

Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening the Engagement of the
United Nations Forum on Forests
with Regional Partners, Major Groups, and other Stakeholders

New York, 16-17 December 2021 (virtual)

1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING

The United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) 2017-2030 provides a reference point for ambitious transformational actions by all actors, including regional and subregional organizations and processes and major groups and other stakeholders, to achieve its Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and targets. Accordingly, one of the core functions of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is to strengthen high level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders in support of sustainable forest management.

The Forum's 17th session (UNFF17) will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 9-13 May 2021. UNFF17's draft agenda item 3 (a) (v) includes, among the issues to be debated under the framework of the implementation of UNSPF, the "interlinkages between the global forest goals and targets and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2022 and international forest-related developments".

In this regard, the Bureau of the sixteenth session of the Forum decided that GFGs 1 and 2, together with three cross-cutting goals (namely, goals 4, 5 and 6), should be the main thematic priorities for the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Forum. Accordingly, the thematic priorities for UNFF17 are: (a) reversing the loss of forest cover; (b) enhancing forest-based economic, social, and environmental benefits; and (c) mobilizing financial resources and strengthening scientific and technical cooperation; promoting governance frameworks to advance implementation; and enhancing cooperation, coordination, and coherence for sustainable forest management.

The 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), to be held in July 2022, will undertake an in-depth review of SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals. The HLPF 2022 will also consider the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across all SDGs and the integrated, indivisible, and interlinked nature of the Goals.

Moreover, in accordance with the general guidance provided in annex I to Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/14 of 17 July 2020, the proposals contained in the Chair's summary of the discussions of the sixteenth session of the Forum will be submitted for consideration by UNFF17. Among the proposals is "(g) Emerging issues: impact of COVID-19 on forests and the forest sector". The UNFF Secretariat is currently conducting a global assessment of the challenges faced by countries, and the strategies, recovery measures and best practices implemented for reducing the impact of COVID-19 on forests and the forest sector. The assessment will identify and elaborate on:

- a. the challenges faced by countries in addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on forests and the forest sector
- b. the strategies and recovery measures being adopted by countries in combatting the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on forests and the forest sector, and
- c. best practices adopted by countries and other stakeholders for reducing the impact of COVID-19 on forests and the forest sector.

To address the issues mentioned above, an Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening the Engagement of the United Nations Forum on Forests with Regional Partners, Major Groups, and other Stakeholders, organized by the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS) took place virtually on 16-17 December 2021. Approximately sixty participants registered to attend the meeting, representing regional/subregional entities, Major Groups, and other stakeholders.

The objective of the expert group meeting was to mobilize and strengthen engagement with major groups, regional and subregional partners, and other stakeholders in support of the implementation of the UNSPF, and to prepare for the forthcoming UNFF17 session.

Key elements of the discussions are reflected in this summary, which will be forwarded to UNFF17; attached to it are the meeting's Agenda (Annex 1) and the List of Participants (Annex 2).

2. MEETING SUMMARY

A. Opening Session

Ms. Afsa Kemitale-Rothschild, Chief, Policy Coordination and Partnerships Section, UNFFS, offered initial remarks and introduced Mr. Alexander Trepelkov, Officer-in-Charge, UNFFS, who delivered a welcome address.

In his opening statement, Mr. Trepelkov highlighted the contribution of forests to sustainable development, including in the “One health” approach to ensure the health of ecosystem and people, and several related global initiatives led by the United Nations Secretary-General. He also noted the growing political momentum on forest matters, particularly through the adoption of the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use by more than 110 countries at COP26. Finally, Mr. Trepelkov emphasized that the UNFF Secretariat very much values its relationship with the Forum's partners and that, if we are to make progress towards sustainable forest management around the world, while ensuring the health of people and the planet, the keys to success are commitment, determination, and concerted actions by all partners.

Ms. Kemitale-Rothschild introduced the meeting facilitator Mr. Joseph Cobbinah, former UNFF Science and Technology Major Group focal point and UNFF Major Groups Chairman. Mr. Cobbinah explained the rationale behind each item to be discussed by participants during the meeting and informed that its summary will be forwarded to UNFF17 via the pertinent official document for consideration.

B. Discussions

B.1. Linkages between the Global Forest Goals – GFGs and the Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs under review by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2022 Session - HLPF 2022

Ms. Barbara Tavora-Jainchill, Programme Management Officer, Forest Affairs, presented on the meeting's agenda item 2 by providing an overview of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the SDGs and HLPF 2022. The theme for HLPF 2022 is “Building back better from the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. It will review the sustainable development goals:

- **SDG 4.** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- **SDG 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- **SDG 14.** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development
- **SDG 15.** Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- **SDG 17.** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

After showcasing each of the SDGs mentioned above, Ms. Tavora-Jainchill presented the GFGs¹, the rationale behind them and their individual relationship with the various SDGs, described in the UNSPF. She also informed participants of the thematic priorities for UNFF 17:

- i. Reversing the loss of forest cover
- ii. Enhancing forest-based economic, social, and environmental benefits
- iii. Mobilizing financial resources and strengthening scientific and technical cooperation; promoting governance frameworks to advance implementation; and enhancing cooperation, coordination, and coherence, for sustainable forest management.

Participants were then encouraged to download UNFF's flagship publication, “Global Forest

¹ **GFG 1** - 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; **GFG 2** – Enhance forest-based economic, social, and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependant people; **GFG 3** - 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; **GFG 4** - 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; **GFG 5** - 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; **GFG 6** – Enhance coordination, cooperation, 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.

Goals Report 2021” from UNFF’s website², since it paints a clear picture in the progress achieved towards the achievement of the SDGs. Finally, a slide showed the many ways that the sustainable management of forests contribute to achieve most, if not all, SDGs.

To help focus the ensuing discussions, the following three guiding questions were tabled:

1. What messages on the interlinkages between the GFGs and the SDGs under review should be emphasized?
2. What actions can be taken to accelerate the progress in the implementation of the UNSPF?
3. How can UNFF better communicate the contribution of the sustainably managed forests to the achievement of the SDGs?

Key Messages from the Session:

Guiding Question 1: What messages on the interlinkages between the GFGs and the SDGs under review should be emphasized most in the secretariat Note to UNFF17?

- Interconnectedness and complementarities are the salient features of the GFGs and the SDGs.
- The meeting recognized that effective interventions on the GFGs will automatically enable forests to contribute to the SDGs; and that promotion of SFM particularly since GFG 1 target 1.3³ has a wide range of benefits which are interlinked and mutually reinforced across most, if not all, SDGs.
- The focus on interlinkages should include linkages with other environmental related instruments such as United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), and the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. Finally, it was said that the achievement of GFG 1 has a close relationship with SDGs 6, 12, 13, 14 and 15⁴, while GFG 2 is linked to SDGs 1 and 5⁵.

In this regard linkages between the UNFF17 thematic priorities, SDGs under review by HLPF 2022 and Aichi Biodiversity targets are demonstrated below:

² [United Nations Forum on Forests » Global Forests Goal Report 2021](#)

³ **GFG 1 target 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.

⁴ **SDG 6** - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; **SDG 12** - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; **SDG 13** - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; **SDG 14** - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; **SDG 15** - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

⁵ **SDG 1** - End poverty in all its forms everywhere; **SDG 5** - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

- **Goal 1** and its targets are linked and contribute to the achievement of SDGs 14.2, 15.1- 15.4 and 15.8 as well as Aichi Biodiversity targets 5, 7, 9, 11, 14 and 15.
- **Goal 2** and its targets are linked and contribute to the achievement of SDG 4.4, 5a, 15.6 and 15c as well as Aichi Biodiversity targets 4, 14 and 18
- **Goal 4** and its targets are linked and contribute to the achievement of SDGs 15a, 15b, 17.1- 17.3, 17.6, 17.17-17.19 as well as Aichi Biodiversity target 19
- **Goal 5** and its targets are linked and contribute to the achievement of SDGs 15.9, 15c and 17.14 as well as Aichi Biodiversity targets 2 and 3.
- **Goal 6** and its targets are linked and contribute 17.14

Guiding Question 2: What actions need to be taken to accelerate the progress in the implementation of UNSPF?

- Sustainable development can only be achieved through broad alliance of all players including the Major Groups and Regional Partners. Success can only be achieved if all stakeholders are committed and determined to work together including inter-sectoral approach to achieve SFM.
- There is a need to:
 - increase joint efforts across international organizations and the promotion of multi-country projects;
 - identify, collate and share best practices for mitigating the adverse impacts of COVID-19;
 - build the capacity and provide financial support to the vulnerable groups in the IAF architecture to effectively contribute to the implementation of the UNSPF;
 - resource the Major Groups, including the scientific and research community to gather data crucial for SFM;
 - political commitment by governments and clear mechanism for action on the ground;
 - integrated cross sectoral policy development as most challenges to SFM come from activities outside forests - agriculture, mining, energy, infrastructure development etc).
- Member States should scale up national Science & Technology activities and encourage stronger collaboration across scientific and policy communities
- The conservation of rainforests seems to be at the center of the international arena, but equally important are, for instance, boreal forests and mangroves
- UNFF17 should discuss implementation of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use⁶ as a way to accelerate the progress in UNSPF implementation; and
- Major Groups should update their work plans to include the consequences of the pandemic and the actions necessary to support the implementation of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration.

Guiding Question 3: How can UNFF better communicate the contribution of the GFGs to the achievement of the SDGs?

⁶ [Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use - UN Climate Change Conference \(COP26\) at the SEC – Glasgow 2021 \(ukcop26.org\)](https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/11/20211101-forest-land-use-declaration.shtml)

- Need to increase the national / voluntary reporting to increase awareness including through social media and disseminating the UNSPF local languages;
- Organize capacity building workshops on national reporting, localize the UNSPF and GFGs and the role of forests in achieving the SDGs and the broader post-2015 development agenda;
- Find ways to reach people in different languages and set up a platform to track the contribution of UNSPF to the progress in the achievement of the SDGs.

Communication related to activities such as the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration should focus on the positive links between SFM and the achievement of the SDGs, as well as on seeking nature-based solutions.

B.2. Briefing on findings of the Expert Group Meeting on the International Arrangement on Forests Midterm Review

Ms. Afsa Kemitalé-Rothschild explained that, in accordance with the program of work of the Forum for the period of 2022-2024, and its provisional agenda, UNFF17 should consider, and decide on the preparations for the midterm review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) in achieving its objectives. The Forum will undertake the actual midterm review of the IAF during its nineteenth session (UNFF19) in 2024, so UNFF17 will only discuss and decide on the required actions, events, and outputs to be carried out/prepared during the period between UNFF17-UNFF19 to facilitate the IAF midterm review by UNFF19 in 2024. For this reason, an EGM on the IAF Midterm Review took place on November 2021. Experts suggested key actions in preparation for the IAF midterm review in the following areas⁷:

- ❖ Actions related to UNFF and its Members
- ❖ Actions related to the UNFF Secretariat
- ❖ Actions related to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)
- ❖ Actions related to the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN)
- ❖ Actions related to the UNFF Trust Fund
- ❖ Actions related to the implementation of the UNSPF
- ❖ Actions related to the contributions of the Forum to 2030 Agenda
- ❖ Actions related to the Communication and Outreach Strategy of the UNSPF
- ❖ Actions related to the regional and subregional involvement
- ❖ Actions related to the involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders
- ❖ Actions related to paragraph 42a and 42b of the ECOSOC resolution 2015/33⁸

After the briefing participants discussed how stakeholders can enhance their relationship with the Forum. The representative of a regional entity reaffirmed the commitment to support UNFF activities and informed on the interest to further develop the concept and understanding of sustainable forest management, as well as to enhance the engagement with other regional entities, to learn more about their realities, challenges, opportunities, and share experiences on

⁷ The full report of the EGM on the IAF Midterm Review can be found at [Microsoft Word - Co-Chairs Summary of Key Actions_EGM Preparations for IAF Midterm Review_Final Version_20 Dec 2021 \(un.org\)](#)

⁸ [E/RES/2015/33 - E - E/RES/2015/33 -Desktop \(undocs.org\)](#)

issues such as criteria and indicators.

The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) and the associated Clearing House mechanism dominated the ensuing discussions. The facilitator referred to an earlier campaign and appeals by Major Groups to the Forum to consider extending the GFFFN to the Major Groups based on the fact that SFM is a shared responsibility of all actors in the forest sector. He referred to MGs requests at UNFF15 and the EGMs in China and Switzerland in 2018 and 2019 respectively to review the eligibility criterion.

Mr. Peter Gondo, Inter-regional Advisor, UNFFS, was invited to share information on the GFFFN, as not all participants were fully aware of the Network. Mr. Gondo provided an overview of the GFFFN's mandate. The Network promotes the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for SFM; it facilitates access to existing and emerging financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund; Further, it serves as a clearing house on existing, new, and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned from successful projects.

Further, regarding eligibility, Mr. Gondo informed the meeting that all developing countries or countries with economies in transition and regional intergovernmental entities are eligible to request assistance through the Network. So far, 34 countries have received support.

The meeting proposed that the midterm review consider including revising the eligibility criterion to major group entities' requests for support in project conceptualization and capacity building on accessing financing for implementation of activities/projects in the collective major group workplan.

Key Points from the Discussion

- Regarding GFFFN, some regional entities expressed interest in knowing the Network better and others vowed to renew their engagement with the Network at the pre-pandemic level.
- The Major Groups are of the view that the UNSPF is a co-designed vision and must be rolled out by coherent action among all groups in society. In order not to live any segment of IAF behind MGs request that the GFFFN Guidelines is revised to allow the MGs access support to implement projects and activities that would contribute to the implementation of UNSPF
- That MGs can add value to the efforts of partners and that support extended will yield high dividends for the UNSPF process.
- The meeting proposed that the midterm review consider including revising the eligibility criterion to major group entities' requests for support in project conceptualization and capacity building on accessing financing for implementation of activities/projects in the collective major group workplan.
- That in the short term the UNFFS should extend the capacity building in Project Conceptualization and development training programme to MGs constituents to enhance and scale up their capacity to mobilize funding for projects in their collective workplan that will contribute to the achievement of the goals in the UNSPF and the 2030 Agenda.

- MGs invite donor countries and organizations to support specific interventions outlined in their collective workplan

B.3. Status of Study coordinated by UNFFS on COVID-19 Effect on Forests and the Forest Sector

Mr. Cobbinah introduced the agenda item by pointing out the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the global economy with global GDP estimated to shrink by 1 percent, as well as on other areas, such as the wiping out of 20 years of education gains, the expected increased number of girl child marriages and reduced remittances to developing countries.

Ms. Njeri Kariuki, Sustainable Development Officer, briefed the meeting on the UNFFS's work on assessing the impact of the pandemic on SFM. She informed the meeting that UNFF15 in May 2020 tasked the UNFFS with the responsibility of compiling an initial assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on SFM, the forest sector, forest-dependent people and Indigenous Peoples and local communities. The assessment also looked at the pandemic's impact on forest financing and international cooperation. In order to fulfill this mandate, the UNFFS commissioned a global assessment of the impact of the pandemic on the SFM in the form of six regional analytical studies. The Forum secretariat also organized and participated in webinars on the impact of the pandemic. Two policy briefs outlined how sustainably managed forests could lay the foundation for resilient economies and societies capable of withstanding future pandemics, climate change and other global challenges⁹. While another one looked at the adverse impacts of the pandemic on income generation from forests and implications for current and future funding for forests; and proposed measures to finance SFM, mobilize investment and other resources for forests, as an essential component for effective post-pandemic recovery plans¹⁰.

UNFFS organized an EGM on the impact of the pandemic on SFM to present the findings from the global assessment¹¹. Key findings from the studies presented at this meeting included the need to:

- Integrate SFM in COVID-19 recovery plans. SFM can make significant contributions to offset many of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the pandemic.
- Renew commitment to internationally agreed forest-related goals and targets. SFM practices may reduce the risk of future pandemics and must be prioritized through renewed commitment to the internationally agreed forest-related goals and targets. Healthy forests are vital to addressing many pandemic-induced challenges, including through creating new jobs in afforestation, reforestation, and agroforestry.
- Strengthen the role of science, technology, and governance. All three play critical roles in understanding the virus itself, enabling productivity growth and in advancing education. There is a need for a better science-policy and society interface and more

⁹ [UN/DESA Policy Brief #80: Forests at the heart of a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic | Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)

¹⁰ [UN/DESA Policy Brief #88: Financing sustainable forest management: a key component of sustainable COVID-19 recovery | Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)

¹¹ [Microsoft Word - Co_Chairs Summary_UNFF EGM_Impacts of COVID19 On SFM_5pm_28 Jan 2021_Final](#)

effective governance, in order to ensure that the best science-based evidence & technological solutions are available in crisis response and recovery measures.

Other key findings included:

- The importance of increasing resources from all sources. The response to the pandemic provides a unique opportunity to accelerate actions to tackle the drivers of deforestation & forest degradation. In order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and future zoonotic diseases, minimize their impacts on global trade and supply chains of forest products, leverage action to build more sustainable production & resilient supply chains, & provide more diverse livelihoods, it is important to build momentum to halt deforestation and unsustainable forest practices.
- Further, countries should **integrate investment** in forests and forest management into their national recovery strategies, considering their national conditions and priorities.
- Finally, the pandemic has created opportunities to build back better, create jobs in a more inclusive, sustainable, and environmentally friendly economy, while continuing forest restoration and sustainable utilization.

These key findings and a synthesis of potential responses and measures for the forest sector's recovery were presented to UNFF16 in May 2021. The Forum welcomed the proposals and encouraged their implementation at the national, regional, and international levels.

Based on the findings of the regional study that focused on Africa, the UNFFS, working together with the African Union Commission, the African Forest Forum and Forest Stewardship Council-Africa has developed a set of draft guidelines on the SFM measures required to enhance the contribution of trees and forests to socio-economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, inclusive sustainable development and building resilience against future pandemics in Africa. This work has been done as part of capacity development project that aims to contribute to better understanding the impacts of the pandemic, how best these impacts might be addressed, in the short, medium, and long term, with an eye not just on response, but also on finding pathways to sustainable and inclusive recovery. The guidelines will be used for capacity building support at national, sub-regional and regional levels on the design and/or updating of regional or national forest action plans that are an integral part of national socio-economic recovery, and sustainable development strategies.

Based on the UNFF16 discussions on the key messages coming from the regional studies, the Forum asked the UNFFS, in collaboration with members of the Forum, the CPF and stakeholders to conduct a second global assessment focusing on the challenges faced by countries, and the strategies, recovery measures and best practices for reducing the impact of COVID-19 on forests and forest sector, and to present the findings of this study to UNFF17. This work was being carried out through a number of regional assessments; and the key findings of these assessments will be forwarded to UNFF17 for its consideration.

During subsequent interactive discussions participants shared experiences and lessons learned from the perspective of their regions and constituents. The meeting learnt that similar studies and surveys have been initiated at regional and constituent levels and UNFFS expressed interest in having access to such studies. The Major Groups were invited to consider organizing a side event during UNFF17 to share experiences from their various constituents building on their

similar UNFF16 event.

Generally, COVID-19 impacted on the operations of the forest sector (logging and processing companies, small and medium scale forest-based enterprises, employment and livelihoods of forest fringe communities, Indigenous People, migrant workers, NTFPs collectors and traders). At the imposition of the lockdown in urban areas many IP and rural dwellers are reported to have retreated to their communities and some engaged in positive activities such as forest restoration, agroforestry activities to deal with food insecurity amidst fears in the communities that the returnees were bringing COVID-19 to the communities. In developed countries, time and financial investments were made to improve homes, made possible largely by economies and time saved from commuting to and from work. Indigenous peoples are now more convinced than ever of the importance of protecting nature and the environment in order to protect human health.

Key Points from the COVID-19 related discussions:

- COVID 19 is awake up call for more sustainable development
- Forests are at the heart of green recovery for COVID 19
- Remote working deploying digital technologies was the most common strategy adopted by the private forest sector
- There is a call to develop regional/subregional best practices manual based on data from the two assessments and other studies
- Call to develop guidelines on the SFM measures required to enhance the contribution of trees and forests to socio-economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for other regions.
- Commission studies to determine impacts and coping responses of vulnerable groups (indigenous communities, women, and youth).
- Publicize the link between forest and human health and promote the role of SFM in the long-term recovery plan
- Strengthen the institutional capacity at the local level to support national plans to combat the pandemic
- Promote the collection of longer-term quality data to ensure better understanding of the effects of the pandemic on the forest sector and sustainable development
- The pandemic has had a profound impact on forests and forests contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals
- The pandemic calls for re-echoing of the **One Health** concept that recognizes that the health of people is closely tied to the health of animals and the shared environment. It also highlights the need to bring nature to the urban setting by mainstreaming forests and trees into urban level planning.

AGENDA

Strengthening the engagement of the United Nations Forum on Forests with Regional Partners, Major Groups, and other stakeholders

New York, 16-17 December 2021 (virtual)

Thursday, 16 December 2021 (8:00 – 11:00 a.m. New York Time)

1. Opening:
 - Remarks by **Afsa Kemitale-Rothschild**, Chief, Policy Coordination and Partnerships Section, United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS)
 - Welcome address by UNFFS Officer-in-Charge, **Alexander Trepelkov**
 - Setting the scene by facilitator, **Joseph Cobbinah**
2. Linkages between the Global Forest Goals – GFGs and the Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs under review by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2022 Session - HLPF 2022
(*Barbara Tavora-Jainchill*)
3. Briefing on the International Arrangement on Forests midterm review Expert Group Meeting findings (*Afsa Kemitale-Rothschild*)
4. Interactive discussion
5. Summary of first day discussions by the facilitator

Friday, 17 December 2021 (8:00 – 10:00 a.m. New York Time)

1. Remarks by facilitator
2. Presentation on status of study coordinated by UNFFS on the pandemic effect on forests and the forest sector (*Njeri Kariuki*)
3. Interactive discussion
4. Final summary of discussions by the facilitator
5. Final remarks

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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