *the purpose of the exercise* is, how the information will be used, and by whom, that the information will be made public etc.
8. *Improve layout and design* to help both respondents and analysts (easy transfer of replies to databases for analysis)
9. Clearly *link the “supplementary questions” under Goals 4, 5 and 6 to the relevant Targets*, and invite countries to provide brief accounts of other actions taken to achieve these Goals (maximum 100 words per Goal). Delete the more detailed requests (legislative and policy action, institutional action, financial action, technical and scientific action, other action), for these Goals, as they generate duplications.
10. For some targets under Goals 1, 2 and 3 usable quantitative information from international sources is unlikely to be available for most countries. For these Targets, ask countries to provide quantitative information, with suggestions as to what type of information might be supplied. This request could address targets 2.1 (extreme poverty of forest dependent people), 2.2 (access of small scale enterprises to financial services), and 2.3 (contribution of forest and trees to food security). If progress is made in the meantime by international agencies in providing this information in time for use in the study, these questions could be dropped from the format.

11. Remove references to targets 6.1, 6.2 and 6.5, as implementation of these targets is primarily the responsibility of, respectively, the UN system, the CPF and the UNFF itself, not of national policy makers.

The workshop is invited to review the above recommendations, as well as others which may arise during the discussion, and prepare a revised format.

Conclusions

The workshop is invited, on the basis of the information and suggestions contained in this paper, to:

- Discuss the possible objectives and format of the report to be presented to UNFF on progress in the implementation of the strategic plan for forests, and agree on suggestions, which should be taken into account when considering the reporting process
- Review the proposed changes to the format used in the pilot enquiry, and agree on changes for the next round
- Review the likely availability of quantitative data relevant to monitoring progress towards the targets, suggesting additional sources of information, and prepare recommendations to actual or potential suppliers of relevant information about improvements to the data, or new indicators (e.g. on extreme poverty of forest-dependent people)
- For those targets for which it appears likely that satisfactory information will not be available from international data providers, suggest alternative arrangements, including a separate enquiry asking countries to make available any relevant information they may have, to help the analysts in their task
- Review the timeline for reporting and following studies, modify as necessary and agree a proposal for submission to the next session of UNFF
- Review the proposals above for organisation of the work, modify as necessary and agree a proposal for submission to the next session of UNFF
- To review the latest version of the Global Core Set of forest related indicators (annex 2), from the point of view of a major user of the Global Core Set, and prepare suggestions for improvement for transmission to the CPF Task Force on the GCS.
- Recommend to UNFF and its partners that sufficient resources be made available for the report in 2021.

Annex 1: List of sources of quantitative data for goals 1, 2 and 3 and target 4.1 that could supplement information provided in national reports

Note: this list includes sources which are probably in a position to supply usable information for a comprehensive global study of trends in the period 2015-2020. It does not include indicators for which data are not yet available. This is the case in particular for some of the indicators in the Global Core Set, which have been identified as important and policy-relevant, but for which reliable data are not yet available.

<i>Target number</i>	<i>Relevant target/indicator text</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.1	Forest area is increased by 3 per cent worldwide		
1.1.1	Average annual forest area net change (hectares)	FAO/FRA	Also used for SDG 15.1.1
1.2	The world's forest carbon stocks are maintained or enhanced		
1.2.1 ^a	Carbon stock in above ground forest biomass (tons C)	FAO/FRA	Data not reliable for forest soil carbon
1.2.2	Average annual forest carbon stock change (tons C)	FAO/FRA	Derived from 1.2.1
1.2.3	Carbon storage in harvested wood products (tons C)	National reporting in framework of UNFCCC	Supplement by scientific studies/modelling
1.3	By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally		
1.3.1	Progress towards sustainable forest management	FAO/FRA (SDG indicator 15.2.1)	Five sub-indicators, all supplied by FAO/FRA
1.3.2	Average annual change in area of natural and planted forest (hectares)	FAO/FRA	Addresses “deforestation”, “afforestation” and “reforestation”
1.3.3	Average annual change in area of degraded forest (hectares)	FAO/FRA	Challenge of defining “degraded forest”
1.4	The resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change is significantly strengthened worldwide		
1.4.1	Area of forest disturbed by insects (thousands of hectares)	FAO/FRA	These data not published in FRA 2015
1.4.2	Area of forest disturbed by diseases (thousands	FAO/FRA	These data not published in

<i>Target number</i>	<i>Relevant target/indicator text</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Comment</i>
	of hectares)		FRA 2015
1.4.3	Area of forest disturbed by severe weather events (thousands of hectares)	FAO/FRA	These data not published in FRA 2015
1.4.5	Area of forest disturbed by burning (thousands of hectares)	FAO/FRA	Need to distinguish naturally occurring wildfires from “disturbance”
1.4.6	Area of forest disturbed by other sources (thousands of hectares)	FAO/FRA	These data not published in FRA 2015
2.1	Extreme poverty for all forest-dependent people is eradicated		
2.1.1	Percentage change in the number of forest-dependent people or livelihoods of forest-dependent people	To be developed	Challenge to define “forest-dependent”, then to collect data. Discussed in SOFO 2016
2.2	Increase the access of small-scale forest enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets		
2.2.1	Proportion of small-scale industries in total industry value added	SDG indicator 9.3.1	At present “Tier III” only, and no indication that separate data are available on forests
2.2.2	Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit	SDG indicator 9.3.2	At present “Tier III” only, and no indication that separate data are available on forests
2.3	The contribution of forests and trees to food security is significantly increased		
2.3.1	Availability of and access to forest food	To be developed	Only case studies available (SOFO 2016)
2.3.2	Forest-related income providing access to food	To be developed	Only case studies available (SOFO 2016)
2.3.3	Contribution of forest ecosystems to food production	To be developed	Only case studies available (SOFO 2016)
2.3.4	Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status	SDG indicator 2.3.2	At present “Tier III” only, and no indication that separate data are available on forests
2.4	The contribution of forest industry, other forest-based enterprises and forest ecosystem services to social, economic and environmental development, among other things, is significantly increased		
			Target is loosely defined, and thus impossible to measure directly. It is suggested to use three indicators, one for each

<i>Target number</i>	<i>Relevant target/indicator text</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Comment</i>
			type of contribution
2.4.1	Employment in the forest sector (social indicator) (Number of jobs FTE ⁵)	FAO/FRA	
2.4.2	Share of forest sector in GDP (economic indicator) (%)	FAO	Published in SOFO 2014. Monitored by FAO
2.4.3	Share of forest area legally protected for conservation of biodiversity (environmental indicator) (%)	FAO/FRA	Exact wording of parameter may be adjusted to the definition used in FAO/FRA
2.5	The contribution of all types of forests to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation is enhanced, taking into account the mandates and ongoing work of relevant conventions and instruments		
2.5.1	Share of forest area legally protected for conservation of biodiversity (%)	FAO/FRA	Combine/cross-check with forest relevant reporting through CBD on SDG indicator 15.1.2 ⁶
2.5.2	Progress towards national targets relevant to forests established in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020	SDG indicator 15.9.1, adjusted to cover only forest relevant national targets	Modalities to be agreed with CBD
3.1	The area of forests worldwide designated as protected areas or conserved through other effective area-based conservation measures is significantly increased		
3.1.1	Share of forest area legally protected for conservation of biodiversity (%)	FAO/FRA	Targets 2.4, 2.5 and 3.1 have considerable overlap, notably as regards conservation of forest biodiversity
3.2	The area of forests under long-term forest management plans is significantly increased		
3.2.1	Forest area with a long-term forest management plan (hectares)	FAO/FRA	
3.3	The proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests is significantly increased		
3.3.1	Estimated roundwood production from certified	ECE/FAO, FSC,	There is at present no direct tracking of volumes of

⁵ Equivalent of full time employment.

⁶ Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type

<i>Target number</i>	<i>Relevant target/indicator text</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Comment</i>
	forests	PEFC	roundwood produced by certified forests, but rough estimates are possible. Data from SDG 15.2.1, as measured at present, do not make it possible to identify specific forests which are sustainably managed.
4.1 ^b	Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation		
4.1.1	Financial resources from official development assistance for sustainable forest management	OECD DAC	Data on ODA have been supplied to UNFF in the past
4.1.2	Financial resources from all sources (except official development assistance) for the implementation of sustainable forest management	To be developed	The present draft of GCS has an indicator referring to this target, but at present, no methodology, definitions, or responsible agency has been agreed.

Abbreviations: FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; FRA, forest resources assessment; OLI, organization-led initiative; SDG, Sustainable Development Goal.

^a Subindicators should make direct reference to the current reporting scope and level of the reporting framework under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and consider the difference between the countries listed in annex I to the Convention and those not so listed, as applicable.

^b The sum of the amounts in proposed indicators 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 is equal to the total financing available.

Annex 2: Relation between Global Core Set of Forest Related Indicators (as of October 2017) and policy commitments

	GCS Indicator	Thematic element	SDG	GFGT	Aichi
1	Forest area net change rate	1	15.1.1 15.2.1	1.1 1.3	T5 T14
2	Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas	2	15.2.1	1.3 2.5 3.1	T11
3	Above-ground biomass stock in forest	4	15.2.1	1.3 2.5	T7
4	Forest area designated and/or managed for protection of soil, water, infrastructure and managed natural resources	5		1.4	
5	Employment related to the forest sector	6		2.4	
6	Existence of policies, strategies and institutions which explicitly encourage SFM	7		5.1 5.3 5.4	
7	Existence of national or sub-national forest assessment process	7		4.5	
8	Existence of a national or sub-national stakeholder platform	7		5.3 6.3	
9	Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan	7	15.2.1	1.3 3.2	T7
10	Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme	7	15.2.1	1.3 3.3	
11	Volume of wood removals	4		2.4	
12	Existence of traceability system(s) for wood products	7		3.3 5.2	
13	Proportion of forest area disturbed (or reword to gain consistency with FRA 2020)	3		1.4	
14	Area of degraded forest	3	15.3.1	1.3	T15
15	Number of forest dependent people in extreme poverty	6		2.1	
16	Financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management	7		4.1 4.2	
17	Total supply of wood-based energy	4	7.2.1		
18	Net GHG sink/source of forests, and carbon storage in harvested wood products	7		1.2 2.5	
19	Change in area of primary forests	2		1.3	T5
20	Number of threatened forest dependent species/trends in keystone/indicator species for forests	2			T5

Annex 3: Data available from international sources at present to monitor trends

Set out below are draft tables, with data by region, from international comparable sources, mostly FRA 2015, to demonstrate how the progress to the Global Forest Goals and Targets might be monitored

Trends, 2010-2020, for Global Forest Goal 1

Table 1
Trends in forest area

	Forest area (million ha)			Annual percent change	
	2010	2015	2020	2010-2015	2015-2020
Africa	638	624		-0.08	
Asia	589	593		-0.45	
Europe	1014	1015		0.13	
North and Central America	750	751		0.04	
Oceania	172	174		0.01	
South America	852	842		0.18	
World	4016	3999		-0.08	

Source FRA

Table 2
Changes in carbon stocks in above and below ground forest biomass

	Carbon in biomass (Gt)			Change (Gt)	
	2010	2015	2020	2010-2015	2015-2020
Africa	61	60		-1.1	
Asia	37	36		-0.9	
Europe	44	45		1.1	
North and Central	36	36		0.3	

America					
Oceania	16	16		0.1	
South America	104	103		-0.9	
World	298	296		-1.4	

Source FRA 2015

Table 3

Trends in area of natural and planted forest (million ha)

	Natural forest					Planted forest				
	Area			Change		Area			Change	
	2010	2015	2020	2010-2015	2015-2020	2010	2015	2020	2010-2015	2015-2020
Africa	616	600		-16		15	16		1	
Asia	467	462		-5		120	129		9	
Europe	929	929		0		78	80		2	
North and Central America	706	704		-2		41	43		3	
Oceania	167	168		1		4	4		0	
South America	792	781		-11		13	14		2	
World	3677	3644		-33		271	287		16	

Source FRA 2015

Table 4

Implementation of SFM (components of SDG 15.2.1) (final version would have 2015 and 2020 instead of 2010 and 2015)

	Forest area net change rate	Above-ground biomass stock in forest	Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas	Proportion of forest area under a long term forest management plan ⁷	Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification

⁷ Data on long term management plans were not collected by FRA 2015, but will be collected by FRA 2020. For that reason, no data yet on management plans in 2015

	% / yr over 5 yrs		Gt		%		%		scheme ⁸	
	2010	2015	2010	2015	2010	2015	2010	2015	Million ha	
									2010	2015
Africa	-0.51	-0.08	61	60	12.3	13.5	16.3		7.3	6.5
Asia	0.29	-0.45	37	36	14.3	15.3	64.7		8.6	13.1
Europe	0.19	0.13	44	45	5.0	5.1	95.0		110.2	172.5
North and Central America	0.06	0.04	36	36	16.1	16.4	65.8		199.8	217.3
Oceania	-0.51	0.01	16	16	18.8	19.6	24.1		11.6	12.5
South America	-0.38	0.18	104	103	12.7	13.3	16.0		14.4	17.1
World	-0.08	-0.08	298	296	11.6	12.12	52.6		356.7	439.0

Source FRA

Target 1.4 refers to “the resilience and adaptive capacity” of forests, a concept which it is difficult, if not impossible, to measure directly at the national level. Relevant data concern the opposite of resilience which is damage or disturbance, for instance by fire, insects, disease or abiotic causes such as storms. However, these concepts also have significant measurement problems and FRA 2015 is only able to provide global data on area burnt, which are shown in the table.

Table 5

Area of forest burnt

	Area burnt (mio ha) (5 yr av.)			Share of total forest		
	2010	2015	2020	2010	2015	2020
Africa	16.0			2.6		
Asia	1.2			0.2		
Europe	2.7			0.3		
North and Central America	3.0			0.4		
Oceania	5.4			3.2		
South America	28.6			3.4		
World	56.9			1.5		

Source FRA 2015 (latest fire data for 2012, no estimates possible for 2015)

⁸ Source ECE/FAO FPAMR. NB country groupings slightly different

Trends, 2010-2015, for Global Forest Goal 2

2.1 Nothing quantitative yet available on GCS 15 “number of forest dependent people in extreme poverty”, but there is an excellent discussion/synthesis in SOFO 2014, which can be summarised.

2.2 No international data on access to financial services of small-scale forest enterprises

2.3 No simple statistical data on contribution of forests and trees to food security, but several large studies, notably State of the World’s Forests 2016, which should make it possible to show broad trends

2.4 “Contribution to social, economic and environmental development” is too wide to be directly measured. I suggest tables on forest sector share of GDP, and forest employment, which are available.

2.5 Tables on protected areas (FRA) trends in above ground biomass stock (proxy for carbon/climate change issues) (source: FRA 2015), as well as net GHG sink/source of forests (from IPCC/UNFCCC)

Table 6

Progress towards Aichi biodiversity targets in forests

(summarise CBD reports on progress towards Aichi targets, if we can get breakdown of forest component)

Table 7

Area of forest conserved for biodiversity

	Forest conserved for biodiversity (million ha)			Change (million ha)		Percent of total forest		
	2010	2015	2020	2010-2015	2015-2020	2010	2015	2020
Africa	50	92		42		12.3	13.5	
Asia	81	86		5		14.3	15.3	
Europe	49	53		4		5.0	5.1	
North and Central America	119	127		8		16.1	16.4	
Oceania	9	36		27		18.8	19.6	
South America	101	130		30		12.7	13.3	
World	408	524		116		11.6	12.12	

Source FRA 2015

Table 8

Share of forest sector Gross Value Added (GVA) in GDP, 2014 (%)

I assume this can be got from IPCC or similar

Trends, 2010-2015, for Global Forest Goal 3

3.1 area of protected (for soil and water) forest, and area conserved for biodiversity (Both FRA 2015) (same as earlier table!!)

Table 11

Area under long term management plan (FMP)

	Area with FMP		% with FMP	
	2005	2010	2005	2010
Africa	55	98	9.0	16.3
Asia	257	274	62.8	64.7
Europe	935	936	95.2	95.0
North and Central America	203	210	64.0	65.8
Oceania	38	39	22.8	24.1
South America	93	108	13.4	16.0
World	1581	1664	49.7	52.6

Source FRA 2010

Table 12

Area of certified forest and production of wood from certified forest

	Area certified FSC and PEFC (mio ha)			Production of roundwood from certified forest (mio m3)		
	2010	2014	2020	2010	2014	2020
Africa						
Asia						
Europe						
North and Central America						
Oceania						
South America						
World	288	441				

Source FRA 2015

TABLE 2.3.1
Estimated global and regional supply of roundwood from certified resources, 2014-2016

	Total forest area (million ha)	Certified forest area (million ha)			Certified forest area (%)			Estimated industrial roundwood from certified forests (million m ³)			Estimated proportion of total roundwood production from certified forests (%)		
		2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
North America	614.2	221.3	217.3	206.8	36.0	35.4	33.7	250.5	245.9	234.0	14.1	13.9	13.2
Western Europe	168.1	106.6	109.6	106.8	63.4	65.2	63.6	251.1	258.1	251.7	14.2	14.6	14.2
CIS	836.9	55.5	62.9	62.9	6.6	7.5	7.5	10.6	12.0	12.0	0.6	0.7	0.7
Oceania	191.4	12.6	12.5	12.6	6.6	6.5	6.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	0.2	0.2	0.2
Africa	674.4	6.4	6.5	7.8	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.9	2.0	2.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Latin America	955.6	16.3	17.1	17.8	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.2	1.3	1.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Asia	592.5	14.1	13.1	18.3	2.4	2.2	3.1	4.5	4.2	5.9	0.3	0.2	0.3
World total	4,033.1	432.8	439.0	432.8	10.7	10.9	10.7	523.5	527.1	510.9	29.6	29.8	28.8

Notes: Estimates of forest area (excluding "other wooded land") and industrial roundwood production from certified forests are based on data in FAO (2010). The annual roundwood production in "forests available for wood supply" in a given region or subregion is multiplied by the percentage of that region or subregion's certified forest area (i.e. it is assumed that the removals of industrial roundwood from each hectare of certified forest is the same as the average for all forest available for wood supply). Not all certified roundwood is sold with a label. 2014, 2015 and 2016 represent May of the prior year to May of the current year. "World" is not a simple total of the regions and subregions. The data shown take into account estimated overlaps of 29.5 million hectares (as of May 2016) and 7.5 million hectares (as of May 2014 and May 2015) due to double certification. Information is valid as of May 2016. FSC data are as of April 2016; PEFC data are as of March 2016.

Sources: FAO, 2010; FSC, 2016a; PEFC, 2016a; SFI, 2016a, b; authors' compilation.

This table could be used to generate the required information.

Trends, 2010-2015, for Global Forest Goal 5

Global Forest Goal 5 essentially focuses on governance issues and is thus not well suited to international comparable data on outcomes: the main source of information will be reports supplied by countries on whether governance of forest related issues in their country is consistent with the targets specified under GFG 5.

The Global Core Set of Forest related indicators calls for two relevant indicators:

- "existence of policies, strategies and institutions which explicitly encourage SFM", which addresses in practice the whole of GFG 5:
- "Existence of a national or subnational stakeholder platform", which addresses part of target 5.3

FRA 2015 has data very similar to those addressed by the Global Core Set (see tables).

Table 13

Number and forest area of countries with policies supporting SFM and with a national stakeholder platform for SFM

	Countries with policies supporting SFM		Countries with stakeholder platform	
	Number	Forest area (mio ha)	Number	Forest area (mio. Ha)
Africa				
Asia				
Europe				
North and Central				

America				
Oceania				
South America				
World	146	3919	126	3771

Source FRA 2015 (regional data can be calculated)

Annex 4: Draft outline of flagship study

(Note: this is a rough outline. No doubt in the final version, more detail would be desirable, notably analysis and assessment at the level of targets, not only goals, and of regions, not only global totals)

Progress towards the Global Forest Goals – the first report

1. Introduction
 - a. Mandate
 - b. Objectives of the study
 - c. Process
 - d. Data sources and quality
 - e. Acknowledgements
2. Global Forest Goal 1
 - a. Trends and developments 2010-2015-2018
 - b. Actions at the national level (legal/policy, institutional, financial, technical/scientific)
 - c. Voluntary National Contributions referring to Goal 1⁹
 - d. Are we on track for Global Forest Goal 1 and its associated targets?
3. Global Forest Goal 2
 - a. Trends and developments 2010-2015-2018
 - b. Actions at the national level (legal/policy, institutional, financial, technical/scientific)
 - c. Voluntary National Contributions referring to Goal 2
 - d. Are we on track for Global Forest Goal 2 and its associated targets?
4. Global Forest Goal 3
 - a. Trends and developments 2010-2015-2018
 - b. Actions at the national level (legal/policy, institutional, financial, technical/scientific)
 - c. Voluntary National Contributions referring to Goal 3
 - d. Are we on track for Global Forest Goal 3 and its associated targets?
5. Global Forest Goal 4
 - a. Trends and developments 2010-2015-2018
 - b. Actions at the national level (legal/policy, institutional, financial, technical/scientific)
 - c. Voluntary National Contributions referring to Goal 4
 - d. Are we on track for Global Forest Goal 4 and its associated targets?
6. Global Forest Goal 5
 - a. Trends and developments 2010-2015-2018
 - b. Actions at the national level (legal/policy, institutional, financial, technical/scientific)
 - c. Voluntary National Contributions referring to Goal 5
 - d. Are we on track for Global Forest Goal 5 and its associated targets?
7. Global Forest Goal 6
 - a. Trends and developments 2010-2015-2018
 - b. Actions at the national level (legal/policy, institutional, financial, technical/scientific)
 - c. Voluntary National Contributions referring to Goal 6
 - d. Are we on track for Global Forest Goal 6 and its associated targets?
8. Conclusions
 - a. Overview of progress towards the Global Forest Goals/what have we learned about the sustainability of management of the world's forests?

⁹ For the pilot study, it would only be possible to report the commitments made (for all Goals). Later studies could report on progress achieved in moving towards those commitments

- b. Which targets are “on track” and which are not?
- c. Lessons learned: which instruments have promoted progress towards the Goals and which have not? Trade-offs (between targets and between policy instruments)?