



Entity name:	AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION
Date of submission:	November 9, 2019

Format for United Nations Forum on Forests regional/sub-regional partners reporting on progress towards the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 and the United Nations Forest Instrument

1. The format is structured around the global forest goals and targets of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030.
2. While considering the word limits, regional and sub-regional entities are invited to provide as much detail as possible in their answers, including regarding figures and deadlines, if applicable.
3. The year 2015 is used as a baseline.
4. Where possible, all terms used herein are consistent with the terms and definitions used by the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment.
5. Wherever possible, please indicate the source of information or provide a weblink.

*Please submit the completed format to: unff@un.org with cc: tavora-jainchill@un.org
by 15 November 2019.*



General Information

Information on Entity

Official Name:	AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION
Membership :	INTER-GOVERNMENTAL (ALL AFRICAN COUNTRIES
Mandate:	REGIONAL INTEGRATION , PEACE AND SECURITY

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Global forest goal 1 and associated targets¹

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 worldwide ²
- 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, ³ what types of action have been taken by your entity to support Member States to advance or contribute to the achievement of targets 1.1–1.4?

The development of the African Regional Sustainable Forest Management Framework which contributes to the attainment of targets 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4

Please indicate to which targets the actions relate and briefly describe the results to date, if applicable, (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:

1. *Development of the African Regional Sustainable Forest Management Framework*
2. *Development of African Strategy to combat Illegal Wildlife Trade*
3. *Adoption of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative*
4. *African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100)*

(ii)

(iii) Institutional actions (actions to advance implementation of SFM)

- *Dedicated position for forestry and land management*

List of actions: Working with the Regional

Economic Communities and African Union

Member States

Description of actions:

Development of synergies between the various

strategies and policies

¹ 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.

² Based on the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015.

³ Or earlier, where relevant to capturing important action. The same applies hereafter.

(iv) Financial actions

List of actions: Resource mobilization

for our member states

Description of actions: Development

and submission of proposals

(v) Technical and scientific actions

List of actions: Conducting training for African Union Member States

Description of actions: Regional and national training workshops

How do the actions listed above support Member States in the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument? What are the main challenges in supporting Member States in achieving goal 1 in your region? Any additional comments on goal 1: Global forest goal 2 and associated targets ⁴

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

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 your entity to support Member States to advance or contribute to the achievement of targets 2.1–2.5?

- *Collaboration with partner including FAO, UNFF and African Forest Forum through the development and promotion of marketing of forest products like Gum Arabic*
- *Development of a Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience*

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

List of action

description of actions:

(i) Legislative and policy actions

(ii) Institutional actions (actions to advance implementation of SFM)

⁴ 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.

List of actions:

Description of action

(iii) **Financial actions**

List of Action

Description of action

(iv) **Technical and scientific actions**

(v)

List of action

Description of action

(b) What other action is being taken by your entity in support Member States to achieve goal 2?

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

(d) What are the main challenges in supporting Member States in achieving goal

2 in your region?

- (e) Any additional comments on goal 2:

Global forest goal 3 and associated targets ⁵

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 your entity to support Member States 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 if applicable, (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:

Description of acti

(ii) **Institutional actions (actions to advance implementation of SFM)**

List of actions:

Description of actions

5 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.

(iii) **Financial actions**

List of actions:

Description of actions:

(iv) **Technical and scientific actions**

<p><i>List of actions:</i></p> <p><i>Description of actions:</i></p>
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(b) What other action is being taken your entity in support Member States to achieve goal 3?

<p><i>Development of a continental strategy with major intervention areas on addressing deforestation, forest degradation and loss of biodiversity</i></p>
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(c) How does the action listed above support Member States in the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument?

The African SFM Strategy is to serve as a guideline for members when developing or revising their national strategies.

(d) What are the main challenges in supporting Member States in achieving goal 3 in your region?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Inadequate financial and technical capacity for SFM,</i>• <i>Inadequate multisectoral/multidisciplinary approach to forest management</i>

(e) Any additional comments on goal 3:

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Global forest goal 4 and associated targets ⁶

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

Questions on goal 4

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

There has been increased political will to support sustainable forest management on the continent. However, this political will is yet to be translated into increased funding to the forestry sector.

Progress towards targets 4.1 and 4.2

(b) Since 2015, has your entity been able to mobilize significantly increased financial resources to support Member States in the implementation of sustainable forest management?

Yes No

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

- *Despite the political will, national budgets committed to forestry are generally inadequate*
- *There is still a high level of sectoral approach to SFM in many countries where key ministries like planning, finance and local governments are not fully involved*
- *In adequate level of mainstreaming forestry into the national blue prints, planning and budgeting.*

⁶ 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.

Progress towards target 4.3

(c) Please specify the actors/stakeholders with which your entity is cooperating:

X Governments

X Intergovernmental organizations/processes

X Private sector

X Non-governmental organizations

X Other (please specify):

Types of cooperation:

X North-South

X South-South

North-North

Triangular

Technical

Financial

Other (please specify):

Areas of cooperation:

X Forests and climate change

X Forest biodiversity

Valuation of the ecosystem services provided by forests

X Socioeconomic issues, including livelihoods

X 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

(d) Since 2015, has your entity supported Member States in developing or implementing financing strategies to achieve sustainable forest management and to implement the United Nations forest instrument?

Yes

No

Comments if needed:

The African Regional Forestry Strategy is just been adopted. The next phase is to develop an implementation plan which will be accompanied by a financing plan. This will mark the beginning of a resources mobilization efforts in support of our member states.

Global forest goal 5 and associated targets ⁷

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 region to move towards goal

- *We have forest policies and strategies at regional and continental levels (e.g African Union Sustainable Forest Management Framework, COMIFAC and ECOWAS Forest Convergence Plans) which are being gradually domesticated and mainstreamed into the national structures and frameworks*
- *Together with the FAO, we have embarked on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the whole spectrum of agriculture including forestry, wildlife, livestock and fisheries.*
- *We are planning with FAO in early 2020 a regional training workshop on the promotion of NTPs as instruments of poverty alleviation and rural development.*

6. 5 and its associated targets. More detailed information on actions for each target may be supplied below.

7 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.

Progress towards target 5.2

(b) Since 2015, has your entity supported Member States in promoting or participating in National/Regional/Sub-Regional initiatives to prevent and reduce illegal international trafficking in forest products, wildlife and other biological

resources?

Yes

No

African Union Commission in collaboration with the FAO, WWF, UNEP and African Union member states have organized regional policy dialogue to address the challenges of illegal exploitation and trade in forest product especially Rosewood. We organized a regional policy dialogue for directors of forestry and customs in Accra, Ghana to control the illegal trade and exploitation. In December 2019, we will organize another Subregional dialogue for Guinea Conakry, Mali and Sierra Leone.

Comments if needed:

Global forest goal 6 and associated targets ⁸

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

Questions on goal 6

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

8 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.

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Progress towards target 6.3 (cross-sectorial coordination and cooperation)

(b) Please describe major actions taken in your region to regarding cross-sectorial coordination and cooperation to promote sustainable forest management and halt deforestation and forest degradation.

We have strengthened our collaboration with partners in the African region like the FAO, WWF, African Forest Forum, ECOWAS and COMIFAC. Recognizing the role of agriculture in deforestation, we are collaborating with FAO, CBD and member states to enhance synergies between forestry and agriculture and biodiversity conservation for improved livelihoods.

Progress towards target 6.4 (criteria and indicators)

(c) Are there criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management used by your entity?

Yes No

If yes, please specify which sets are used:

Our forestry strategy has the following strategy:

- *Area of forest under SFM*
- *Reduced Rate of deforestation*
- *Overall increased in forest cover*

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) to the Assembly of the African Union

Progress towards target 6.4 (communication and awareness)

(d) Since 2015, have actions been taken by your entity to communicate and promote a greater understanding and awareness of sustainable forest management?

Yes No

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

In February 2019, during the African Union Summit, we organized a high level side event to create awareness and on the illegal exploitation and trade on forest resources in particular Rosewood. This was followed by a regional policy dialogue on the same issue in Accra, Ghana in July 2019.

Progress towards target 6.5

(e) Have actions been taken by your entity 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:

The African Union SFM Strategy and other policies and strategies at Subregional and national levels are all indirectly in support of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests.

Other questions

8. (a) Since 2015, has your entity taken action to support Member States in promoting gender equality in the forest sector?

Yes No

If yes, please indicate action taken regarding 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:

The African Union Commission has been organizing the Women and Environment Forum for the past four year with the main objective of strengthening women's access to and ownership over natural resources in particular. We have supported the creation of the African Women Innovators for Sustainable Environment as a network to give to women to participate in the decision making process regarding natural resource management

(b) What action has been taken by your entity 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

We have been organizing IDF for the past consecutive four years. In 2019, we organized it with the government of South Africa. Next year, we will be in Bangui, Central African Republic

relevant documentation:

Success stories

9. Does your entity have any success stories relating to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017– 2030? 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:

Goals and targets addressed:

Outcome and results achieved: