

## 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?
- b. Enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels?
- 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)
- e. Strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives?

Appropriate progress was registered on the implementation of the objectives of the [IAF](#) as a result of the activities carried out

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

I don't have thorough information in order to declare that one or more of the objectives of the international arrangement on forests is/are not achieved

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

The IAF beyond 2015 is operating in a transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable manner.

**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?

Considering its functions, UNFF has made all the progress potentially possible to achieve.

**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?

The level of involvement of members and interested parties in the intersessional activities of the Forum is proportional to their own potential, possibilities, availability and individual particularities

**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?

Making more visible the encouraging success stories of achieving global forest goals and their associated targets

## **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?

Achievements of the Secretariat in carrying out its functions are consistent with its tasks

**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?

I have no relevant information in order to consider such gaps.

**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?

Maintaining a balanced approach to the wide range of challenges related to forests, at global level

**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?

I am not in a position to make such an accurate assessment

**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	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
2	Streamlining forest reporting	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
3	Global Forest Expert Panel	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
4	Global Forest Information Service	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
5	CPF meetings, side events & OLI	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
7	CPF Communicators network	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
8	Forest Landscape Restoration	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion
10	Forest Finance Facilitation	No relevant opinion	No relevant opinion

**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 document<sup>1</sup>)
- 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

No relevant opinion

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

**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.

No relevant opinion

#### **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?

Romania didn't request assistance from the GFFFN for mobilizing forest financing

**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?

It was not the case

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

It was not an option

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

It was not the case

#### **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?

There is no contribution yet.

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

No relevant opinion

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

No relevant opinion

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

No relevant opinion

#### **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?

Also after 2020, a number of measures have been taken to implement the Global Forest Goals.

The Draft National Strategy for Forests 2030 has recently been completed, which will go through the necessary steps for official adoption. It also considers the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030, citing the link to this document.

In Romania, in accordance with the provisions of Law no. 46/2008 - The forestry code - the fundamental law in the field of forestry, forest management - ensuring the administration or provision of forestry services, is mandatory for all forests, regardless of the type of ownership, and is ensured by the forest districts, which are forest management structures with professional forestry personnel.

The forest authorities have considered a series of measures to prevent and stop the degradation of forests through illegal logging. These aim at both improving the legal framework and strengthening institutional capacity, including the development and improvement of working methods and tools based on modern technologies.

Thus, relevant legislative amendments were promoted, such as the amendment to the Forestry Code in connection with the tightening of the system of sanctions, in the sense that the unauthorized cutting of trees from the national forest fund, regardless of the form of ownership, is a forestry crime. Auxiliary sanctions were also consolidated (Law no. 197/2020 for the amendment and completion of Law no. 46/2008 – Forestry Code).

Emergency Ordinance no. 119/2021 for the amendment and completion of law no. 171/2010 on the establishment and sanctioning of forestry offences was approved., which concerned:

- correlation of the legislation with the provisions of Law no. 197/2020, by which the cutting and theft of wood, regardless of volume, are classified as crimes;
- the urgent consolidation of the legal framework and the strengthening of the implementation, monitoring and control capacity regarding the fight against illegal logging;
- the urgent imposition of proportionate and dissuasive sanctions on operators who illegally introduce wood and wood products onto the market.

In order to provide better protection to forestry personnel, Law no. 8/2022 for the amendment of art. 257 para. (4) from Law no. 286/2009 regarding the Criminal Code, in the sense that for acts of outrage committed against a policeman or gendarme and which are sanctioned with the punishment provided by law for those crimes, the limits of which are increased by half, the scope of application of these provisions has been extended for forestry personnel vested with the exercise of public authority, in the exercise of service duties or in connection with the exercise of these duties.

Government Emergency Ordinance no. 77/2021 regarding the establishment of the National Forestry Guard was approved. This aims to reorganize the current Forest Guards according to their main attributions, namely the control of the forestry and hunting regime and approval and implementation activities.

In order to prevent the illegal cutting of trees, in relation to privately owned forests, there is a legal provision regarding the state budget bearing the costs necessary to ensure the forestry services of the forest guard by the authorized forest guards, for small owners who own forests with less than 30 ha.

Another measure to prevent the illegal logging consists in maintaining in force the system of granting compensation to forest owners for losses caused by the restrictions imposed on the exploitation and utilization of wood, due to the priority fulfilment by the forest of the functions of protection within the forest management plan.

Thus, Government Decision no. 1131/2020, which extended the period of validity of Government Decision no. 447/2017 for the approval of the Methodological Norms for granting, using and controlling the compensations representing the counter value of the products that the owners do not

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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.

harvest, due to the protection functions established by forest management plans that determine restrictions in the harvesting of wood (until December 31, 2022).

On January 30, 2021, the Government Decision no. 497/2020 for the approval of the Norms relating to the origin, circulation and commercialization of wood, to the regime of storage spaces for wooden materials and roundwood processing facilities, as well as those regarding the origin and circulation of wood intended for the owner's own consumption and some measures to apply the provisions of Regulation (EU) no. 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of October 20, 2010 laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market, entered into force.

In order to monitor with the help of digital means the exploitation of wood, as well as to protect forests against illegal logging, the Forestry Authorities proceeded to update and improve the Integrated Information System for Wood Tracking (SUMAL). It implements several innovative IT applications aimed at increasing the efficiency of control regarding the legality of the origin of wood and ensuring its traceability. Thus, a specific Methodology was adopted by the Order of the Minister of Environment, Water and Forests no. 118/2021.

Actions are also being taken to promote, raise awareness and inform the population, to report illegal logging.

SUMAL facilitates public information and involvement regarding the existence of possible shipments of wood without legal provenance.

The verification of wood shipments can be done both by accessing the web portal [www.inspectorulpadurii.ro](http://www.inspectorulpadurii.ro), and with the help of the "Forest Inspector" mobile application, available free of charge to the population. This can be downloaded both from the website of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, and from the Google Play store - for devices using the Android operating system.

At the address [www.inspectorulpadurii.ro](http://www.inspectorulpadurii.ro) you can view and consult both the accompanying notices, the place of loading of the wood material, as well as the valuation act from which the wood comes.

Through the mentioned portal, which is accessible to the population, if after checking the transport it turns out that it is not registered in the timber tracking system, users are instructed to call the unique emergency number 112 to report illegal transport.

In the National Recovery and Resilience Program (PNRR), which is currently being implemented, one of the objectives of component c7. Digital transformation is the development of hardware and software infrastructure by expanding electronic services to ensure the integrity of the forest land - the development of an integrated IT service for the supervision, control and monitoring of the forest land, including the monitoring of wood transport through the use of video monitoring systems.

Thus, the measure I5. Digitalisation in the field of the environment, the milestone "Increased capacity to supervise, control and monitor forests through an integrated IT system", has as main purpose of the investment to develop an innovative digital system to combat illegal logging. It will be integrated with the SUMAL 2.0 Integrated Information System for Wood Tracking.

Video monitoring of timber transports, both on forest roads and on public roads, will drastically reduce the possibility of multiple transports based on the same legal transport document.

In Romania, as regards the forestry sector, efforts are being made to combat desertification, for the ecological reconstruction of degraded lands and soil and to mitigate the effects of drought, through forest plantations and protective forest belts.

For this purpose, the legislative framework was created and national financial mechanisms and support through EU programs are used.

In the PNRR within the C2 component – Forests and biodiversity protection, the investment "Afforestation and reforestation national campaign, including urban forests" has been established, which has an allocation of 730 million euros and aims at investments for the creation of new forests and the reforestation of forest lands affected by natural calamities, with a total area of 56 thousand ha.

By the Emergency ordinance of the Government no. 35/2022 for the approval of the measures necessary to carry out the national afforestation and reforestation campaign provided for in the

National Recovery and Resilience Plan, the categories of services and works that can benefit from financing have been established.

In order to draw up projects, as well as carry out afforestation and plantation maintenance works carried out on agricultural land, at the request of natural and legal persons, as well as administrative-territorial units, the State Aid Scheme "Support for Investments in Newly Forested Areas" was developed, with a total value estimated at 500 million euros, which was approved by the European Commission and is to be approved by order of the minister.

In relation to the significant increase in the area of protected forests worldwide, apart from the inclusion of some forest areas in various categories of natural protected areas, in Romania special attention is paid to the identification and protection of particularly valuable forest ecosystems, by including them in the National Catalogue of Virgin and Quasi-Virgin Forests;

Thus, according to the Forestry Code, "Virgin and quasi-virgin forests will be strictly protected and will be included in the "National Catalogue of Virgin and Quasi-Virgin Forests" established as an accounting and administration tool."

In this respect, the forestry authorities developed the legal framework through which the criteria and indicators are established for the identification of virgin and quasi-virgin forests in Romania, established appropriate procedures for carrying out the studies necessary to identify these forests and established the respective National Catalogue.

In order to continue and finalize the identification process of such forests, the central public authority for forestry contracted in 2020 the "Study regarding the identification of virgin and quasi-virgin forests in Romania with a view to entering the "National Catalogue of Virgin and Quasi-Virgin Forests", in value of approximately 265 thousand euros, which took place in the period 2020-2021.

The additional forest area that was entered through this study in the National Catalogue of Virgin and Quasi-Virgin Forests is 21.9 thousand ha, so that at the end of 2021, a total area of 70,069 ha is entered in the catalogue, which can be identified on the map by accessing the web portal [www.inspectorulpadurii.ro](http://www.inspectorulpadurii.ro)

**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?

There is no relevant/available information and appropriate responses for all items included in the reporting format

**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?

This opportunity will be considered

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

Among the regional/global problems can be listed

- the need to strengthen the protection, recovery and resilience of forests;
- the need to strengthen the role of the forest in mitigating and combating extreme weather phenomena;
- supporting the forestry bioeconomy, at the same time emphasizing sustainable forestry and the sustainable use of forest biomass;
- conservation of forest biodiversity;
- better targeted support to foresters and forest owners for sustainable forest management

- harmonization of the interests of all stakeholders involved in obtaining products and services produced by forests - forest owners, economic operators, state and local authorities, NGOs and others. All these parties must work together to maintain the functions of the forest ecosystem and to provide optimal supply of forest goods and services;
- confrontation of the forest sector with financial constraints, given that the financing of forest management is still dominated by the income from the sale of timber because the forest services are not profit-generating.

## 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:

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

  5   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):

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).

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

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

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: \_\_\_\_\_

**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

<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 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?

Part of the activities developed as mentioned at **Question F-1** contributed to greater visibility of the forests, UNSPF and the global forest goals.

The International Day of Forest has been adequately celebrated and publicized. A few examples:

<http://www.mmediu.ro/articol/comunicat-de-presa-ministrul-barna-tanczos-de-ziua-internationala-a-padurilor-padurile-merita-toata-pretuirea-si-grija-noastra/5036>

<https://www.juridice.ro/500526/ziua-internationala-padurilor.html>

<https://www.agerpres.ro/documentare/2022/03/21/21-martie-ziua-internationala-a-padurilor-onu--887043>

[http://www.rosilva.ro/comunicate\\_de\\_presa/ziua\\_internationala\\_a\\_padurilor\\_marcata\\_printr-un\\_simpozion\\_international\\_dedicat\\_silviculturii\\_si\\_educatiei\\_forestiery\\_p\\_464.htm](http://www.rosilva.ro/comunicate_de_presa/ziua_internationala_a_padurilor_marcata_printr-un_simpozion_international_dedicat_silviculturii_si_educatiei_forestiery_p_464.htm)

<https://ms-my.facebook.com/RnpRomsilva/videos/ziua-interna%C8%9Bional%C4%83-a-p%C4%83durilor-21-martie-2021/863478511174834/>

**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?

No documented opinion

**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?

No documented opinion

**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?

No documented opinion

## 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?

No documented opinion

**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*]

No documented opinion

**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)*]

No documented opinion

## 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?

No documented opinion

**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*]

No documented opinion

**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)*]?

No documented opinion

**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 documented opinion

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

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