

# **Preparations for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)**

## **Assessment on actions related to the UNFF Trust Fund**

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### **Assessment report prepared for the UN Forum on Forests**

Through its resolution 2022/17, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), based on the outcome of the seventeenth session of the UN Forum on Forests, decided that the Forum would undertake extensive intersessional activities in preparation for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF). The resolution called 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 this process, the Forum Secretariat hired consultants to assist in the preparation of background papers and assessments. These assessments and outcomes of preparatory intersessional work related to the midterm review, will be submitted to the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group on the preparations for the IAF-MTR, which will be convened in late 2023.

The views and opinions expressed in the assessment reports are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Secretariat. The designations and terminology employed may not conform to United Nations practice and do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Organization.

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## List of Acronyms and abbreviations

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
AHEG	Open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CLI	Country-Led Initiatives
COFO	FAO Committee on Forestry
COP	Conference of Parties
COS	Communication and outreach strategy of the UNSPF
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
CTO	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ENB	Earth Negotiations Bulletin
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FRA	Global Forest Resources Assessment
GA	United Nations General Assembly
GFFFN	Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network
GFG	Global Forest Goal
HLPF	High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IAF	International Arrangement on Forests
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations
JPO	Junior Professional Officer Program
MG	Major Group
MGLI	Major Group-Led Initiatives
MTR	Midterm review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the IAF
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO MG	Non-governmental Organizations Major Group
OLI	Organizations Led Initiatives
RLI	Regional- Led Initiatives
S&T MG	Scientific and Technological Community Major Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNFFS	United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
UNFI	United Nations Forest Instrument
UNSPF	United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030

## Executive Summary

1. Because of the importance of the Trust Fund as a tool to enhance the capacity of the Secretariat and improve the implementation of the UNFF priorities, Member States and organizations have been supporting the UNFF Trust Fund since its establishment. Voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund play an essential role in supplementing funds from the regular budget. Without these contributions, the UNFF Secretariat would face challenges, to a greater extent in fully delivering on its core functions. This report highlights the fact that UNFF Member States and organizations recognize the importance of the Trust Fund because it has been instrumental in filling some gaps and enhancing the capacity of the UNFF Secretariat. Through the Trust Fund, it has been possible to undertake many activities to support the work of the Forum and to increase the participation of representatives of countries as well as experts from those countries that need financial support to take part in the sessions of the Forum and other meetings.
2. The Trust Fund ensures and expands the development of the activities of the Forum Secretariat, in particular, the Global Forest Finance Facilitation Network. A compilation and analysis of existing information shows that from 2015 to 2021, the Trust Fund received a total amount of USD 7,050,457. This represents an annual average contribution of USD 1,007,208. Through this continued annual financial contribution to the Trust Fund from Member States and organizations, it was possible for the UNFF Secretariat to create supplementary posts to fill the gaps related to the Secretariat's capacity and provide technical support to Members of the Forum to promote SFM. In addition, the regular contribution to the Trust Fund has empowered the Secretariat to take care of consultancy costs, travel related to capacity development, participation of representatives and experts to meetings, staff travel, contractual services, and operating expenses. Therefore, it is critical to continue exploring options to persuade Member States and organizations to sustain and increase their constructive and practical support to the UNFF Trust Fund. Without adequate annual support to the UNFF Trust Fund, it would be difficult for the Secretariat to cover recurring expenses such as the costs for supplementary posts, capacity development, consultancy, travel to attend meetings, contractual services, and operating expenses.
3. However, the Trust Fund is facing some challenges that need to be addressed. The UNFF Secretariat depends on few sources or few financing mechanisms and there is a need to diversify and multiply the sources of financing in the short and long term for specific programs. The allocation of resources from additional sources of funding may depend to a large extent on the particular legal, political and economic system of each country. Strategies or plans for resource mobilization should be reviewed and updated periodically in order to identify new possible sources of funding and decide whether to stop pursuing others that have not produced tangible results. A key challenge is the global attention and high profile currently on climate finance commitments, and this appears to be at the expense of other finance flows.
4. Considering the importance of the Trust Fund and the above challenges, it is recommended that sustainable and consistent extrabudgetary funds continue to be contributed to the Trust Fund so as to provide the Secretariat with a stable basis for the performance of its core functions. A

strong and efficient Trust Fund is also helpful for taking actions to scale up the activities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, to support countries in the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2030 (UNSPF), and to ensure a balanced representation of developed and developing countries at future Forum-related meetings. Highlighting the critical role of healthy and productive forests at the high-level segments at UNFF sessions could be one avenue to raise the commitment of members States and organizations to the Trust Fund as one of the tools to enhance the capacity of the UNFF Secretariat for a better implementation of the UNSPF. More solidarity and team spirit are recommended between all UNFF members to scale up ongoing activities and to improve capacity development, funding for sustainable forests management, monitoring, assessment, and reporting on progress in implementation, regional coordination, communication and strengthening stakeholder engagement.

## I. Introduction

1. This report refers to Section E on: Actions related to the UNFF Trust Fund and is one of 10 assessment reports prepared by consultants (see [Annex 1](#)) as part of preparations for UNFF's midterm review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) as set out in paragraphs 28-31 of ECOSOC resolution 2022/17<sup>1</sup>. The annex to the resolution elaborates actions to be undertaken in 10 assessment areas, A through J, as areas identified in the annex of ECOSOC resolution 2022/17 to be assessed in preparation for a mid-term review in 2024 of the "effectiveness of the IAF in achieving its objectives".
2. Section E of annex to ECOSOC resolution 2022/17 is on actions related to the UNFF Trust Fund and aims to:
  - a. Assess the impact of voluntary contributions to the UNFF trust fund on supporting the core activities of the UNFF.
  - b. Explore options to encourage sustained and adequate contributions to the trust fund.
  - c. Identify the key challenges and constraints with regard to mobilizing adequate resources for the trust fund.
3. This report focuses on the Assessment E and addresses the above-mentioned first three actions. The report was prepared by Tiega Anada (see [Annex 1](#)) and includes the following sections:
  - Section II briefly describes the Assessment Methodology
  - Section III reviews the Background and Context
  - Section IV deals with the Literature Review and Analysis of Responses to the questionnaire, and information related to the Assessment of the Trust Fund.

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<sup>1</sup> As provided in paragraph 41 of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 on the IAF beyond 2015, the UNFF will conduct a mid-term review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the IAF in achieving its objectives, with a final review in 2030: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/259/77/PDF/N1525977.pdf?OpenElement>

- Section V presents the Conclusions on Assessment E Section
  - VI offers some Recommendations on Assessment E
4. In accordance with Section E of annex to ECOSOC resolution 2022/17, this assessment report will be submitted to the AHEG referred to in paragraph 30 of ECOSOC resolution 2022/17.

## II. Assessment methodology

5. The following sources of information were used in the preparation of this report:
- a. Responses to a consolidated questionnaire, containing questions proposed by the consultant. This questionnaire was circulated by the UNFF Chair on 9 August 2022 with a request for responses by 30 September 2022.
  - b. Annex 2 contains an extract of the parts of the questionnaire that are relevant to this report, and the names of Member States and organisations that responded to these parts of the questionnaire.
  - c. Relevant UNFF documents, including reports of UNFF meetings, Notes by the Secretariat on the Trust Fund (e.g., E/CN.18/2022/6) to each Forum session which, for example, set out the contributions to the Trust Fund, Reports of the Secretary General and Notes by the Secretariat, together with other relevant literature.
  - d. Discussions with relevant individuals, including staff members of the UNFF Secretariat and UNFF members.
6. The consultant notes that this work faced some challenges and limitations, which were clearly considered and addressed to the greatest extent possible.
- a. Initially, only 17 countries, out of 197 Member States, provided their replies to the questionnaire. The consultant tried to address this problem by contacting about 30 focal points to get direct additional responses to the questions related to Assessment E of the UNFF Trust Fund. The consultant also compiled and reviewed documents, including reports on previous assessments.
  - b. Getting written response to the questionnaire as well as discussions with some countries was challenging because some focal points of the UNFF are also dealing with other international treaties and some countries have small forest departments with staff already burdened by a heavy workload. As a result, while relevant focal points were expected to reply to the UNFF questionnaire, some of them were busy preparing and /or attending various Conferences of the Parties, including the UNFCCC COP 27, Ramsar COP 14, and the CITES COP19. To address these challenges, additional exchanges were made with Member States.

- c. Finally, the responses that are analyzed in this report come from a limited number of respondents, eventually totaling 19 out of 197 Member States. In addition, four organizations and one Major Group responded to the questionnaire. The quality of collected responses to the questions varied greatly: some countries did not provide any response to the specific questions related to Assessments E, while other countries were able to provide detailed and significant answers. All collected responses relevant to the topics covered are reported in this document.<sup>2</sup>
- d. Throughout the process of preparing this Report, there was close consultation between all the consultants engaged in preparing the ten reports in this series. The aim of this consultation, which was conducted through joint (virtual) meetings and the circulation of drafts, was to seek to ensure a consistency of approach between the assessments. While the UNFF Secretariat facilitated administrative and communication matters with the UNFF Members for the consultants, the views expressed in the Report, including the conclusions and recommendations, are those of the consultant. This Assessment Report on the UN Secretariat is prepared by Tiega Anada. Annex 1 provides a brief biography of this consultant.

### III. Background and context

- 7. In 2000, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The UNFF is a high-level intergovernmental policy forum mandated to address forest-related issues in an integrated and holistic manner and oversees the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and the United Nations forest instrument, as well as the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network. The participants in the Forum sessions include all United Nations member States and permanent observers, State members of the UN Specialized Agencies, the UNFF Secretariat, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, Regional Organizations and Processes, and Major Groups.<sup>3</sup>
- 8. Paragraph 16 of the ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 called upon interested donor Governments, financial institutions and other organizations to make voluntary financial contributions to a trust fund in order to facilitate the continuing work of the Forum and the secretariat.<sup>4</sup>
- 9. ECOSOC Resolution 2003/63 acknowledged with appreciation the voluntary extrabudgetary contributions made by a number of donor Governments to the Trust Fund to support the Forum and its secretariat and recognizing the need for additional resources. The resolution also:
  - 1. Invites donor Governments, institutions and other organizations to provide contributions to the Trust Fund;
  - 2. Recommends that the General Assembly decide that support to participants from developing countries, with priority to the least developed countries, as well as from countries with economies in transition may be provided from the Trust Fund for travel and daily subsistence from funds designated for that purpose.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Annex 2. Responses to Questionnaire

<sup>3</sup> See ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35

<sup>4</sup> See Paragraph 16 of the ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35

<sup>5</sup> See ECOSOC Resolution 2003/63

## IV. Analysis of results of questionnaire, Literature Review, and Discussions related to the Assessment of the UNFF Trust Fund

10. The analysis of key findings will be carried out, taking into account the answers to the questionnaire, prepared by the Consultant regarding UNFF Trust Fund. The analysis will also be supplemented by reviewing the relevant documents, and decisions of the Forum regarding the Trust Fund, analysis of the trend in provision of contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund during the period of 2015-2022, resource needs and requirements of the Secretariat, and analyses of other materials, taking into account section E of ECOSOC resolution 2022/17.

### IV.1. Analysis of answers to the questionnaire from member states and organisations that responded to the questionnaire E, related to the Assessment of the UNFF Trust Fund.

#### IV.1.1. Country or organization's contributions to the UNFF trust fund

11. Most countries/organizations are not regular contributors of voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund. Only two countries indicated in their response to this question in the questionnaire that they are significantly contributing to the Trust Fund on a regular basis:
  - The United States of America has been one of the largest and most consistent supporters of UNFF through their annual voluntary contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund.
  - Other large donors include China, Finland, Germany, Russian Federation, and Switzerland. China began contributing in 2011, and has contributed nearly 2.7 million since then. Since 2015, the US has contributed US \$2.2 million, China has contributed US \$1.5 million, Russian Federation has contributed US \$0.93 million, Germany has contributed 0.9 million, Finland has contributed 0.6 million, and Switzerland has contributed 0.45 million, respectively, to the UNFF Trust Fund.<sup>6</sup>
  - The following countries have also previously contributed to the Trust Fund between 2015 and 2021: Australia, Japan, the Netherlands, Republic of Korea, and Slovakia.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See Trust Fund - donors 2000-21

<sup>7</sup> Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2020) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2019  
Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2021) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2020



#### IV.1.2. Impact of voluntary contributions to the UNFF Trust fund on supporting the core activities of the UNFF

12. The analysis of responses reveals that UNFF Member States and organizations recognize the importance of the Trust Fund because it has been instrumental in filling some gaps and enhancing the capacity of the UNFF Secretariat.
13. Member States indicated that through the Trust Fund, it has been possible to undertake activities to support the work of the Forum and to increase the participation of representatives of countries as well as experts from those countries that need financial support to take part in the sessions of the Forum and other UNFF-related meetings.
14. The voluntary nature of contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund and the flexibility it provides for the Secretariat and Forum to meet its mandate are highly valued as well as the increased transparency of the Trust Fund through annual reports that have been presented at each Forum session since 2009.
15. The Trust Fund ensures and expands the development of the activities of the Forum Secretariat, including in particular the Global Forest Finance Facilitation Network. Some Member States highly value a transparent and accountable operating environment to promote confidence among members and lead to greater engagement and long-term sustainable contributions. Member States would welcome more specific and regular updates on contributions received and progress made through UNFF newsletters (quarterly reports) and papers. In addition, consideration could be given to developing regular well-articulated plans, based upon the UNSPF and the Global Forest Goals, for Trust Fund expenditure could increase Members' willingness and enthusiasm to make contributions.

#### IV.1.3. Options to encourage sustained and adequate contributions to the trust fund

A summary of proposed options is presented below:

16. Member States proposed that public reports on progress and results obtained through contributions could be disseminated via the UNFF web platforms. Furthermore, it was proposed that analyses could be undertaken to identify specific actions that could be developed with sustained contributions to increase the impacts of the Trust Fund.
17. It is also suggested that charting historical data on contributions and the associated impacts and results achieved, could be disseminated to Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs in Member States, which may encourage them to make future contributions to the Trust Fund. Additional efforts should be made to better understand the priorities of donors through their input to the high-level segments at UNFF sessions. This could be an opportunity to match donor priorities and ensure that the resources of the Trust Fund are supporting activities that are also part of the priorities of Member States on critical aspects of SFM. This approach could also promote synergies between initiatives with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the International Tropical Timber

Agreement. At national level, it was seen as important to promote the activities of the Forum at the political meetings of the Member States.

#### IV1.4. Key challenges and constraints with regard to mobilizing adequate resources for the trust fund

Identified challenges are presented below:

18. Only a few countries are in a position to regularly commit and contribute resources to the Trust Fund, because of economic constraints in many countries. Complex internal government budgets and competing political priorities may create challenges or delays in voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund. In recent years, decisions regarding the use of specific funds may have inhibited additional member states from contributing. Forests and forestry are not currently a priority area for most countries, and the weak global economic situation has led to a decline in the willingness of countries to contribute to the Trust Fund. Unforeseen economic situations brought about by COVID 19 Pandemic, climate change and other disruptive events are also affecting availability of resources for voluntary contributions from Member States.
19. Some countries have other priorities or prefer other mechanisms to make their contributions to international forest finance. A key challenge is the global attention and high profile currently focuses on climate finance commitments, and this appears to be at the expense of other finance flows. There is a need to encourage efforts to position funds for the UNFF and its initiatives to being seen as part of forest-based solutions for climate change. This also links to the important advocacy role of UNFF for forests and sustainable wood products. Mobilizing funding may be easier if it is based on a long-term program of work/ activities.
20. The UNFF depends on a limited number of donors and financing mechanisms and there is a need to diversify and multiply these sources of financing, both in the short and long term for specific areas of the Secretariat's work. Attracting resources from additional sources of funding may depend to a large extent on the particular legal, political and economic system of each country. Resource mobilization requires different kinds of specialized knowledge and experience to prepare and implement strategies or plans that should be reviewed and updated periodically in order to identify new possible sources of funding and decide whether to stop pursuing others that have not produced tangible results.

## IV.2. Literature Review, and Discussions related to the Assessment of the Trust Fund

### IV2.1. Compilation and Analysis of existing data and information related to the Assessment of the UNFF Trust Fund.<sup>8</sup>

The results of a literature review and discussions related to the Assessment of the UNFF Trust Fund are presented below:

- 21 To ensure transparency, the Secretariat reports to the Forum at each session on the operation of the Trust Fund, including the amounts contributed, the source of the contributions, and a description of how the funds have been expended. A compilation and breakdown of existing information was carried out to identify key elements of the evolution of the Trust Fund from 2015 to 2021. The results of this compilation are described below. From 2015 to 2021, the Trust Fund received a total amount of USD 7,050,457, including the following contributions:
- 22 In 2015-2016, a sum of USD 2,122, 903 was received from eight (8) countries, including China, Finland, Japan, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Switzerland, and the United States of America. This financial contribution provided useful opportunities to get 6 posts to support the UNFF Secretariat. In addition, in-kind contribution was received from FAO, with P-3 level post in 2015, for monitoring, assessment, and reporting work of the Forum. The Government of Japan also funded a Junior Programme Officer post from April 2016.
23. In 2017, a contribution of USD 1, 173, 830 was received. Five (5) countries provided contribution, including China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States of America. The allocation of funding was used to cover expenditures for 2 posts and different activities. In-kind contribution was provided by the Governments of China and Japan for funding Junior Programme Officer posts in 2017 for activities relating to capacity development of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and on monitoring, assessment, and reporting to the Forum.
24. In 2018, it is worthwhile to note a substantial decrease of contribution, since the total amount received was only USD 685, 133. Five (5) countries provided their contribution: China, Finland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States of America. This funding was used

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<sup>8</sup> Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2017) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2015 and 2016  
Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2018) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2017  
Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2019) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2018  
Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2020) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2019  
Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2021) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2020  
Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2022) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2021  
Implementation of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 – Report of the SG (2018)  
Report of the SG on Reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consideration of all future options (2015)  
Proposed programme budget for 2022 (See section on Subprogramme 8 - Sustainable forest management)

to support 2 posts and many other activities. The Governments of China and Japan funded Junior Professional Officer posts in 2018.

25. In 2019, total annual contribution was higher than 2018, with USD 1, 574 ,755. Seven (7 ) countries provided their contribution, including Australia, China, Germany, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Switzerland, and there was also a contribution from International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through Global Environment Facility (GEF). This funding was used to cover expenditures related to 2 posts and additional activities. The Government of China provided in-kind contribution for funding a Junior Professional Officer post until April 2019.
26. In 2020, the annual contribution to the Trust Fund was USD 1, 173, 635, which was lower than the amount received in 2019. Five (5 ) countries provided their contribution, including China, Germany, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States of America. It is significant to note that in 2020, there were no in-kind contributions.
27. In 2021, the contribution to the Trust Fund was only USD 320, 201. This is the lowest annual contribution when compared to the previous seven years from 2015 to 2021. Only two (2) countries provided contribution to the Trust fund: The Republic of Korea and the United States of America. Again, it is significant to note that there was no in-kind contribution in 2021.
28. In summary, from 2015 to 2021, the Trust Fund received a total amount of USD 7,050,457. This represents an annual average contribution of USD 1, 007,208 . Through this continued annual financial contribution to the Trust Fund from Member States and organizations, it was possible for the UNFF Secretariat to get supplementary posts to fill the gaps related to the Secretariat's capacity, and more importantly to support and provide technical assistance to Members of the Forum to promote SFM and implementation of the UNSPF. In addition, the regular contribution to the Trust Fund has empowered the Secretariat to take care of consultancy costs, travel related to capacity development, participation of representatives and experts to meetings, staff travel, contractual services, and operating expenses.
29. Therefore, it is critical to continue exploring options to persuade members States and organizations to sustain and increase their constructive support to the UNFF Trust Fund. Without adequate annual support to the UNFF Trust Fund, it would be difficult for the Secretariat to continue to cover recurring expenses such as the costs for supplementary posts, capacity development, consultancy, travel of representatives to attend UNFF-related meetings, contractual services, and operating expenses.

## V. Conclusions and Recommendations

### V.1. Conclusions

30. Existing information from the UNFF website and previous assessment reports shows that the UNFF Trust Fund overall received an amount of USD 20 million between 2000 and 2014.<sup>i</sup> This signifies an average annual contribution of USD 1,428,571. It is a helpful support to the Secretariat that enhanced its efficiency during this period.
31. From 2015 to 2021, the Trust Fund received a total amount of USD 7,050,457. This represents an annual average of USD 1,007,208. It is hoped that the level of annual financial contributions will continue to be total more than USD 1,000, 000, despite the very low number of voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund in 2021.
32. It is encouraging to note that the human and budgetary resources needed by the UNFF Secretariat to support the Forum and its member States have been recognized and highlighted in various UN resolutions, including the Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33.
33. With this recognition, hopefully, the Members States and organizations will continue to provide their political and financial support to the UNFF Secretariat through significant funding to the Trust Fund and through other mechanisms such as in-kind contributions.

## V.2. Recommendations

34. Considering the need to address key challenges related to the financial and human resources that are required to broaden the integration of forests into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is recommended that sustainable and consistent extrabudgetary funds continue to be allocated to the Trust Fund so as to provide the Secretariat with a reliable foundation for the performance of its core functions.
35. A strong and efficient Trust Fund is also helpful for taking actions to scale up the activities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, to support the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests , and to ensure a balanced representation of developed and developing countries at future Forum-related meetings.
36. Highlighting the critical role of healthy and productive forests at the high- level segments of the UNFF sessions could provide an option to promote the work of the Forum and raise the commitment of Members States and organizations to contribute to the Trust Fund. Ultimately, voluntary contributions help to enhance the capacity of the UNFF Secretariat, which in turn contributes to better implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests and achieving the six Global Forest Goals.
37. More solidarity and team spirit are recommended between all UNFF members to scale up ongoing activities and to improve capacity development, funding for sustainable forests management, monitoring, assessment, and reporting on progress in implementation, regional coordination, communication and strengthening stakeholder engagement.

## Annexes

### Annex1. Brief biography Tiega Anada, consultant

Tiega Anada, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Specialist, former Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Born in Niger (West Africa), started his career as a forester, having earned university degrees in Agriculture, Forestry, Wildlife Management, Climate Change issues, and Watershed Management. Has been deeply involved in working on Biodiversity and Water resources Management at national level (Former Director of Wildlife and Fisheries in Niger), at sub-regional level (Regional Coordinator for IUCN in West Africa) and global level (Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands). Working for the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA BiCC) as Resilience and Adaptation Specialist, he coordinated and supervised all activities of the Program, including support to national and regional policies/strategies and legislative framework on Forests, Wildlife, fisheries, and protected Areas in 15 countries of West Africa, as well as site-based activities on coastal landscapes in Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire. From 2021 to 2022, he provided technical support to five countries in Central and West Africa on Strategic Planning including Sustainable Forest Management, Integrated River Basin Management, Integrated Coastal Management, and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

### Annex 2. Responses to Questionnaire E related to the Assessment of the UNFF Trust Fund

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT ON FORESTS: RESPONSES RELEVANT TO Assessment of the UNFF Trust Fund (Assessment E).** The Questionnaire on the Mid-term Review contained four questions specifically relating to the Assessment E, namely E1, E2, E3, and E4.. This summary highlights key points made by Member States and the organizations which responded directly to these questions.

#### Question E-1: What are your country or organization's contributions to the UNFF trust fund?

<i>Member State /organization which responded directly to this question.</i>	<i>Responses from Member States and organizations</i>
Bangladesh	Bangladesh does not contribute to the UNFF trust fund. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The country has neither applied nor received the UNFF trust fund.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•UNFF is encouraged to communicate regularly with member countries to keep them updated on UNFF Trust Fund-related issues. So far no such communication has been received except couple of email communications with focal points such as the current one.</li> </ul>
China	China has contributed more than US \$2.2 million to the UNFF Trust Fund since 2012.
Colombia	There have been no contributions
El Salvador	We do not participate.
Jamaica	N/A
Kenya	Kenya has not been in a position to contribute to the trust fund
Malawi	None
Malaysia	No
Mexico	Mexico has not contributed.
Romania	There is no contribution yet.
Switzerland	Switzerland mainly contributes to the GFFFN
The Philippines	The Philippine government has not announced any voluntary contribution to the UNFF trust fund.
USA	The United States has been one of the largest and most consistent supporters of UNFF through our voluntary contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund.

FAO	FAO is not in a position to provide detailed responses on these items but is willing to note the relevance of the G3FN and the Trust Fund, both in supporting members in implementing the Forum’s decisions and in particular in the case of the latter, enabling the Forum secretariat to deliver on its functions.
ITTO	NA but ITTO has seconded several officers to UNFF Secretariat over the years (none in last decade or so) due to a lack of resources.
Major Group for Children and Youth	No response to this question

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

<i>Member State /organization which responded directly to this question.</i>	<i>Responses from Member States and organizations</i>
Australia	Trust fund contributions have made substantial impacts on elements including developing the inaugural GFG report.
China	Contributions from the UNFF Trust Fund have significantly enhanced the capacity of the UNFF Secretariat to carry out its responsibilities, particularly in supporting the participation of developing countries in UNFF activities and in enhancing forestry financing capacity.
Colombia	No information is available to determine the impact.
El Salvador	Unknown.
Jamaica	UNFF relies on funding to support the core work.



Kenya	The voluntary contribution has been positive and has facilitated occasional funding for one delegate participating in the regular UNFF sessions and intersessional activities
Malaysia	N/A
Mexico	Impacts are identified in supporting the daily work of the Secretariat, in the organization of UNFF sessions and expert group meetings and in GFFFN technical cooperation activities.
Romania	No relevant opinion.
Switzerland	It is difficult to say as we only get a one-year report.  Core activities of UNFF should be funded by the UN budget.
USA	We value the voluntary nature of contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund and the flexibility it provides for the Secretariat and Forum to meet its mandate. We highly value the increased transparency of the trust fund through annual reports at each Forum session since 2009.
FAO	FAO is not in a position to provide detailed responses on these items but is willing to note the relevance of the G3FN and the Trust Fund, both in supporting members in implementing the Forum's decisions and in particular in the case of the latter, enabling the Forum secretariat to deliver on its functions.
ITTO	Unknown but assumed positive.
Major Group for Children and Youth	Support the administrative work of the secretariat and enable financing of meetings through logistical support and travel grants for some delegates and the activities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network. Thus, they are a fundamental intervention that enables robust action of the secretariat and UNFF in general.

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

<i>Member State /organization which responded directly to this question.</i>	<i>Responses from Member States and organizations</i>
Australia	<p>We highly value a transparent and accountable operating environment to promote confidence among members and lead to greater engagement and long-term sustainable contributions. We would welcome more specific and regular updates on contributions received and progress made through UNFF newsletters (quarterly reports) and papers.</p> <p>In addition, we consider that developing regular well-articulated plans, embedded in UNSPF objectives, for Trust Fund expenditure would increase Members’ willingness and enthusiasm to make contributions.</p>
Bangladesh	The Secretariat may be encouraged to strengthen communication with member countries and request contributions to the Trust Fund.
China	Formulate and publicize, annually, planned activities and funding gaps in accordance with the mandates of the UNFF Secretariat and UNFF resolutions; Report the effects of contributions; and design targeted activities taking into account donors’ priority areas.
Colombia	Generation of synergies between initiatives with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Tropical Timber Agreement, among others, to promote or facilitate the participation of delegates.
El Salvador	Not explored.
Jamaica	N/A
Kenya	- Application or utilization of the trust fund resources for mutually beneficial activities among member states on critical aspects of SFM

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holding of targeted and well-coordinated High level political forums with the funding for the trust fund high on the agenda</li> <li>- Profiling of the activities of the forum in the political cycles of the member states</li> </ul>
Malawi	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
Malaysia	N/A
Mexico	Make greater dissemination of the impacts and results achieved.
Romania	No relevant opinion.
Switzerland	Activities under UNFF should be need-driven. Needs must be identified during the meetings or before by way of questionnaires so as to discuss it during the UNFF sessions.
USA	Few Members are consistent supporters of the UNFF Trust Fund. We are interested in charting historical data and contributions to the trust fund and their impact on core activities.
FAO	No response to this question.
ITTO	Make contributions mandatory. Voluntary contributions will probably never be sustained, they will fluctuate with donor whims and priorities.
Major Group for Children and Youth	<p>Transparency in the use of existing resources to build confidence in the utility of the fund.</p> <p>Aligning contributions directly with particular initiatives that require support as opposed to financing without particular targets in mind.</p>

**Question 4. What are the main challenges and constraints in mobilizing sufficient resources for the Trust Fund?**

<i>Member State /organization which responded directly to this question.</i>	<i>Responses from Member States and organizations</i>
Algeria	<p>The fact that the "United Nations instrument on forests" is not a legally binding instrument does not contribute to sustainable forest management, despite the fact that all the other conventions mention forests, but we do not have any instrument or convention in the same way as wetlands, biodiversity, the LCD. As a result, there is no fund specifically dedicated to forests.</p> <p>At the level of the UNFF secretariat, the CPF is the technical and scientific body of the UNFF, it turns out that at the country level, this situation is not replicated and there is no framework that reflects this synergy, while FAO is a partner that mobilizes funding on issues that are not necessarily within the UNFF strategic framework.</p>
Australia	<p>The limited visibility of the UNFF's work, including its strength and value, constrains ODA funds from members. As per points at E-3 above, ensuring transparent and accountable operating systems, and well-articulated plans for Trust Fund expenditure, would help address this, and potentially enable more contributions.</p>
Bangladesh	<p>No information available about the activities on the Fund.</p> <p>Given the global economic situation and its negative impacts on the member countries is likely to be the main challenge for the fund.</p> <p>Secretariat may look for potential contributors from the member countries.</p>
China	<p>Forests and forestry are not currently a priority area for most countries, and the weak global economic situation has led to a decline in the willingness of countries concerned to contribute to the Trust Fund.</p>
Colombia	<p>The main challenge is to provide specific information on the participation requirements needs of developing countries, or least developed countries or countries with economies in transition, to determine the actual needs.</p>

El Salvador	Exploration efforts are under way for a Forest Incentives Act and Plan.
Jamaica	Budgetary constraints?
Kenya	The Tight economic situations in members countries  Unforeseen economic situations brought about by COVID 19 Pandemic, Climate change and other disruptive events affecting economic performance of member states.
Malawi	Few countries commit and contribute resources into the trust fund.
Mexico	Countries have other priorities or prefer other mechanisms to make their contributions to international forest finance.
New Zealand	We note that a key challenge is the global attention and high profile currently on climate finance commitments, and that this appears to be at the expense of other finance flows. We encourage efforts to position funds and initiatives to qualify as eligible for climate finance. This also links to the important advocacy role of UNFF for forests and sustainable wood products noted above.
Romania	No relevant opinion.
Switzerland	Funding will be easier to provide based on an agreed programme of work/ activities.
USA	Complex internal government budgets and schedules and political priorities may create challenges or delays in voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund.  In recent years, decisions regarding the use of specific funds may have inhibited other member states from contributing.
FAO	No response to this question.

ITTO	See above comments.
Major Group for Children and Youth	<p>Limited awareness of the scope of initiatives supported by the trust fund makes it difficult to attract new/additional support.</p> <p>UNFF trust fund may not be formally recognized by member states, organizations, and other entities thereby limiting continuous financial contributions.</p> <p>Limited awareness of collaboration opportunities between UNFF and other stakeholders, particularly in situations where activities can be supported directly without direct financial contributions, for example the proposed GFFFN office in Beijing costs covered through extrabudgetary resources.</p>

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### Annex 3 Relevant documents

Trust Fund - donors 2000-21 (Excel sheets)

Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2017) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2015 and 2016.

Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2018) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2017.

Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2019) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2018.

Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2020) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2019.

Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2021) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2020.

Forum Trust Fund – Note by the Secretariat (2022) – covers contributions/expenditures for 2021.  
Implementation of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 – Report of the SG (2018).

UNFF website, available at <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/index.html>

ECOSOC Resolution on the International Arrangement on Forests beyond 2015 - E/RES/2015/33.

ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35: Report on the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

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ECOSOC Resolution 2003/63 Trust Fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests.

<https://www.un.org/esa/forests/documents/ecosoc-resolutions/index.html>

<https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/IAF-Assessment-Report-Final-12-Sep-2014.pdf>

ECOSOC Resolution 2017/4: United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 and quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2017–2020:

General Assembly Resolution 71/285: United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030  
A/RES/71/285

Secretary-General Report on the implementation of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N18/051/50/PDF/N1805150.pdf?OpenElement>

Report on the Independent Assessment of the IAF (September 2014):  
<https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/IAF-Assessment-Report-Final-12-Sep-2014.pdf>

Report of the SG on Reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consideration of all future options (2015)

Proposed programme budget for 2022 (See section on Subprogramme 8 - Sustainable forest management).

Report of the Special Session of the UN Forum on Forests (20 January 2017) E/CN.18/SS/2017/2

ECOSOC Resolution 2017/4: United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 and quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2017–2020 E/RES/2017/4

Report of the 11th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests E/CN.18/2015/14

Report of the 12th session of the UN Forum on Forests E/CN.18/2017/8

Report of the 13th session of the UN Forum on Forests E/CN.18/2018/9

Report of the 14th session of the UN Forum on Forests E/CN.18/2019/9

Report of the 15th session of the UN Forum on Forests E/CN.18/2020/9

Report of the 16th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests E/CN.18/2021/

Report of the 17th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests E/2022/42-E/CN.18/2022/8

Additional consulted documents from the web

[eehttps://repository.usfca.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1757&context=capstone.](https://repository.usfca.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1757&context=capstone)

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[http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/repository/entri/docs/cop/Ramsar\\_COP10\\_res012.pdf](http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/repository/entri/docs/cop/Ramsar_COP10_res012.pdf) -Resolution X.12 Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector.

<https://repository.usfca.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1757&context=capstone>.

[http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/repository/entri/docs/cop/Ramsar\\_COP10\\_res012.pdf](http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/repository/entri/docs/cop/Ramsar_COP10_res012.pdf) -Resolution X.12 Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector