

**UNFF Expert Group Meeting on
the Clearing House of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network
Conference Room VIII- Palais des Nations
12-13 November 2019, Geneva-Switzerland
Concept Note**

I. Background

The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) was established in 2015 by the UN Economic and Social Council.¹ The United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) 2030,² adopted in January 2017, sets out four priorities for the GFFFN, namely:

- (a) To promote the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management;
- (b) To assist countries in mobilizing, accessing and enhancing the effective use of existing financial resources from all sources for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM);
- (c) To serve as a clearing house and database on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned and best practices from successful projects; and
- (d) To contribute to the achievement of the global forest goals and targets as well as priorities contained in the 4POWs.

The resolution adopted during the thirteenth session of the UNFF³ requested the UNFF Secretariat to “initiate development of the Network’s online clearing house mechanism” in accordance with the guidelines for the operation of the GFFFN.⁴ The guidelines further stipulate that the Secretariat should develop, without duplicating existing efforts, the Clearing House (CH) in consultation with interested members of the CPF, with a view to providing:

- a. A comprehensive up-to-date database on forest financing opportunities from all sources for sustainable forest management, drawing and building on existing initiatives and sources of information, including information on procedures for accessing resources;
- b. A web-based interactive platform for the exchange of data, lessons learned and best practices among users, including, for example, on project conceptualization and;
- c. A source of data for assessing progress on target 15.b of the Sustainable Development Goals and Global Forest Goal 4.

To initiate consultation among stakeholders and to discuss the scope, elements and components of the CH, the UNFF Secretariat organized an Expert Group Meeting from 9 to 11 January 2019 in New York on the CH of the GFFFN. The outcome of this EGM⁵ was presented for consideration to the fourteenth session of the Forum in May 2019. Participants at UNFF14 recognized the core elements of the CH and a two-step approach for development of the CH as proposed by the Expert Group Meeting. As a result of this discussion, the

¹ ECOSOC resolution 2015/33, available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/164/47/PDF/N1516447.pdf>

² General Assembly Resolution 71/285, and ECOSOC Resolution 2017/4, available at: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/documents/un-strategic-plan-for-forests-2030/index.html>

³ Available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N18/162/00/PDF/N1816200.pdf>

⁴ Annex II of the UNFF13 report, also available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N18/162/00/PDF/N1816200.pdf>

⁵ Co-chairs’ summary on the EGM available at: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/EGM-CH-2019-CH-CoChairs-Summary.pdf>

following intersessional activities on the CH were proposed to be undertaken by the Secretariat in preparation for UNFF15:

- Organizing a follow-up expert panel to develop a more extensive plan towards a stepwise and simple approach to the establishment of the clearing house; and
- Supporting a cost-benefit analysis of different options for making the clearing house operational, including potential partnerships with other entities.⁶

In response to the above, the UNFF Secretariat has been taking intensive steps on the content preparation of the CH, as well as the design of databases and online platform for phase I of the CH. In addition, the Secretariat is organizing this Expert Group Meeting on the CH (12-13 November 2019, Geneva).

In advance of the Expert Group Meeting, the Secretariat will circulate a concise paper on the scope and design of the CH databases produced by the substantive consultants in connection to the development of phase I of the CH. The two substantive consultants of the CH will also make presentations on the status of information collected for the CH databases during the meeting. A presentation will be also made on the technical design of the CH website.

II. Objective

The Expert Group Meeting is an opportunity for the experts to be informed of, and provide their feedback on the development and operationalization of phase I of the CH since UNFF14, including design of databases, information collected for the databases and the way forward.

III. Format and the Expected Outcome

The Expert Group Meeting will be held from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm on 12 and 13 November 2019 in Conference Room VIII at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting will be conducted in English. The programme of work for the meeting is contained in Annex I of this concept note. The outcome of the meeting will be a concise summary of discussion, including key suggestions and proposals. A brief overview of the discussion and outcome of the expert meeting will be incorporated in the relevant official document for consideration by UNFF15.

IV. Participants

The expert meeting will bring together experts from Member States, member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional and subregional organizations and processes, as well as major groups and other relevant stakeholders.

V. Contact Person

For all logistical issues related to the EGM, including issuance of required passes, please contact Ms. Yan Lang at yan.lang@un.org.

⁶ Report of the UNFF14 available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N19/152/67/PDF/N1915267.pdf>

Annex I: Provisional agenda and programme of work

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Conference Room VIII, Palais des Nations

12 November 2019	
10:00 am- 1:00 pm	<p>Agenda item 1. Election of the Co-Chairs</p> <p>Agenda item 2. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work</p> <p>Agenda item 3. Progress in the development of Phase I of the CH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brief overview of the outcome of the January 2019 EGM on the CH - core elements and timelines of the CH (UNFFS) b. Presentation on the CH content preparation (substantive consultant 1) c. Presentation on the CH content preparation (substantive consultant 2) <p><i>(Discussion among participants)</i></p>
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Lunch break
3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<p>Agenda item 3. Progress in the development of Phase I of the CH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Presentation on the design and mock-up of the CH website <p><i>(Discussion among participants)</i></p>

13 November 2019	
10:00 am - 1:00 pm	<p>Agenda item 4. Exchange of views on the development of Phase I of the CH, and the way forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Presentation by IATI <p><i>(Discussion among participants)</i></p>
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Lunch break
3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	<p>Agenda item 4. Exchange of views on the development of Phase I of the CH, and the way forward (continued)</p> <p>Agenda item 5. Summary of discussions, including key suggestions and proposals</p> <p>Agenda item 6. Closing</p>