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*Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic
to the United Nations
New York*

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The Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat and in accordance with paragraph 30 of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017 – 2030 has the honor to send the Voluntary National Contribution of the Slovak Republic towards achieving the global forests goals and targets of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017 – 2030.

The Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration. *Ran*

New York, 3rd December 2019



*United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
United Nations Headquarters
New York*



Country:	Slovak Republic
Date of submission:	29 November 2019

Format for reporting on progress towards the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions¹

1. The format is structured around the global forest goals and targets of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and builds on the format previously used for reporting to the United Nations Forum on Forests at its eleventh session. It is largely narrative, reflecting the qualitative nature of many of the targets.

2. Only information that is not currently provided to the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests or that is not in other international databases is requested. The information submitted will be supplemented with quantitative data, among other things, from the following international data providers:

(a) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Global Forest Resources Assessment/collaborative forest resources questionnaires, Forest Europe, Economic Commission for Europe, International Tropical Timber Organization, Montreal Process and Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa;

(b) Reports on the state of the world’s forests, produced every two years by FAO;

(c) Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat;

(d) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development;

(e) Other data sources, including the Forest Stewardship Council and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

3. Members are kindly requested:

(a) To submit their completed national reports electronically (in Microsoft Word format) in English, French or Spanish to unff@un.org by mid-November 2019, bearing in mind that early submissions will greatly facilitate the secretariat’s preparation of the report on progress towards the goals and targets of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 [title and focus to be determined] to be presented to the Forum in 2021 [to be confirmed];

(b) To submit, in a separate electronic file, a scanned version of the official signed letter conveying their submission from the respective ministry, or a note verbale from their permanent mission to the United Nations in New York;

Please submit the completed format to: unff@un.org by 15 November 2019.

¹ Detailed guidelines will be prepared and discussed and will, among other things, state the purpose of reporting and how the data will be used. References to voluntary national contributions will be harmonized with the process to be put in place for announcing voluntary national contributions.

(c) In view of the cross-cutting nature of issues relating to forests and sustainable forest management, to consult experts from relevant national ministries, such as those of the environment, economic development, finance and agriculture, in completing the reporting format and to consult the national focal points for the forest resources assessments, the Rio Conventions secretariats, other member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, criteria and indicators processes, and relevant stakeholders, where applicable. Members may also wish to consult stakeholders when preparing their report.

4. The year 2015 is used as a baseline.
5. Where possible, all terms used herein are consistent with the terms and definitions used by the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment.
6. Wherever possible, please indicate the source of information or provide a weblink.

General information

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Institutions involved in the preparation of the national report

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Global forest goal 1 and associated targets²

Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change

Associated targets

- 1.1 Forest area is increased by 3 per cent worldwide³
- 1.2 The world's forest carbon stocks are maintained or enhanced
- 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
- 1.4 The resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change is significantly strengthened worldwide

Questions on goal 1

1. (a) Since 2015,⁴ what types of action have been taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country to advance or contribute to the achievement of targets 1.1–1.4?

Please indicate to which targets the actions relate and briefly describe the results to date (in a maximum of 250 words). For each action, please indicate whether it is continuous, planned, in progress or completed.

- (i) Legislative and policy actions

List of actions:

Action 1 relates to Targets 1.1 – 1.4

Approval of the Action Plan II of National Forest Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2015-2020 by the Government of the SR (Government Resolution no. 697 of 16.12.2015).

Web link: <https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/12544/1>.

Action 2 mainly relates to Target 1.3

Approval of the (national) Act No. 113/2018 on the placing of timber and timber products on the internal market (note: internal market = a single EU market). Web link: https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2018/113/vyhlasene_znenie.html.

Description of actions:

Action 1: Action Plan has been developed in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management, multifunctional forestry and sustainable supply of forest-related goods and services. The measures set out in the action plan are indicative, which means, their fulfilment is dependent on available funds for their implementation. Measures (actions) should therefore be implemented based on their urgency. Action Plan is in the stage of implementation.

Action 2: The Act is in force. It prohibits operators from placing illegally harvested timber and products derived from illegal timber on the EU market, as well as in the fields of timber marketing on the domestic market. The Act implements the EU Timber Regulation at a national level.

² Goal 1 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among other things, targets 6.6, 12.2, 13.1, 13.3, 14.2, 15.1–15.4 and 15.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 7, 9, 11, 14 and 15, and are supported by paragraphs 6 (o) and 7 (d) and (e) of the United Nations forest instrument.

³ Based on the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015.

⁴ Or earlier, where relevant to capturing important action. The same applies hereafter.

(ii) Institutional actions

List of actions:

Action mainly relates to Target 1.3

Establishment of the Slovak Forestry and Wood Inspection (SLDI) for enforcement of the Act No. 113/2018 on the placing of timber and timber products on the internal market of 1 July 2018.

Description of actions:

The Act lays down that the central state authority in the field of timber marketing on the domestic market (in Slovakia) will be the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development through the Slovak Forestry and Wood Inspection (SLDI). The purpose of the Act is to prevent the entry of timber from illegal logging or products of such timber into the internal market through the responsible government authority. The Act defines inspection's competencies and determines sanctions for administrative offenses in this area.

(iii) Financial actions

List of actions:

Action 1 mainly relates to Targets 1.2 – 1.4

In the actual Rural Development Programme (RDP SR) 2014-2020 there are included the measures related to the creation, funding and implementation of recovery projects in forests determined on prevention and regeneration of forest potential in damaged forest stands. The measures on regeneration of forests after calamities caused by wind and insects, including tending subsequent young forest stands, are implemented.

Action 2 relates to Targets 1.1 – 1.4

The provision (elaboration) of forest management plans for all forest owners was ensured in accordance with the relevant provisions of the (national) Act on Forests. In 2016-2017, this process was funded from financial resources of the Rural Development Programme of the SR for 2014-2020. Since 2018, the process is funded from the state budget.

Description of actions:

To restore degraded forests and to increase resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change (Action 1). Creating financial conditions to ensure and improve sustainable forest management (SFM) including associated targets of the global forest goal 1 (Action 2).

(iv) Technical and scientific actions

<p><u>List of actions:</u></p> <p>Action 1 relates to Targets 1.1 – 1.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Several scientific projects are being implemented, notably: "Optimization of the forest stands management under the condition of the changing climate"; "Extreme displays of the climate change and their impacts on the growth and production of the forest stands"; "Information and warning system for invasive organisms in forests and urban environments".- In 2016, a project was launched within the RIS3 SK specialization, which includes the activity "Strategic research on methods of monitoring abiotic, biotic and anthropogenic agents in forests for the precise applications in forest protection".- Within the RDP SR 2014-2020, the project "Automated stationary detection system for early detection of forest fires" for selected territories/regions with high fire risk was implemented.- The publication "Sustainable Forest Management" was issued in 2016; it is accessible for the public at https://web.nlcsk.org/?page_id=10828. <p><u>Description of actions:</u></p> <p>In April 2017, the Automated Stationary System for Early Detection of Forest Fires (ASSEDF) was launched in three areas with a high-and medium-level fire risk - Záhorie, Nízke Tatry (the Low Tatras) and Vysoké Tatry (the High Tatras). The ASSEDF operates around the clock and data on all suspected fires are sent to the operational centres of relevant regional headquarters of the Fire and Rescue Service of the Slovak Republic (FaRS SR).</p> <p>The educational publication "Sustainable Forest Management" contains five parts - silviculture, forest protection, logging and transport technologies in forestry, forest management planning and current forestry issues from the viewpoint of forestry legislation. It serves mainly professional forest managers to facilitate their daily work.</p>

(b) How do the actions listed above support the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument?

All actions listed above contribute to the improvement of SFM implementation
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(c) What are the main challenges in achieving goal 1 in your country?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To develop the new "National Forest Programme of the SR" for period post 2020 in accordance with the relevant international and national forest related processes and policies;- To ensure every year the sufficient financial resources for competent forestry institutions to adequately fulfil the tasks resulting from forest related policies and legislation in the context of promoting SFM;- To ensure annual assessment of the implementation of relevant forest related policies and programmes, as well as regular 5-year complex assessment of the state and development of forests and forestry according to pan-European indicators of SFM, including drafting related recommendations.- To develop and implement a proposal for a systematic and complex solution to the calamity situations in forests in protected areas and propose a related system of financing. Explanatory note: Because of the various reasons and obstacles (climate change, new nature conservation concepts, administrative, organizational, etc.), the timely and thorough processing of damaged timber (by incidental felling) has often not been ensured. As a consequence, we are witnessing, in the last 15-20 years, the most serious damage to forests caused by biotic harmful agents (especially bark-insects) in the whole documented history of forests in Slovakia (volume of 3.9 million m³ calamitous timber only in 2017 and another 4.2 mil. m³ in 2018).- To improve cooperation with the nature conservation authorities to achieve nature conservation goals through active close-to-nature management of forests in protected areas, where applicable.- To elaborate models of target forest structures and forest stands adaptation to climate change for the basic forest types (according national classification of forest types).

(d) If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal 1, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far.

In 2017, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Degree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic No. 226/2017 on providing financial support in forestry for fulfilling non-productive forest functions. The degree entered into force on 1 October 2017.

Based on the decree, there was a total amount of 2,069 million of euros allocated to forest owners (holders) in 2017 to support fulfilling non-productive functions of forests. These financial resources were granted to 116 forest owners (holders). In 2018, the total amount of 2,296 million of euros was allocated to 127 forest owners for the same purpose.

This VNC supports specifically the achievement of Global Forest Goal 1, target 1.4 (strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacity of forests to natural disasters and climate change), among other goals and their targets. The progress made will be evaluated at a later stage.

(e) Any additional comments on goal 1:

In 2018, the area of forest lands reached 2.021 million ha, of which forest stands accounted for 1.948 million ha. The long-term trend of their increasing has continued. Since 2001 the area of forest stands has increased by 20,4 thousand ha. The annual growth is mainly due to a change in the category of land use. Forest cover reached 41.2% in 2018. In addition, there is also 288 ths. \pm 39 ths. ha, or almost 15% of farming and other land covered by forest vegetation. After adding this area to the area of forest stands corresponding forest cover would be 45.1% \pm 0.9%.

The carbon stock in forest ecosystems both in above- (AG) and below-ground (BG) biomass is increasing as it is directly related to growing stock increases. As compared to 2000 it has increased by 14,2 t/ha in AG and by 2.8 t/ha in 2018.

In order to achieve the principal goal – to implement SFM, there is an adequate legal and institutional framework in place, including state forestry authorities, professional training and education, counselling services, forest inventory and research, forest protection service, seed and reproductive material controlling, forestry information system, etc. The fulfilment of some of the tasks resulting from relevant policy and legislative regulations is limited by available funding, which in some cases also limits the institutional framework effectiveness.

Global forest goal 2 and associated targets⁵

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people

Associated targets

- 2.1 Extreme poverty for all forest-dependent people is eradicated
- 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
- 2.3 The contribution of forests and trees to food security is significantly increased
- 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

⁵ Goal 2 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among other things, targets 1.1, 1.4, 2.4, 4.4, 5.a, 6.6, 8.3, 9.3, 12.2, 12.5, 15.6 and 15.c of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 4, 14 and 18, and are supported by paragraphs 6 (d)–(f), (h), (j), (p), (q), (t)–(v) and (y) and 7 (k) of the United Nations forest instrument.

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

Questions on goal 2

2. (a) Since 2015, what types of action have been taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country to advance or contribute to the achievement of targets 2.1–2.5?

Please indicate to which targets the actions relate and briefly describe the results to date (in a maximum of 250 words). For each action, please indicate whether it is continuous, planned, in progress or completed.

(i) Legislative and policy actions

List of actions:

Action 1 mainly relates to targets 2.4 and 2.5

In 2017, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Degree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic No. 226/2017 on providing financial support in forestry for fulfilling non-productive forest functions. The degree entered into force on 1 October 2017. (This legislative action has provided a legal basis for VNC the Slovak Republic announced at UNFF13 session – see relevant information on VNC as a response to the question under 2(e))

Action 2

Harmonisation of relevant provisions in two related legislative acts on (1) forests and (2) nature and landscape protection (eliminating ambiguities in both acts) and further amendments of both acts, in order to improve the implementation of sustainable forest management, including forest conservation and protection – legislative proposals approved by the Slovak Parliament in September 2019.

(ii) Institutional actions

List of actions:

No institutional measures have been taken since 2015.

Description of actions: -

(iii) Financial actions

List of actions:

The RDP SR 2014-2020 call (for funding eligible projects) was opened within Sub-measure 8.6 - Support for investments in forestry environmentally sound technologies and processing, the mobilization and marketing of forestry products.

In 2017, total financial compensations of 3.21 € million (from the financial sources of the Ministry of Environment) were granted to forest owners for the management restrictions imposed in forests with the interest of biodiversity protection (it was 1.38 € million lower than in 2016).

Description of actions:

(iv) Technical and scientific actions

List of actions:

Action 1 relates to targets 2.4 and 2.5

The scientific project "Research of the wood use as a renewable material in transformation to a green economy" was carried out in 2019; the project was funded from the sources of national R&D support agency.

Action 2 relates to targets 2.4 and 2.5

In 2016, the "Analysis of Slovakia's potential for using the principles of green economy in forestry" was carried out.

Action 3 relates to target 2.5

The research projects "Innovative Methods of Forest Management Planning in Close to Nature Forests - FORESTMAN" (completed), "Research and Development for Innovation and Support of the Competitiveness of the Forestry Sector" and "Innovative Methods of Optimizing of Timber Felling in the Close to Nature Forests" are being implemented.

Action 4 relates to target 2.5

In 2017, the working procedures of forest management planning has been updated particularly in relation to the planning of management measures in selection forests and permanently multi-storeyed forest stands.

Description of actions:

Action 1: The main objective of the project was to develop alternative models of utilisation of domestic wood sources with respect to optimization of sequestration of carbon in harvested wood products.

Action 2: The aim was to analyse and propose policy tools to support sustainable production and processing of wood in Slovakia, as well as to identify potential sources and activities of regions in Slovakia to use the principles of the green economy and their implications for employment and poverty alleviation in the regions.

Action 3: Listed scientific projects are aimed at ecology, economics and optimization of close to nature forest management in natural conditions of Slovakia to permanently support forest biodiversity.

(b) What other action is being taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country in support of the achievement of goal 2?

- For the period 2018-2021, the research project "Testing of new policies and business models for ensuring selected forest ecosystem services" was approved by national R&D Support Agency.
- Preparation of calls within the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020 for measures 16.1 and 16.2: "Establishment and Running of Operational Groups" and "Support for Pilot Projects and the Development of New Products, Procedures, Processes and Technologies" including forestry.

(c) How does the action listed above support the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument?

Actions listed above contribute to enhancement of forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits at a national level.

(d) What are the main challenges in achieving goal 2 in your country?

To continue in research and development of a system of identification, quantification and payments for the use of the most important ecological and social functions of forests - ecosystem services; to permanently analyse the principles, methods and procedures of their assessment and valuation.

To identify the constraints and barriers until now hindering the economic realization of non-wood forest products and services; to create favourable conditions and opportunities for establishing markets with non-wood forest products and services; to develop a system for assessing forest ecosystem services with respect to societal requirements and legitimate interests of forest owners.

To improve the awareness of forest owners and managers about the opportunities to engage them in business and marketing of new products and services.

To ensure the promotion and awareness raising of the public about the importance of sustainable forest management and the practical benefits (environmental, social and economic) of using wood compared to other materials.

To develop forest pedagogy programs for the use of wood as a renewable raw material - to implement them within the forest pedagogy activities.

To elaborate the concept of economically efficient close to nature forest management in the conditions of Slovakia.

To elaborate a common methodological guide for ensuring adequate care of forests in protected areas through the coordinated elaboration of programmes of care of protected areas (under the competence of nature conservation authorities) and forest management plans (under the competence of forestry authorities).

To develop a methodology and program solutions for quantifying impacts of a special management regime in protected areas to support forest biodiversity; to create a system tool for sustained funding of support and of compensation payments.

(e) If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal 2, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far.

In 2017, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Degree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic No. 226/2017 on providing financial support in forestry for fulfilling non-productive forest functions. The degree entered into force on 1 October 2017.

Based on the decree, there was a total amount of 2,069 million of euros allocated to forest owners (holders) in 2017 to support fulfilling non-productive functions of forests. These financial resources were granted to 116 forest owners (holders). In 2018, the total amount of 2,296 million of euros was allocated to 127 forest owners for the same purpose.

This VNC supports specifically the achievement of Global Forest Goal 2, target 2.4 (increasing the contribution of forest ecosystem services to social, economic and environmental development) and target 2.5 (enhancing the contribution of forests to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaption), among other goals and their targets. The progress made will be evaluated at a later stage.

(f) Any additional comments on goal 2:

The value of gross domestic product (GDP) of forest sector given in current prices of 2018 came to 0.35 billion € representing a 9.4% increase from previous year. Share of forestry on total economy is increasing due to higher wood felling in last years. In addition, share of wood-processing industry on total economy is increasing due to higher wood consumption and development of wood sector. The pulp and papermaking industry belongs to one of the most profitable and competitive industries of the national economy in Slovakia. Profit of the forestry (without wood-processing sector) reached €40.62 million in 2017. Employment in forestry was 18 thousand employees and the average monthly wage of a forestry employee was € 980 in 2018; it increased by 7.2% as compared to 2017. Timber production and its use has significant environmental benefits for climate change mitigation since wood based products store sequestered CO2 in the long term. The volume of CO2 in harvested wood products (sawn-wood, wood panels, paper and paperboard) increased in 2017 by 1.059 million tonnes.

Global forest goal 3 and associated targets⁶

Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests

Associated targets

- 3.1 The area of forests worldwide designated as protected areas or conserved through other effective area-based conservation measures is significantly increased
- 3.2 The area of forests under long-term forest management plans is significantly increased
- 3.3 The proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests is significantly increased

Questions on goal 3

3. (a) Since 2015, what types of action have been taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country to advance or contribute to the achievement of targets 3.1–3.3?

Please indicate to which targets the actions relate and briefly describe the results to date (in a maximum of 250 words). For each action, please indicate whether it is continuous, planned, in progress or completed.

⁶ Goal 3 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among other things, targets 7.2, 12.2, 12.6, 12.7, 14.2, 14.5, 15.2 and 15.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 7, 11, 12 and 16, and are supported by paragraphs 6 (p), (q) and (x) and 7 (f) and (g) of the United Nations forest instrument.

(i) Legislative and policy actions

List of actions:

Action 1 relates to target 3.1

The National Parliament approved the Government Bill amending the Act no. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection, as amended, on 11 September 2019.

Action 2 relates to target 3.1

The National Parliament approved the Government Bill amending Act no. 326/2005 Coll. on Forests, as amended, in September 2019 after accepting the President's comments.

Action 3 relates to target 3.3

Approval of the Action Plan of the National Programme of Utilization of Wood Potential of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2020 by the Slovak Government (Government Resolution no. 225 of 14 May 2014): <https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/10795/1>.

Description of actions:

Actions 1 and 2: Amendments of both legislative acts have significantly contributed to eliminating existing contradictions (between forest management and nature conservation), that had resulted from the previous versions of these legislative acts, and further addressed the promotion of sustainable forest management and protection of nature and natural values.

Action 3: Action Plan has been developed in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management, multifunctional forestry and sustainable supply of forest-related goods and services. The measures set out in the action plan are indicative, which means, their fulfilment is dependent on available funds for their implementation. Implementation of measures should therefore be based on their priority and urgency. Action Plan is in the stage of implementation.

(ii) Institutional actions

List of actions:

No institutional actions have been taken since 2015.

Description of actions: -

(iii) Financial actions

List of actions:

Action 1 relates to target 3.2: Financing forest management plans for all forest owners.

Description of actions:

The elaboration of forest management plans for all forest owners was ensured in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Act on Forests. This process was funded from the state budget. In some cases, also resources of the RDP of the SR could be used.

(iv) Technical and scientific actions

List of actions:

No technical and scientific actions have been taken since 2015.

Description of actions: -

(b) What other action is being taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country in support of the achievement of goal 3?

(c) How does the action listed above support the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument?

Actions listed above contribute to positive trend towards the achievement of the associated targets of the global forest goal 3.

(d) What are the main challenges in achieving goal 3 in your country?

- *Because of a very large extent of protected areas (62% of the total forest area) and not too effective biodiversity protection in Slovakia, it is necessary to reassess the actual national network of protected areas. In reassessment, it is needed to consider, in particular, their extent, objectives and aim of the protection, the overlaps between both networks (national and EU NATURA 2000), the possibility of applying active management, where appropriate, in the achievement of objectives of nature conservation, as well as the possibilities of the state budget to provide financial compensations for restrictions in ordinary forest management.*
- *To fundamentally improve acceptance and understanding of forestry and forest harvesting among general public, and effectively communicate benefits of using wood and wood based products from sustainably managed forests as sustainable alternatives to „non-wood“ raw materials and products.*

(e) If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal 3, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far.

(f) Any additional comments on goal 3:

The national network of protected areas includes large-scale protected areas such as national parks and protected landscape areas. It includes also several categories of small-scale protected areas. The total area of forest land in the nationally protected areas was 784,000 ha. NATURA 2000 network (i. e. protected areas designated pursuant to EU law) in Slovakia includes partially overlapping networks of Special Protection Areas and Sites of EU importance which includes at present 951 ths. ha of forest stands. The total area of NATURA 2000 sites in Slovakia is 1,463,000 ha. The overlap between NATURA 2000 network and the national network of protected areas is around 776 ths ha. NATURA 2000 network thus increases the area of forests under nature protection by approximately 578 ths ha.

The total growing stock in Slovakia is increasing. It reached 537.67 million m³ in 2017, an increase of 33.9% (136 million m³) against 1990 figures (according to results of the 2nd cycle of the National Forest Inventory and Monitoring (NFIM SR) 2015-2016). It can be said that, at present, due to the actual age composition of the forests in Slovakia, we have the historically highest growing stock at least over the last century. However, the volume of present growing stock is already at the culmination point. It is expected that in the coming years and decades the growing stock will decrease as a result of the gradual change in age composition of forests in Slovakia.

In 2017, the total supply of raw timber reached a volume of 9.36 million m³. The timber supplies has been gradually increasing in line with the development of volume of timber growing stock and timber felling over the past decades. The supplies of other forest products are rising too.

Global forest goal 4 and associated targets⁷

Mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships

Associated targets

- 4.1 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
- 4.2 Forest-related financing from all sources at all levels, including public (national, bilateral, multilateral and triangular), private and philanthropic financing, is significantly increased
- 4.3 North-South, South-South, North-North and triangular cooperation and public-private partnerships on science, technology and innovation in the forest sector are significantly enhanced and increased
- 4.4 The number of countries that have developed and implemented forest financing strategies and have access to financing from all sources is significantly increased
- 4.5 The collection, availability and accessibility of forest-related information is improved through, for example, multidisciplinary scientific assessments

⁷ Goal 4 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among other things, targets 12.a, 15.7, 15.a, 15.b, 17.1–17.3, 17.6, 17.7 and 17.16–17.19 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 19, and are supported by paragraphs 6 (h), (i), (m), (r) and (s) and 7 (a)–(c) and (l)–(q) of the United Nations forest instrument.

Questions on goal 4

4. (a) Please describe major actions taken in your country to move towards goal 4 and its associated targets. More detailed information on actions for each target may be supplied below.

Action relates to target 4.5:

National Inventory and Monitoring of Forests SR 2015-2016 (NIMF) was carried out. The NIMF provided objective information on the state of forests at a national level and in selected regions of Slovakia, as well as the real dynamics of changes over the past 10 years. The broad spectrum of collected data provides enough information not only about traditional forest indicators but also new, especially ecological ones.

- (b) If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal 4, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far.

In 2017, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Degree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic No. 226/2017 on providing financial support in forestry for fulfilling non-productive forest functions. The decree entered into force on 1 October 2017.

Based on the decree, there was a total amount of 2,069 million of euros allocated to forest owners (holders) in 2017 to support fulfilling non-productive functions of forests. These financial resources were granted to 116 forest owners (holders). In 2018, the total amount of 2,296 million of euros was allocated to 127 forest owners for the same purpose.

This VNC supports specifically the achievement of Global Forest Goal 4, target 4.2 (increasing forest-related financing from all sources), among other goals and their targets.

Progress towards targets 4.1 and 4.2

- (c) Since 2015, has your country (the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) been able to mobilize significantly increased financial resources for the implementation of sustainable forest management?

Yes No

If yes, please specify the sources:

- Public domestic funding
 Private domestic funding
 Public international funding, including official development assistance
 Private international funding
 Blended financing

Please describe the main challenges in mobilizing funds in a maximum of 250 words:

The financing instrument described above (Decree No. 226/2017: financial support for non-productive forest functions) provided increased funding for sustainable forest management. However, this cannot be seen as a "significant" increase.

Progress towards target 4.3

(d) Is your country (the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) engaged in international cooperation to promote sustainable forest management?

Yes No

If yes, please specify the entity or entities with which your country is cooperating:

- Governments
- Intergovernmental organizations/processes
- Private sector
- Non-governmental organizations
- Other

Types of cooperation:

- North-South
- South-South
- North-North
- Triangular
- Technical
- Financial
- Other (please specify): scientific

Areas of cooperation:

- Forests and climate change
- Forest biodiversity
- Valuation of the ecosystem services provided by forests
- Socioeconomic issues, including livelihoods
- Forest degradation and rehabilitation
- Scientific cooperation
- Forest monitoring/data collection
- Technology transfer and capacity development
- Production of timber or non-timber products
- Other (please specify):

Progress towards target 4.4

(e) Since 2015, has your Government developed or implemented financing strategies to achieve sustainable forest management and to implement the United Nations forest instrument?

Yes No

If yes, what is the time frame for these strategies (multiple answers possible, if there is more than one strategy)?

- 2–5 years
- 5–10 years
- 10–20 years
- More than 20 years

Global forest goal 5 and associated targets⁸

Promote governance frameworks to implement sustainable forest management, including through the United Nations forest instrument, and enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Associated targets

5.1 Number of countries that have integrated forests into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies is significantly increased

5.2 Forest law enforcement and governance are enhanced, including through significantly strengthening national and subnational forest authorities, and illegal logging and associated trade are significantly reduced worldwide

5.3 National and subnational forest-related policies and programmes are coherent, coordinated and complementary across ministries, departments and authorities, consistent with national laws, and engage relevant stakeholders, local communities and indigenous peoples, fully recognizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

5.4 Forest-related issues and the forest sector are fully integrated into decision-making processes concerning land use planning and development

Questions on goal 5

5. (a) Please describe major actions taken in your country to move towards goal 5 and its associated targets. More detailed information on actions for each target may be supplied below.

Action relates to target 5.2:

Act No. 113/2018 (on the placing of timber and timber products on the internal market) appointed responsible government authority with the competence for enforcement the EU Timber Regulation that prohibits operators in the EU from placing illegally harvested timber and products derived from illegal timber on the EU market, as well as in the fields of timber marketing on the domestic market. The Act lays down that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will be the central state authority in the field of timber marketing on the domestic market in Slovakia.

⁸ Goal 5 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement, among other things, of targets 1.4, 2.4, 5.a, 15.9, 15.c, 16.3, 16.5–16.7, 16.10 and 17.14 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2 and 3, and are supported by paragraphs 6 (a), (c), (k), (l), (n) and (w) and 7 (c) and (h)–(j) of the United Nations forest instrument.

(b) If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal 5, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far.

Progress towards target 5.1

(c) In your country, have forests been integrated into national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies?

Yes No

If yes, please specify if integrated into:

National sustainable development plans and/or

Poverty reduction strategies

Progress towards target 5.2

(d) Since 2015, has your Government taken steps to prevent and reduce illegal international trafficking in forest products, wildlife and other biological resources?

Yes No

If yes, please specify the type of action:

New legislation

Improved enforcement of existing legislation

Export controls

Import controls

Bilateral agreements between exporting/importing countries

Other action, for example, public procurement policies and public-private partnerships. Please list below:

Progress towards target 5.3

(e) Are mechanisms in place to ensure cross-sectoral coordination among government agencies?

Yes No

If yes, please specify in a maximum of 250 words:

The basic tool for providing conditions to ensure the cross-sectoral coordination on forest issues is the National Forest Programme (NFP) and its action plan for 2014-2020. However, it is still needed to improve their implementation. We can't state full observation of all basic principles of the NFP process, mainly "Partnership for implementation" and "Raising awareness". We did not achieve the harmony with other sectoral policies, mainly nature conservation. Awareness of public on forestry goals and benefits of SFM is insufficient. We haven't succeeded in utilization of partnerships and sources in maximum extent to increase the effectiveness of the NFP.

(f) What types of mechanism are in place to involve stakeholders in forest/ sustainable forest management policy formulation, planning and implementation?

Please specify in a maximum of 250 words:

Participation of stakeholders in forest policy development, decision-making and implementation is ensured through application of the general law, namely the Act No. 71/1967 Coll. that sets modalities for administrative procedures of public authorities in cases when the rights, legitimate interests or duties of interested persons are affected (in order to ensure participation of relevant stakeholders and other interested persons in these administrative processes).

Progress towards target 5.4

(g) Are mechanisms in place to involve the forest sector in cross-sectoral coordination among government agencies in charge of land use planning and development?

Yes No

If yes, please specify in a maximum of 250 words:

Cross sectoral coordination is partially ensured through the application of the general law, namely the Act No. 71/1967 Coll. that sets modalities for administrative procedures of public authorities in cases when the rights, legitimate interests or duties of interested persons are affected (in order to ensure participation of relevant stakeholders and other interested persons, incl. different government agencies, in these administrative processes).

Global forest goal 6 and associated targets⁹

Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the United Nations system and across member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders

Note: targets 6.1 and 6.2 are not included in this section of the reporting format as they address actions taken by the international community, and not those taken at the national level

Associated targets

6.3 Cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation to promote sustainable forest management and halt deforestation and forest degradation are significantly enhanced at all levels

6.4 A greater common understanding of the concept of sustainable forest management is achieved and an associated set of indicators is identified

6.5 The input and involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the strategic plan and in the work of the Forum, including intersessional work, is strengthened

⁹ Goal 6 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among other things, target 17.14 of the Sustainable Development Goals and are supported by paragraphs 6 (b), (c), (g), (m) and (w) and 7 (r) and (s) of the United Nations forest instrument.

Questions on goal 6

6. (a) Please describe major actions taken in your country to move towards goal 6 and its associated targets. More detailed information on actions for each target may be supplied below.

Actions relates to target 6.4:

There are annually elaborated reports on forests and the forest sector in the Slovak Republic (so called green reports) based on identified sets of indicators (European and national):
<http://www.mpsr.sk/index.php?navID=123&id=13656>.

(b) If your Government has announced a voluntary national contribution or contributions relating to goal 6, please provide brief information, including target dates and the progress made thus far.

Progress towards target 6.4 (criteria and indicators)

(c) Are criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management used in your country?

Yes No

If yes, please specify which sets are used:

National or subnational

Regional or international¹⁰

Other (please specify):

For which of the following purposes are they used? (Multiple answers possible)

To generate information for national reports on forest conditions and management

To monitor and assess forest conditions and management

To review and develop national forest policies and tools for sustainable forest management

To communicate with society and carry out dialogue with stakeholders

To report on forests to regional and international organizations (please specify):

Progress towards target 6.4 (communication and awareness)

(d) Since 2015, have actions been taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country to communicate and promote a greater understanding and awareness of sustainable forest management?

¹⁰ For instance, those used by the International Tropical Timber Organization, Forest Europe, the Montreal Process and the Tarapoto Proposal on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainability of Amazonian Forests.

Yes No

If yes, please specify in a maximum of 250 words:

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic approved Directive No. 1320/2017-120 on a unified and coordinated procedure in the area of media policy of the sector and communication of the sector with the public (approved on 23 March 2017).

Progress towards target 6.5

(e) Have actions been taken by your Government to involve major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030?

Yes No

If yes, please specify in a maximum of 250 words:

Only to very limited extend and on an ad-hoc basis: several presentations in the media informing on the adoption of UNSPF in 2017 and briefly explaining the purpose, context and content of UNSPF.

Other questions

7. (a) Since 2015, has your country taken action to promote gender equality in the forest sector?

Yes No

If yes, please indicate action taken with regard to the following:

- Women's effective access to the control and use of forest resources
- Women's effective participation in decision-making at the household and community levels
- Women's effective participation and representation in forest management institutions
- Other

Please provide a brief description:

(b) What action has been taken (by the Government, the private sector, communities, civil society or others) in your country in observance of the International Day of Forests?

- Cultural activities (for example, art, music, film and theatre)
- Educational activities (for example, workshops and symposiums)

- Media activities (for example, newspapers, magazines, television and radio)
- Social media activities
- Other

Please provide two to three examples and, if possible, a weblink or weblinks to relevant documentation:

2019: Educational workshop for students organized by the National Forest Centre, events focused on forest pedagogy throughout the country. <http://www.lesnapedagogika.sk/portal/2019/04/04/lesnici-vyzvu-prijali/>.

Main national-wide awareness raising events are organized every year in April, so called "Forest days"

Success stories

8. Do you have any success stories relating to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 in your country? If so, please provide a brief description, with references (such as weblinks, publications and articles), showing how the action contributed to achieving the goals and targets and specifying which goals and targets are relevant. Please provide a maximum of three success stories.

Success story 1

Action taken:

International intergovernmental cooperation: Leading the pan-European (regional) political process on forests (FOREST EUROPE) since 2016. Through this political process and its actual Programme of Work (currently being implemented), providing the regional contribution to SFM and the implementation of the UNSPF 2017-2030 (under the Slovak leadership).

References:

Official FOREST EUROPE website (www.foresteuropa.org).

Annex II

Draft global core set of forest-related indicators

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Thematic element</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Tiera</i>	<i>Data supplier</i>	<i>Linkages to globally agreed goals and targets</i>
1. Forest area as a proportion of total land area	1. Extent of forest resources	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals and global forest goal 1. Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.1.1
2. Forest area annual net change rate	1. Extent of forest resources	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and target 1.1 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
3. Net greenhouse gas emissions (source)/ removals (sink) of forests, and carbon balance of harvested wood products	1. Extent of forest resources 4. Productive functions of forest resources	Kilotons of carbon dioxide emissions per year	2	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat	Measures progress towards targets 1.2 and 2.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Linkages with Sustainable Development Goal 13 and measuring, reporting and verifying requirements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
4. Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas	2. Forest biological diversity	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, targets 2.5 and 3.1 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and Aichi Biodiversity Target 11. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
5. Change in area of primary forests	2. Forest biological diversity	Hectares	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 1.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and Aichi Biodiversity Target 5. Linkages with Sustainable Development Goal 15
6. Proportion of forest area disturbed	3. Forest health and vitality	Percentage of forest area	2	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 1.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Thematic element</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Tiera</i>	<i>Data supplier</i>	<i>Linkages to globally agreed goals and targets</i>
7. Area of degraded forest	3. Forest health and vitality	Hectares	3	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 1.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Linkages with target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 15. Linkages to strategic objective 1 of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (2008–2018), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
8. Above-ground biomass stock in forest	4. Productive function of forest resources	Tons per hectare	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets 1.2 and 2.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 7. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
9. Volume of wood removals	4. Productive function of forest resources	Cubic metres	1	ECE/FAO/International Tropical Timber Organization/Eurostat joint forest sector questionnaire	Measures progress towards target 2.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
10. Wood-based energy share of total final energy consumption	4. Productive function of forest resources	Percentage	2	ECE and FAO	Linked to target 7.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Thematic element</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Tiera</i>	<i>Data supplier</i>	<i>Linkages to globally agreed goals and targets</i>
11. Forest area with a designated management objective to maintain and enhance its protective functions	5. Protective function of forest resources	Hectares	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Linked to target 1.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
12. Employment related to the forest sector	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	Number of full-time equivalents	2	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 2.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
13. Number of forest-dependent people in extreme poverty	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	Number	3	FAO and United Nations Forum on Forests	Measures progress towards global forest goal 2 and target 2.1 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
14. Contribution of forests to food security	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	To be decided	3	FAO and United Nations Forum on Forests	Measures progress towards global forest goal 2 and target 2.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
15. Financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	United States dollars	3	OECD, World Bank	Measures progress towards global forest goal 4 and targets 4.1 and 4.2 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Linkages with targets 15.a and 15.b of the Sustainable Development Goals
16. Existence of national or subnational policies, strategies, legislation, regulations and institutions that explicitly encourage sustainable forest management	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards global forest goal 5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Thematic element</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Tiera</i>	<i>Data supplier</i>	<i>Linkages to globally agreed goals and targets</i>
17. Existence of national or subnational forest assessment process	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 4.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
18. Existence of national or subnational stakeholder platform for participation in forest policy development	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessments	Measures progress towards target 4.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
19. Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, targets 1.3 and 3.2 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and Aichi Biodiversity Target 7. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
20. Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	Hectares	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets 1.3 and 3.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
21. Existence of traceability system(s) for wood products	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	2	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards targets 3.3 and 5.2 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

Abbreviations: ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; OECD, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

^a Tier 1: methodology and data in place. Tier 2: methodology in place, data challenges. Tier 3: methodology and data both present challenges.