

## Questionnaire on the Mid-Term Review of the International Arrangement on Forests

### Introduction

In accordance with its programme of work, the UN Forum on Forests at its seventeenth session (UNFF17) adopted an [omnibus resolution](#). The annex to this resolution contains the actions to be taken in preparation for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF). The resolution calls for these actions to be implemented in a transparent and independent manner, and in close consultation with Members of the Forum, as well as the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) member organizations and other relevant stakeholders. To facilitate the process, the UNFF Secretariat has hired several consultants to assist in the preparation of background papers and assessments. This questionnaire is prepared by the consultants to solicit views from UNFF national focal points and representatives of relevant stakeholders, for use in their assessments. You are kindly invited to send your responses to the UNFF Secretariat at: [unff@un.org](mailto:unff@un.org), with copy to [yan.lang@un.org](mailto:yan.lang@un.org) by 30 September 2022.

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### A. Questions related to the United Nations Forum on Forests and its members

**Question A-1:** Considering the objectives of the [IAF](#), what progress has been made by the UNFF and its Members towards:

- a. Implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests?
  - **The UNFF has assisted countries in mobilizing resources for implementing SFM**
  - **It has provided capacity building to member states on development of National Action Plans**
  - **Financing Clearing House/Mechanism has been developed for members to get information on financing opportunities**
  - **The forum has assisted countries on reporting on global forest goals which touch on all aspects of SFM**
  - **Most member states have been implementing the UNFI e.g. landscape restoration activities**
- b. Enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels?
  - **The Forum has encouraged coordination and cooperation with and among member states and other forest related agencies such as UNCCD, UNFCCC, AFF, IUCN, FAO etc**
- c. Promoting North-South, South-South, triangular cooperation, public-private partnerships, and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels?
- d. Strengthening forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI)
  - **Activities on implementation of UNFI**

- **Development of National Action Plans**
  - **Holding meetings with high profile people such as politicians to consider forestry as a priority**
- e. Strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives?
- **The Forum holds High Level Political Forum every year which includes ministers of Forestry, Environment, Natural Resources etc**

**Question A-2:** Could you list the objectives that have not been achieved, and how can this be improved?

- **Promotion of North-South, South-South, triangular, PPPs at all levels**

**Questions A-3:** Has the IAF beyond 2015 been operating in a transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable manner?

- **Yes, to some extent. Communication to and among member states has been a problem**

**Question A-4:** Considering the functions of the UNFF in paragraph 3 of resolution [2015/33](#), what has been the progress made by UNFF towards:

- a. Providing a coherent, open, transparent, and participatory global platform for policy development, dialogue, cooperation, and coordination on issues related to all types of forests, including emerging issues, in an integrated and holistic manner through cross-sectoral approaches?
  - **Yes to a larger extent because forums at different levels on different issues have been held for discussions and some important information has been shared on the Forum's website**
- b. Promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM, in particular, the UNFI?
  - **The Forum encourages member states to voluntarily report on progress of implementation of Global Forest Goals which touches on most aspects of UNFI as a way of monitoring and assessing implementation of UNFI**
- c. Mobilizing, catalyzing, and facilitating access to financial, technical, and scientific resources?
  - **The Forum through Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network assisted some member states such as Malawi to develop Forest Financing Strategy and bankable project proposals to be submitted to bilateral and multilateral funding institutions such as GCF**
- d. Promoting governance frameworks, enabling conditions at all levels to achieve SFM?
- e. Strengthening high-level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, in support of SFM?
  - **High Level Political Forums are held where Ministers and other political authorities attend or participate to woe their support in SFM**

**Question A-5:** Are you satisfied with the current level of engagement of Members and stakeholders in the Forum's intersessional activities, and what are your suggestions to improve the use of the UNFF's annual sessions, including intersessional activities?

- Somehow. Most member states especially in the developing countries have limitations in terms of resources. Therefore, participation at sessional and intersessional activities is a problem. Even with the coming in of virtual meetings, most member states have difficulties to participate due to poor internet coverage and strength and also time differences. As such most discussions are done by countries that are able to participate either through personal or virtual meetings and conclusions may not be representative enough.
- As a possible solution, promotion of regional and sub-regional sessions and intersessions may assist.
- Member states to be encouraged or assisted to develop or improve internet facilities

**Question A-6:** What do you suggest could be done to encourage more Members of the UNFF to submit voluntary national reports and voluntary national contributions?

- **Assist member states with finances for data collection and report writing. In most member states, data is available and kept by different sectors in different places which has to be collected and use for report writing. Most often, national reports require multisectoral gatherings to develop them and this requires resources. Some UN agencies such as UNCCD provides financial resources for report writing**

#### **B. Questions related to the Forum secretariat**

**Question B-1:** What are the achievements of the Secretariat in carrying out its functions and in making progress towards the objectives of the international arrangement on forests, as defined in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33?

**Question B-2:** What are the gaps in and the existing capacity of the secretariat with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations, strengthening its capacities, gaining a better understanding of its decision-making processes and procedures, and amplifying the impact of its activities?

- **Limited financial resources to enable it assist member states**
- **It is not a UN agency but possibly a subsidiary of another institution (maybe IAF)**
- **It does not have a regional or continental offices that could be doing coordination of UNFF at regional level**

**Question B-3:** What are your suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of the UNFF Secretariat in carrying out its functions and in making progress towards the objectives of the international arrangement on forests, and enhance collaboration and synergies, and reduce duplication?

- **To have regional or continental offices that could be doing coordination of UNFF at regional level**
- **To make it a standalone UN institution on forests just like other UN agencies**
- **To do more on resource mobilisation**

#### **C. Questions related to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests**

**Question C-1:** Since 2015 what is your assessment of the extent of progress on CPF's contribution to the IAF objectives as defined in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33?

- CPF has assisted the UNFF and member states directly or indirectly on implementation of the UNFI although more should be done as forest loss is still visible globally especially in developing countries

**Question C-2:** In the table below kindly indicate your assessment of the effectiveness, impact and added value of the activities, in particular, Joint Initiatives of the CPF as outlined in its workplan (2017-2020).

| Item | Key CPF activities as outlined in its 2017-2020 Workplan | In your view what has been the effectiveness of CPF in the following areas (please explain) | In your view what has been the Impact and value-added of the CPF in the following areas (please explain) |
|------|--|---|--|
| 1    | Contributions to UNFF documents & sessions               |   |  |
| 2    | Streamlining forest reporting                            |   |  |
| 3    | Global Forest Expert Panel                               |   |  |
| 4    | Global Forest Information Service                        |   |  |
| 5    | CPF meetings, side events & OLI                          |   |  |
| 7    | CPF Communicators network                                |   |  |
| 8    | Forest Landscape Restoration                             |   |  |
| 10   | Forest Finance Facilitation                              |   |  |

**Question C-3:** The CPF Policy Document recognises the need for periodic review of its membership given the evolving nature of its mandate. In your view what should be:

- the key elements in setting criteria for membership of the CPF (take into account CPF rules of procedure as annexed to the CPF policy document<sup>1</sup>)
- the frequency for review of the criteria (e.g., below 5 years; 6-10 years; etc.)
- the process for triggering a review of the CPF membership

**Question C-4:** In your view, how can the CPF provide greater support for policy development and implementation of UNFF resolutions/decisions and in particular assist countries in the implementation of the UNSPF.

#### **D. Questions related to the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network**

**Question D-1:** Have you requested assistance from the GFFFN for mobilizing forest financing? If yes, how long did it take to receive a response and what was the outcome of your request?

- **Yes. It took around 6 months to receive a response. The response was positive because resources were provided for a national and an international consultant to assist the country on this**

<sup>1</sup> CPF Policy Document: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/cpf-policy-document/index.html>

**Question D-2:** If you participated in GFFFN capacity building/training workshops, did forest financing improve for your country as a result? If yes, how did it improve?

- **Yes, I participated. Forest financing did not improve**

**Question D-3:** Was your country able to develop or update its forest financing strategy with the support of the GFFFN?

- **Yes**

**Question D-4:** What funding sources have you targeted for forest financing with the support of the GFFFN and how successful were your efforts?

- **Green Climate Fund has been targeted and project proposal development is yet to start by the accredited entity which is IUCN**

#### **E. Questions related to the trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests**

**Question E-1:** What are the contributions of your country /organization to the UNFF trust fund?

- **None**

**Question E-2:** What is the impact of voluntary contributions to the UNFF trust fund on supporting the core activities of the UNFF?

**Question E-3:** What are the options to encourage sustained and adequate contributions to the trust fund?

- **Ministry of Finance and Foreign Affairs in member states need to be sensitized on the use of the trust fund and encourage them to make contributions or ask MS to make subventions to the trust**

**Question E-4:** What are the key challenges and constraints with regard to mobilizing adequate resources for the trust fund?

- **Few countries commit and contribute resources into the trust fund**

#### **F. Questions related to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**

**Question F-1:** What significant actions has your country or organisation undertaken since 2020 to implement the UNSPF?<sup>2</sup> What are the main challenges and constraints your country or organisation is facing in implementing the UNSPF?

- **With government as well as development partners funding, the Department of Forestry in Malawi is implementing restoration activities such tree planting, promotion of farmer managed regeneration**
- **Strengthened law enforcement activities by collaborating with law enforcement agents**
- **Introduced programmes such as “adopt a Forest” that will assist forest management by engaging private sectors**

**Question F-2:** What challenges and constraints did your country face in the preparation of its voluntary national report? If it did not prepare a report, what were the reasons?

- **The country did not prepare a report because of financial constraint in data collection which is kept by different institutions i.e. government, CSOs, private sector. In addition, it requires**

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<sup>2</sup> There is no need to repeat information which has already been supplied to UNFF, notably in your country's voluntary national report.

**a number of people to prepare the report and this needs commitment which is hard to get because officials have different workloads to handle**

**Question F-3:** Do you agree with the submission of voluntary national reports to UNFF, 6 to 12 months after the publication of the next Global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) in order to reduce reporting burdens and take full advantage of FAO's data?

- **No. UNFF can use the same data that FAO collects through Global Forest Resource Assessment. Unless UNFF requires specific information or data that is not collected by FAO, then 12 months is fine but it has to be made clear of what is needed**

**Question F-4:** What, in your view, are the main "regional and global issues of concern with regard to forests" in the early 2020s?

- **Deforestation and degradation due to charcoal production for energy, agriculture expansion etc**
- **Climate change which brings issues of droughts or flooding**
- **Low financial allocations to forest management by government**
- **Unregulated marketing of forest products**
- **Weak or conflicting policies**
- **Inadequate or lack of capacity by practitioners**
- **Inadequate research in forestry**
- **Weak or poor research extension linkages**

#### **G. Questions related to the contributions of the Forum to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

**Question G-1:** In your view, how well on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being very well) have the Forum's annual inputs to the HLPF on forest benefits and interlinkages with other SDGs been reflected in the HLPF declarations:

  3   HLPF ministerial declarations in 2018 and 2022 (SDG15 theme years)<sup>3</sup>

  2   HLPF ministerial declarations in 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (non-SDG15 theme years)<sup>4</sup>

**Question G-2:** In your view, which of the following should be considered to enhance the visibility of forest contributions at HLPF sessions and better reflect the interlinkages between forests and the SDGs in HLPF declarations (check all that may be useful):

  x   Earlier input into relevant aspects of the HLPF preparatory process<sup>5</sup> by the UNFF, its members, secretariat and partners (CPF, Major Groups, regional/subregional organizations).

  x   Increased role for the UNFF Bureau in representing the Forum and promoting forest/SDG interlinkages at HLPF regional and global preparatory meetings.

  x   Enhanced coordination in capitals between UNFF focal points and those responsible for the HLPF and preparation of Voluntary National Reviews.

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<sup>3</sup> See para 27 of HLPF 2018 declaration and paras 66, 67, 69 and 71 of HLPF 2020 declaration.

<sup>4</sup> No forest-related references in HLPF 2017 declaration. See para 34 of HLPF 2019 declaration; paras 7 and 19 of HLPF 2020 declaration; para 36 of HLPF 2021 declaration.

<sup>5</sup> The annual HLPF preparatory process is launched in March of each year with significant regional and global activities: <http://hlpf.un.org/2022>

- Enhanced consultations between the UNFF and its secretariat and UN Regional Economic Commissions, particularly their Forums on Sustainable Development.
- Enhanced coordination between the UNFF Secretariat and DESA's Office for Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, which supports the HLPF process.

Other: enhanced collaboration between UNFF and national governments (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to encourage participation of political authorities at the HLPF

**Question G-3:** In your view, which of the following should UNFF pursue to increase the political relevance of forests to the broader sustainable development agenda (check all that may be useful)?

- Preparation of a report and associated targeted communication products on the multiple contributions of forests/SFM to the SDGs, including in the context of COVID-19 recovery.
- Building on the momentum of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, foster enhanced coordination among forestry, agricultural and other sectors at all levels (GFG 6.3).
- Enhanced coordination in capitals between focal points for UNFF and the Rio conventions.
- Increased role for the UNFF Bureau in representing the UNFF and promoting forest/SDG interlinkages at key meetings of the Rio conventions.
- Enhanced coordination in capitals on the preparation of Nationally Determined Contributions (UNFCCC), Voluntary National Contributions (UNFF) and Voluntary National Reviews (HLPF).
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **H. Questions related to the communication and outreach strategy of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**

**Question H-1:** What progress has your Government/organisation made since 2015 in implementing the UNSPF communication and outreach strategy, as contained in Annex 1 of UNFF Resolution 13/1 (see [E/2018/42](#))? How could any challenges, including achieving greater visibility of the UNSPF and the global forest goals, be addressed?

**Question H-2:** When considering the overall impact of communication and outreach activities, including the International Day of Forests, undertaken since 2015 by members of the Forum, the secretariat, the CPF, regional organizations and relevant stakeholders, to promote the UNSPF and global forest goals, what do you regard as (i) the main successes and (ii) the main shortcomings?

**Question H-3:** What additional communication opportunities, platforms and channels, including those that have come into prominence in recent years, should be used more effectively to better reach target audiences and achieve greater impact?

**Question H-4:** What opportunities are there to make better use of the capacities of members of the Forum and other players and partners at the global, regional, and national levels to strengthen advocacy on the implementation of the UNSPF?

- **Collaborate with local media in member states**
- **Advocate the UNSPF in other forums/meetings**

#### **I. Questions related to the involvement of regional and subregional partners**

**Question I-1:** In your view, what are the top three areas in which regional and subregional partners have made the most important contributions to SFM policy development and dialogue since the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the UNFF?

- **Holding preparatory meetings to UNFF sessions e.g AFF**
- **Participating in high level policy meetings e.g. SADC**
- **Research in forestry and related issues**

**Question I-2:** What are prime examples of regional and subregional partners successfully contributing to the practical achievement of GFGs under the UNSPF 2017-2030? [*alone or in partnership with governments or business community*]

- **African Forest Forum**
- **SADC**

**Question I-3:** Given the power for good of the business and philanthropic communities, what are the key efforts of regional and subregional partners to partner with them? [*both within and outside the Business Council for Sustainable Development (UN-BCSD)*]

- Mobilization of resources for SFM
- Enhancing value addition and marketing of wood and wood products as well as non-timber forest products

#### **J. Questions related to the involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders**

**Question J-1:** In your view, what are the top three areas in which major groups and other relevant stakeholders have made the most important contributions to SFM policy development and dialogue since the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the UNFF?

- **Advocacy**
- **Research**
- **Formal and informal capacity building**

**Question J-2:** What are prime examples of major groups and other relevant stakeholders successfully contributing to the practical achievement of GFGs under the UNSPF 2017-2030? [*alone or in partnership with governments or business community*]

- **Providing financial resources (grants, loans, aid) to member states for implementation of SFM**
- **Assisting member states in project proposal development**

**Question J-3:** Given the power for good of the business and philanthropic communities, what are the key efforts of major groups and other relevant stakeholders to partner with them [*both within and outside the Business Council for Sustainable Development (UN-BCSD)*]?

**Question J-4:** What degree of funding independence have you achieved for participation in (a) policy development and dialogue or (b) practical SFM contribution? What improvements would you prioritise?

**No independence yet**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION



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