

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, with copy to 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?
 - i. Strengthening of policy and legal framework including operationalisation of the National Forest Policy, the revised Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) Act, the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) Act, and National Strategy to Combat Wildlife and Forest Crime, Development of Timber Legality Standards for effective control and regulation of trade in timber and allied products, and on-going efforts towards the development of National Forestry Act.
 - ii. Increased support and collaborative partnership with local and international government and non-government organisations on forest governance, trade, community livelihood and public education and awareness creation.
 - iii. Establishment and operationalisation of Natural Forest Trust Fund for increased funding of the forestry sector. The Trust Fund has so far assisted in bridging funding gaps which has contributed to forest cover increase, provision of alternative livelihoods as well as reduced community dependence on forests.
- b. Enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels?

As mentioned above, there has been increased support, collaborative partnership, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues as evidential in the willingness and participation of private sector and NGOs in forest-related activities while more than ever before, the country has witnessed involvement of government and non-government stakeholders including agencies in charge of anti-corruption, investigation, intelligence, and prosecution in the fight against forest and wildlife crime. This is being enhanced by the National Strategy with well spelt out institutional arrangements detailing roles and responsibilities.

Besides, there has also been increased synergies with sub- regional, regional and international organizations in the area of information sharing, forest ecosystem restoration and management, biodiversity conservation, and equitable resource use.

- c. Promoting North-South, South-South, triangular cooperation, public-private partnerships, and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels?

Appreciable progress has been recorded in the area of forestry development and innovations, experience and information sharing, and capacity building. Most of the development agenda of the National Government such as SDGs are being driven partly by public-private partnership while cross-sectoral issues affecting sustainable forest management are being addressed through promotion of cross-sectoral engagements.

- d. Strengthening forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI)

Strengthening of policy and legal framework including operationalisation of the National Forest Policy, the revised Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) Act, the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) Act, and National Strategy to Combat Wildlife and Forest Crime, Development of Timber Legality Standards for effective control and regulation of trade in timber and allied products, and on-going efforts towards the development of National Forestry Act which will give legal backing to the National Forest Policy. The Policy is anchored on thirty elements spread across the seven globally accepted elements for Sustainable Forest Management and on increasing forest cover from the present 6% to 25% by 2030. The Act establishing FRIN was amended to strengthen its role in providing products and services to increase forest cover while the NAGGW Act provides for increasing forest cover in the drylands of the country, establishment of a Carbon Sink, implementing livelihood empowerment programmes and improving resilience to climate change.

to achieve the country's strategic actions on increasing the nation's forest cover, improving the resilience and adaptive capacity of our forests, protecting the biodiversity as well as institutionalising sustainable forest management in the country.

support existing and emerging national, subregional and regional joint initiatives and partnerships

- e. Strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives?

Our major approach in strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives includes involvement of top-level decision and policy makers and influencers across the national and sub-national levels of governance. It also includes Institutionalisation of forestry programmes, plans and long-term initiatives through appropriate legislation and process documentation.

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

Our target is to fully achieve all the objectives and I think we are already embarking on actions that are driving progress in achieving all the objectives

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

Yes, but there is still the need for improvement.

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?
- b. Promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM, in particular, the UNFI?
- c. Mobilizing, catalyzing, and facilitating access to financial, technical, and scientific resources?
- 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?

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?

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?

Efforts need to be made to strengthen synergy among national, subnational and local authorities to facilitate forest information sharing. Also, member countries should be encouraged to recognise VNC as an important component of the UNFF reporting system.

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?

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?

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?

Satisfactory

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	Submission of coordinated proposals to members' governing bodies.	
2	Streamlining forest reporting	Cohesion and timeliness	
3	Global Forest Expert Panel		
4	Global Forest Information Service	Progress towards achieving UNSPFF 2017-2030	
5	CPF meetings, side events & OLI	Impactful	
7	CPF Communicators network		
8	Forest Landscape Restoration	Technical advice and guidance	
10	Forest Finance Facilitation	This is not adequate in terms of awareness and access	

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:

- a. the key elements in setting criteria for membership of the CPF (take into account CPF rules of procedure as annexed to the CPF policy document¹)
- b. the frequency for review of the criteria (e.g., below 5 years; 6-10 years; etc.)
- c. 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 UNSPFF.

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?

No, however based on report from African Group, there is need to improve access by especially African countries.

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?

No

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

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

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

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?

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?

Question E-4: What are the key challenges and constraints with regard to mobilizing adequate resources for 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?² What are the main challenges and constraints your country or organisation is facing in implementing the UNSPF?

1. Establishment of National Forestry trust Fund to address funding gaps within forestry sector. The Trust Fund has so far facilitated distribution of over 27 million seedlings and establishment of about 45 hectares of plantations of trees across the country.
2. Strengthening of policy and legal framework including operationalisation of the National Forest Policy, the revised Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) Act, the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) Act, and National Strategy to Combat Wildlife and Forest Crime, Development of Timber Legality Standards for effective control and regulation of trade in timber and allied products, and on-going efforts towards the development of National Forestry Act.
3. More than 20 million tree seedlings have been raised and distributed or planted in the on-going National Afforestation Programme across the ecological zones of the country including the establishment of the Great Green wall across the frontline States in the semi-arid lands in the north, as well as the reforestation of degraded forest lands, mangrove and other critical and fragile ecosystems in the south.

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?

Most forestry activities take place at the sub-national level the report of which are usually transmitted to the National Office for harmonisation with report of activities at the National level. Oftentimes, responses from the Sub-national are either delayed or not forthcoming.

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

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?

Yes.

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

Balancing sustainable forest development with social and economic development; conflicting cross-sectoral policies; Inaccurate forest valuation or accounting; lack or inadequacy of reliable up-to-date data and information on forest; etc.

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:

- 4 HLPF ministerial declarations in 2018 and 2022 (SDG15 theme years)³
- 4 HLPF ministerial declarations in 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (non-SDG15 theme years)⁴

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):

- 5 Earlier input into relevant aspects of the HLPF preparatory process⁵ by the UNFF, its members, secretariat and partners (CPF, Major Groups, regional/subregional organizations).
- 5 Increased role for the UNFF Bureau in representing the Forum and promoting forest/SDG interlinkages at HLPF regional and global preparatory meetings.
- 4 Enhanced coordination in capitals between UNFF focal points and those responsible for the HLPF and preparation of Voluntary National Reviews.
- 5 Enhanced consultations between the UNFF and its secretariat and UN Regional Economic Commissions, particularly their Forums on Sustainable Development.
- 4 Enhanced coordination between the UNFF Secretariat and DESA’s Office for Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, which supports the HLPF process.
- Other: _____

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)?

- x Preparation of a report and associated targeted communication products on the _____

³ See para 27 of HLPF 2018 declaration and paras 66, 67, 69 and 71 of HLPF 2020 declaration.
⁴ 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.
⁵ The annual HLPF preparatory process is launched in March of each year with significant regional and global activities: <http://hlpf.un.org/2022>

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?

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 15th session of the UNFF?

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*]

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)*]

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 15th session of the UNFF?

1. **Alternative livelihood support**
2. **Land use planning and management**
3. **Forest financing and sustainable trade.**

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*]

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 (**80%**) or (b) practical SFM contribution? (**60%**) What improvements would you prioritise? – **Corporate and private sector investments; socio-economic empowerment of forest dependent locals.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION
