



**CONCEPT NOTE | UNFF14 Panel**

**“Communication and Outreach and International Day of Forests 2019”**

**Item 3(a) of the UNFF 14 provisional agenda *Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030- Technical discussion and exchange of experiences***

**Item 7 (f) of the UNFF 14 provisional agenda *Communication and outreach activities***

**7 May 2019, 4:30pm - 6:00pm**

**Introduction**

In crafting the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030, Members of the Forum recognized that communication and outreach efforts would be essential in implementing the Plan, to raise awareness, both within and outside the forest sector, of the vital ways of forests and trees contribute to life on Earth and to the well-being of people everywhere. Paragraph 73 of the Strategic Plan directed the Forum to develop a communication and outreach strategy for the Strategic Plan that identified target audiences, key messages, methods, activities and success criteria.

In accordance with this mandate, UNFF13 adopted an ambitious “Communication and Outreach Strategy for the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030” (contained in Annex 1 of the UNFF13 resolution). The Strategy aims to: (1) Raise awareness within and outside the forest sector of the vital importance of forests and trees to life on Earth and human well-being, (2) promote sustainable forest management, (3) raise awareness of the GFGs and encourage implementation of the UNSPF 2030 and (4) amplify communications from the forest community.

The Strategy institutionalizes the Forum’s long-standing recognition that awareness-raising activities can provide a framework for interactive communication and information exchange and facilitate cross-sectoral and cross-institutional cooperation and coordination. It also provides a framework for Members of the Forum and relevant partners and stakeholders in planning communication and outreach activities in support of implementation of the UNSPF 2030.

One of the primary platforms for raising awareness on forests worldwide is the International Day of Forests, which is celebrated annually on 21 March<sup>1</sup>. The Day is one of the many avenues through which Members of the Forum and partners and stakeholders can galvanize greater action in support of UNSPF 2030 and its Global Forest Goals and targets. The themes of the Day provide an opportunity to highlight the interlinkages between forests and other sustainable development issues, and between the Global Forest Goals and specific SDGs under review at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). In keeping with this, the theme of the 2019 International Day of Forests was “Forests and Education” which provided an opportunity to highlight the interlinkages between forests and SDG 4 (“Quality education”), one of six SDGs under review by HLPF 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> The International Day of Forests was established in 2012, building on the success of the International Year of Forests in 2011.



### **Intersessional work**

Since UNFF13, the Secretariat has undertaken numerous activities in line with and taking forward the Communication and Outreach Strategy for the UNSPF 2030. Paragraphs 61-66 of the Note by the Secretariat on Agenda items 3 and 8 (E/CN.18/2019/2<sup>2</sup>) provide information on these activities, and paragraph 96 (Section B) contains suggestions and proposals. Paragraphs 79-82 of the Note by the Secretariat on Agenda item 7 (E/CN.18/2019/6<sup>3</sup>) also provide information on intersessional activities, including celebration of the International Day of Forests 2018 and 2019. Paragraph 86 contains suggestions and proposals.

### **Panel objective, modalities and output**

The purpose of the panel is to discuss best practices and success stories related to communication and outreach, including activities carried out in the context of the International Day of Forests 2019. Following panel presentations, Forum participants are encouraged to share their communication and outreach activities and provide suggestions on best practices that could be replicated and built upon. Presentations by the panelists and the subsequent interactive discussions among UNFF14 participants and the panelists will address the following questions:

- What are some of the success criteria of communication and outreach activities on the issue of forests?
- Are there particular issues/constraints that are unique to forests as an area? Any stereotypes or misperceptions that need to be addressed?
- How can we improve coordination in communication, so that the many messages, events and activities complement each other?

Key points/proposals emerging from the presentations and subsequent discussion will be reflected as appropriate in the Chair's summary report to UNFF15.

### **Panel composition**

Moderator: Mr. Rob Busink, Vice-Chair of the UNFF14 Bureau

Panelists:

1. Ms. Mita Sen, Programme Management Officer, UNFF Secretariat
2. Ms. Peter Csoka, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO
3. Mr. Steffen Dehn, International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA)

### **Panel Coordinator**

For further information, please contact Ms. Mita Sen ([sen@un.org](mailto:sen@un.org)) at the UNFF Secretariat.

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<sup>2</sup> Secretariat Note <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N19/043/69/PDF/N1904369.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>3</sup> Secretariat Note <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N19/043/55/PDF/N1904355.pdf?OpenElement>