

Concept Note
Capacity building workshop
on reporting on progress made towards the achievement of the Global Forests Goals (GFGs)
and targets of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests 2030 (UNSPF)
Meeting Room F, UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand
28-30 October 2019,

Background and Rationale

The UN Forum on Forests Secretariat/DESA is organising a three-day capacity building workshop on national reporting on progress made towards the achievement of the Global Forests Goals (GFGs) and targets of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests 2030 (UNSPF). The event is being organized in response to a request¹ from the Forum (UNFF14) to hold a capacity building workshop on national reporting before the deadline for submission of voluntary national reports to UNFF15.

At its thirteenth session, the Forum adopted a format for voluntary national reporting on progress towards implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, including the UN Forest Instrument and voluntary national contributions. At the same session, the Forum decided that it would consider the results of the first round of voluntary national reporting at its fifteenth session, in 2020, and invited members of the Forum to submit their voluntary national reports to the Forum secretariat by mid-November 2019.

In July 2019, the UNFF Secretariat circulated the reporting format to Member States, along with the Explanatory Notes for reporting which were endorsed by UNFF14. The deadline for submission of voluntary national reports to UNFF15 is **15 November 2019**.

The Forum requested the UNFF Secretariat to prepare, based on the initial round of reporting and in consultation with countries, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests² and relevant stakeholders, a concise “flagship” publication on progress towards the achievement of the global forest goals, for release by the end of 2021. In this regard, the 14th session of the Forum (UNFF14) encouraged countries:

- (a) to submit their voluntary national reports to the Forum at its fifteenth session, as these reports will also provide the basis for the “flagship” publication;
- (b) to share success stories and best practices as part of their national reports. This would be a vital input, resulting in a “flagship” publication that is interesting and informative, inspiring to experts and non-experts alike and inspirational for the next generation;

This workshop will provide an opportunity to brief the participants on the outcome of Expert meeting on the Global Core Set of forest indicators, that will take place on 22-24 October 2019 at FAO HQ in Rome. The Expert meeting, will discuss possible ways to enhance national capacities to generate and/or access socioeconomic data relevant to the GFGs and, inter alia, will elaborate indicators related to reporting on GFG 2.1 on eradicating extreme poverty for forest dependent populations, GFG 2.3 on the contribution of forests and trees to food security, and GFG 4.1 and 4.2 on mobilizing significant resources and increasing forest-related financing from all sources.

¹ Prior requests for this kind of workshop had been made by experts during previous intersessional activities

² A full list of member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests is available at www.un.org/esa/forests/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/members/index.html.

Workshop Goals and Objectives

The main goal for the workshop is to build capacity for reporting to UNFF. The specific objectives are to review draft reports to UNFF and address any potential issues/challenges that countries might have experienced in preparing their national reports for UNFF15. Workshop participants are expected to have submitted their draft national reports to the Secretariat prior to the workshop. The Secretariat will use the draft reports to identify gaps/challenges and these will be discussed and addressed during the workshop. More specifically, the workshop will undertake the following activities:

- Analyse each of the GFGs and associated targets in the reporting format and address challenges faced in reporting
- Clarify the types of data/information to focus on in reporting to the Forum on progress towards GFGs and targets
- Further clarify (as needed) terms and definitions used in the reporting format
- Provide a forum for participants to share knowledge and national experiences in data collection and the institutions involved in compiling national reports
- Provide suggestions on how to report on goals/targets using terms that do not have internationally-agreed definitions;
- Further clarify the relationship between information submitted to UNFF and to FAO/FRA;
- Discuss the development and use of the Global Core Set of forest related indicators for reporting on progress towards the GFGs and forest related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The workshop will also discuss the types of success stories to be included in national reports. Success stories are vital in order to make the “flagship” publication more interesting to readers. In addition, success stories will be available on the webpage containing the country reports.

Finally, this workshop will provide an opportunity for countries to share their knowledge, experiences, challenges and lessons learned in preparing their national reports to UNFF, to track progress towards forest related SDGs, the GFGs and the UNFI.

Participation

This workshop is being organised for the benefit of Member States representatives who are directly involved in preparing national reports to UNFF15. Participants are expected to submit their draft national reports to the Forum secretariat, prior to the workshop. All participants are expected to be familiar with the GFGs and targets of the UN Strategic Plan for forests and the reporting requirements of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF).

Date and Venue:

The capacity building workshop will take place from 28-30 October 2019, at UNESCAP in Bangkok, Thailand.

Expected outputs

Enhanced capacity of national correspondents to systematically track and report on progress made in the implementation of the UNSPF and achievement of its global objectives on forests and targets. This meeting will strengthen the participants’ understanding of the reporting process to the UNFF and the information needed to assess progress towards GFGs and targets. It is expected that the workshop will result in high quantity and quality of national reports submitted to UNFF15.

Workshop Format and background documentation

The workshop will be held from 9 am to 5 pm daily and will include discussions on questions contained in the reporting template, and challenges faced, particularly on reporting on socio-economic aspects of forests and

progress towards the achievement of the GFGs, the UNFI and the forest related SDGs. All sessions will be highly interactive, and all participants will be expected to actively participate and share their knowledge, experiences and challenges in preparing national reports.

The format for voluntary national reporting to UNFF and the Explanatory notes for national reports will serve as background documentation for the meeting.

Working Languages

The expert meeting will be conducted in English, French and Spanish

The efforts of all those involved in preparing voluntary national reports are greatly appreciated. These reports will play an invaluable role in the assessment of progress that is being made towards the Global Forest Goals and sustainable management of the world's forests.
