

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
19 February 2025

Original: English

**United Nations Forum on Forests****Twentieth session**

New York, 5-9 May 2025

**Item 3 (b) and its sub-items (i), (ii) and (iii)<sup>1</sup> of the provisional agenda****Contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities****Note by the Secretariat*****Summary***

In accordance with its quadrennial programme of work for 2025-2028, the United Nations Forum on Forests at its twentieth session, will consider contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities. The present note serves as the basis for discussion at its twentieth session on contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities under agenda item 3 (b) and its sub-items (i), (ii) and (iii). It also provides the background information and highlights the result of the relevant intersessional activities undertaken since the nineteenth session of the Forum.

---

<sup>1</sup> \*E/CN.18/2025/1

## I. Introduction

1. In accordance with its quadrennial programme of work for 2025-2028, contained in annex to ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) at its twentieth session, will consider contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities.

2. The present note serves as the basis for discussions of the Forum on the above-mentioned issue under agenda item 3 (b) and its sub-items (i) contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on the workplan of the Partnership, (ii) contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities and (iii) contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and philanthropic community to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on major group workplans. The note provides an overview of the results of the relevant intersessional activities undertaken, as well as implementation of the relevant provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 contained in its sections C, I, and J. This note also includes some proposals for discussion by the Forum at its twentieth session.

## II. Background

3. In accordance with the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for 2025-2028, contained in annex to ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, the twentieth session is a technical session. It will include discussions on priorities in support of implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (UNSPF). The thematic priorities for the biennium 2025–2026 are global forest goals 1, 3 and 5<sup>2</sup>. The Forum will also consider the contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities. These include the contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), and its member organizations; the contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes; and the contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders.

4. ECOSOC resolution 2024/15<sup>3</sup> contains several invitations and tasks related to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. More specifically, section C of this resolution includes specific provisions in which the Partnership, among others, is invited to continue to enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies, including through streamlining reporting and data-sharing, as appropriate, on sustainable forest management and their forest agendas in a holistic and integrated manner. The governing bodies of CPF member organizations are also invited to integrate the strategic plan, the global forest goals (GFGs) and associated targets into the plans and operational programmes of work of the members of the Partnership in accordance with their respective mandates. The Council further invited the Partnership to report to the Forum at each session on the progress made on actions that the Partnership has been invited to undertake, and to engage more actively in the work of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network.

5. Section I of ECOSOC Resolution 2024/15 is devoted to actions related to the involvement of regional and subregional partners. This section contains several invitations to these partners, as well as to the Forum, *inter alia*, inviting the Forum's regional/subregional partners to support countries in their respective regions to prepare them for the Forum and related sessions under other relevant conventions and frameworks; engaging regional or subregional financial institutions to expand collaboration on issues related to forests and to attract funding for their forest-related activities and participation in relevant meetings; exploring options to organize regional and subregional partner-led initiatives to provide inputs to the Forum and implement regional, subregional and transboundary forestry initiatives leading to the achievement of the GFGs; considering incorporating the contribution to the GFGs in their respective plans, programmes and strategies, as appropriate, to strengthen collaboration across sectors and facilitate partnerships to promote sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches and restoration of ecosystems, contributing to improved livelihoods, including through building capacities of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities; underlining the need to ensure

---

<sup>2</sup> More information about the thematic priorities of UNFF20 is provided in the Secretariat Note on the Implementation of the UNSPF, contained in document E/CN.18/2025/2.

<sup>3</sup> <https://docs.un.org/en/E/RES/2024/15>

sustainable patterns of consumption and production, as well as engage major groups and other relevant stakeholders in their forest-related activities.

6. Through section J of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, the Council invited the Forum, the Forum secretariat and the Bureau of the Forum to promote the engagement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the work of the Forum, and to consider organizing a capacity-building workshop to implement the strategic plan and achieve the global forest goals. The Council also welcomed the establishment of the international arrangement on forests major groups internal coordination mechanism (IAF MG ICM) for implementation of the strategic plan and invited major groups and other relevant stakeholders (MGoS) to provide information regarding the internal coordination mechanism, and their suggestions and options for effectively improving it; and to develop a joint strategy and update their workplans.

### **III. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030: contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities.**

7. The twentieth session is a technical session and will include an interactive exchange of experiences and lessons learned on thematic priorities among members of the Forum, the CPF and its member organizations, regional and subregional organizations and processes, and MGoS. The interactive exchange will include consideration of the science-policy interface and cross-sectoral and emerging issues and will take into account youth, gender and regions' perspectives.

#### **A. Contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities**

8. The Partnership brings together 16 international organizations with a global forest-related mandate. As a key component of the IAF, the Partnership supports the work of the Forum and its Members, provides scientific and technical advice to the Forum and governing bodies of other CPF members, enhances coherence, cooperation, coordination and synergy through its Joint Initiatives, and promotes the implementation of the UN Forest Instrument (UNFI) and the UNSPF as well as the contribution of forests and trees to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other major forest-related agreements<sup>4</sup>.

9. The Partnership implemented its 2021-2024 Work Plan<sup>5</sup> and is now developing a new work plan for 2025-2028, considering the guidance provided in ECOSOC resolution 2024/15. Accordingly, the activities in the new work plan are going to be structured around the Global Forest Goals and will focus on the priority areas where the Partnership can make the most impact, using technical and scientific expertise, and comparative advantage of its members.

10. A taskforce is formed by the Partnership to develop the draft CPF work plan for 2025-2028. The new work plan builds on the guidance provided in ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, the lessons learned during the implementation of the work plan 2021-2024, the assessment of the completed and ongoing Joint Initiatives, and the results of the recent CPF Retreat, held on 22-23 January 2025, in Washington, D.C., United States of America.

11. The new work plan will be aligned with the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for 2025-2028 and its thematic priorities, namely, GFG 1, 3 and 5<sup>6</sup> in 2025-2026, and GFG 2, 4 and 6<sup>7</sup> in 2027-2028. The new work plan will seek to address emerging issues, and will also focus on the interlinkages and relationships between the GFGs and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under review by the high-level political forum (HLPF), and the work of the Rio Conventions including the Paris Agreement, the

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 20 of E/RES/2015/33

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/CPF-work-plan-2021-24-summary-May2023.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Annex to ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, Table 1-2

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* Table 3-4

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, and other forest-related international developments<sup>8</sup>.

12. The Partnership will report to the Forum at its twentieth session on progress made in implementing its work plan for 2021–2024 and present the CPF Work Plan for 2025–2028.

*Implementation of ECOSOC Resolution 2024/15*

13. The Partnership and its members took several actions in response to relevant invitations in Council resolution 2024/15. A summary of these actions is provided in this section.

14. In response to paragraph 4 (a) of the resolution, the Partnership continued to enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies, including through: a) CPF Joint Initiative on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting; b) CPF members' data-sharing with the Clearing House of the GFFFN; c) CPF members' contribution to the GFFFN activities; and d) CPF members' support to the voluntary national reports to the UNFF, (e) CPF Joint Initiative on Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Global Forest Goals; (f) CPF Joint Initiative on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition; (g) CPF Joint Initiative on Turning the Tide on Deforestation.

15. In response to paragraph 4 (b) of the resolution, the Partnership is in the process of preparing its new Work Plan for 2025-2028. The Partnership will finalize and present its new work plan at the twentieth session of the Forum.

16. In response to paragraph 4 (c) of the resolution, the Partnership posted in May 2024 the results of the first assessment of its completed Joint Initiatives on the CPF and UNFF websites as an attachment to the summary report of the May 2024 CPF Members' meeting.

17. In response to paragraphs 4 (d) and 37 of the resolution, the Partnership plans to organize a virtual briefing for Members of the Forum in advance of UNFF20, during which it provides an update on the progress made in the implementation of Council resolution 2024/15.

18. In response to paragraphs 4 (b) and 4 (f) of the resolution, the Partnership organized a retreat from 22 to 23 January 2025 at the World Bank Headquarters in Washington DC. The Partnership held discussions on: its response to Council resolution 2024/15; guidance and next steps to finalize the CPF Work Plan 2025-28; priority areas and activities in 2025; ways and means to enhance recognition of its activities in the governing bodies of the Partnership's member organizations; resource mobilization; the Partnership's contributions to global forest-related negotiations; and options for advancing a coherent and effective CPF engagement in the Conference of the Parties of the Rio Conventions and other governing bodies of the CPF members.

19. In response to paragraphs 4 (g) and 13 of the resolution, some members of the Partnership continued their involvement in the 2024-2025 activities of the GFFFN. Detailed information on this matter is provided in the Note by the Secretariat on means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (E/CN.18/2025/4).

20. With respect to paragraphs 5 (a) and 5 (b), and following the suggestion of the UNFF Secretariat, the Chair of the twentieth session of the Forum sent a letter to the chairs of the governing bodies of the Partnership's members in July 2024 for appropriate follow up action to strengthen collaboration and support to the work of the Partnership, and integrate the UNSPF, the GFGs and associated targets into the plans and operational programmes of work of the Partnership's members in accordance with their respective mandates and to take mutually beneficial decisions on strengthening the Partnership.

---

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* Table 1, 2(c); Table 2, 2(e); Table 3, 2(c); Table 4, 2(e)

21. In response to paragraphs 18 (a), 18 (b), and 18 (c), relevant member of the Partnership is involved in the advisory group on reporting. Detailed information on these activities is contained in the Note by the Secretariat on monitoring, assessment and reporting: voluntary national reports; capacity building for reporting; global core set of forest-related indicators; next global forest goals report (E/CN.18/2025/5).

22. In response to paragraph 22 (a), members of the Partnership discussed next steps to coordinate on key messages to HLPF on forest interlinkages to the SDGs under its review during the retreat, and is planning to prepare such messages, particularly in the year when SDG15 is reviewed, including through its forest communicators' network.

*Activities of the Partnership since nineteenth session of the Forum*

23. Since UNFF19, the Partnership continued to bring its policy and technical expertise, science, knowledge, and resources to deliver its activities in support of the Forum. In particular, the Partnership delivered through providing an inter-agency space for enhancing the implementation of intergovernmental forest-related commitments. The Partnership also collaborated with regional organizations and Major Groups.

24. Since UNFF19, the Partnership held a virtual meeting on 20 December 2024, and a hybrid Retreat on 22-23 January 2025 at the World Bank HQ in Washington D.C. During these meetings, members of the CPF discussed progress in joint activities to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Forests and the achievement of its Global Forest Goals and targets, response to ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, and development of new workplan, as well as priorities and strategic direction of the future work of the Partnership<sup>9</sup>.

25. The Partnership has been following on the implementation of the *Joint Call to Action for Forests towards 2030* and accelerated global advocacy and communication efforts to bring forests into discussions on climate change, biodiversity, agriculture, and socio-economic issues and to promote opportunities associated with forest solutions to the planetary crises, in particular by organizing events, or activities during the Conferences of Parties of the three Rio Conventions held in 2024.

26. During the sixteenth session of the conference of the parties to the CBD, the Partnership held a series of events and launched a publication. Members of the Partnership took the lead in organizing “*Forests and Water Day*” and “*Restoration Day*” on 25 October 2024 in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Pavilion. Events organized included sessions on “Forests in a changing climate – biodiversity as a safeguard for resilient forest landscapes”, “Sustainable Forest-Based Economies: Meeting the needs of people and biodiversity”, and “Strengthening Conservation of Primary Forests: the catalytic role of the GEF”, “The six-year race to restoration”, “Global Restoration Movement”, “Tracking progress and building capacities”, “Funding local restoration innovation”, and “Scaling finance to deliver the global restoration agenda”. The CPF also launched the publication “The Forest Factor: The role of protection, restoration, and sustainable management of forests for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework<sup>10</sup>” outlining linkages between Global Forest Goals and GBF Targets, and a joint information note from CBD and UNFF secretariats, titled “Towards a coherent forest agenda<sup>11</sup>” as a key deliverable under the Partnership's joint initiative on Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Global Forest Goals - harnessing complementarities and addressing fragmentation in the global forest agenda.

27. During the twenty-ninth session of the conference of the parties to the UNFCCC (COP29), the Partnership and its members held a series of events at the Forest Pavilion within the SDG Pavilion hosted by UN DESA. The Forest Pavilion's thematic daily sessions led by CPF members included: “Science,

<sup>9</sup> Summary reports of the CPF meetings are available on the Forum website at <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/cpf-meetings/index.html>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/forest/doc/forest-factor-en.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Towards-a-coherent-forest-agenda\\_final.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Towards-a-coherent-forest-agenda_final.pdf)

Technology and Innovation / Digitalization” led by the International Union of Forest Research Organizations and co-led by the Center for International Forestry Research-World Agroforestry; "Sustainable forest-based bioeconomy for climate change mitigation and adaptation" led by the CPF and co-led by FAO and the International Tropical Timber Organization and the Government of Japan; and “Forests, Nature and Biodiversity” led by UNEP and co-led by CBD Secretariat and International Council of Forest and Paper Associations. Key messages of these sessions were included in the communiqué of the Forest Pavilion. Detailed information on the Forest Pavilion is provided in the Note by the Secretariat on technical discussions on the implementation of UNSPF (E/CN.18/2025/2).

28. The Partnership organized side events during the sixteenth session of the conference of the parties to the UNCCD. The Partnership events included “*Scaling up agroecology for restoration and conservation in mosaic landscapes*” led by IUCN, and the “Significance of dryland forests for achieving land degradation neutrality, combatting biodiversity loss and climate change”, organized by the Forum together with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

#### Joint initiatives of the Partnership

29. Since the conclusion of the nineteenth session of the Forum, members of the Partnership continued to work on advancing their Joint Initiatives (JIs). Efforts are made to align these JIs with the Forum’s thematic priorities. These JIs generally aim to contribute to several GFGs.

30. Three new JIs were commenced to address emerging issues following the assessment of ongoing joint initiatives at the CPF Meeting in May 2024. These JIs are focused on the topics of “Forests for Food Security”, “Integrated Fire Management” and “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Global Forest Goals”. Of 12 JIs taken forward since UNFF19: five<sup>12</sup> of the JIs have a continuous character while seven<sup>13</sup> are project-based initiatives.

#### Forest Communicators’ Network

31. The Forest Communicator’s Network continued to enhance advocacy and coordinated outreach on the multiple benefits of forests and trees and provided substantive support to the celebration of the International Day of Forests.

32. Events were held to mark the 2024 International Day of Forests on the theme “Forests and innovation” by DESA, FAO and other members of the Partnership. FAO prepared a video spot that aired on major international media outlets. The video spot was translated into 38 languages, celebrating multilingualism and reaching one billion households in over 170 countries, and was viewed more than 720,000 times on social media.

33. FAO also created a dedicated website for the International Day with outreach materials available in several languages<sup>14</sup>. For the 2025 International Day of Forests, the Partnership proposed the theme “Forests and foods” which was subsequently endorsed by the Forum at its nineteenth session. The day will be celebrated widely.

34. Communication and outreach efforts were amplified, designed and supported through the five regional Forest Communicators’ Networks hosted by FAO (for Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Asia-Pacific, the Mediterranean and Near East, and Latin America and the Caribbean) at the regional and national levels.

---

<sup>12</sup> CPF Communicators Network, Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award, Global Forest Experts Panel, Forest Finance Facilitation Network, Streamlining Global Forest-related Reporting

<sup>13</sup> Strengthening the conservation of primary forests through enhanced partnerships and coordination of support; Forests for Food Security and Nutrition; Turning the Tide on Deforestation; Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW); Integrated Fire Management in Tropical and Boreal Forests; Forest Education; Biodiversity mainstreaming in forestry

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.fao.org/international-day-of-forests/previous-years/2024/en/>

35. The Network together with the Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World Initiative (SW4SW) launched the Grow the Solution communication campaign at UNFF19 to transform public perceptions and promote sustainable wood as a vital component of climate action and sustainable development. A key component of the campaign was a wooden billboard that was displayed prominently at the 26th International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) World Congress (Stockholm, June 2024) and the 27th Session of FAO's Committee on Forestry (COFO) (Rome, July 2024). It became a popular selfie spot for visitors and delegates and generated widespread engagement.

36. The Forest Communicators Network convened a communication session at the Science and Society Sub-plenary Session at the 26th IUFRO World Congress, presenting Grow the Solution in the session titled, "Compelling Communication – Reshaping the Sustainable Wood Narrative", as well as presented the initiative at the COFO27 High-Level event "WOOD for GLOBE Leading pathways to carbon neutrality and resilience".

#### Forest education

37. The Partnership continues to support forest education by advancing small-scale forestry and agroforestry through the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) platform to provide knowledge and skills needed for sustainable forest management, and contributes, among others, to GFGs 2, 4, and 6 (priorities for 2027-2028).

38. An event entitled "Forest and Farm Champions: Rural Youth Shaping Tomorrow's Forests and Farms" was organized on 17 October 2024 during the World Food Forum/ Global Youth Action. It amplified the voices of rural youth and spotlighted their significant contributions in integrating sustainable forestry and agricultural production practices and forest conservation, highlighting the need for robust education, training, support and innovative technologies for young farmers to ensure sustainable practices while investing in social innovations of the next generation of forest and farm producers.

39. This JI is moving to its second phase through the multi-country project "Strengthening institutional capacities to train the next generation of forest and farm producers and practitioners", funded by Germany's Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture. This project will support national-level forest and farm producer organizations (FFPOs) and training centres' capacities to provide better training on sustainable forest management-related themes to field practitioners (foresters, farm-foresters, community forestry enterprises, and entrepreneurs) with a focus on young rural women and men.

40. The joint initiative will pilot and test FFPO-led training solutions and innovations to assist the delivery of training and capacity development services among practitioners and producer organizations such as through Farmer Field Schools on Forestry (FFS-forestry) and Farm Business Schools (FSB). The project will benefit national-level forest and farm producer organizations from Guatemala, Togo and Viet Nam.

#### Forest Finance Facilitation

41. The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network was established in accordance with Council resolution 2015/33 and is led and coordinated by the Forum secretariat. The Network works in close cooperation with members of the Partnership to implement its priorities, as outlined in the strategic plan for forests. Detailed information on this matter is provided in the Note by the Secretariat on means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (E/CN.18/2025/4).

#### Global Forest Expert Panel

42. The Joint Initiative Global Forest Expert Panels<sup>15</sup> supports the Forum and other forest-related intergovernmental processes by assessing available scientific information on forest-related issues of global concern in a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, objective, open, and transparent manner. The publications are prepared by thematic Expert Panels consisting of internationally recognized scientific experts in their fields and undergo rigorous peer review. Since 2007 GFEP has produced eight global scientific assessments. The outcomes of the GFEP assessments are published as full scientific reports with accompanying policy briefs. They serve as briefing documents for negotiators, guidance for strategic policy development, information sources for scientists and communicators, and teaching materials for students. Each report has received considerable international media attention and has had a significant impact on international policies.

43. Following CPF's endorsement of the topic, IUFRO initiated a new GFEP assessment on "[Forests for Social and Economic Resilience](#)"<sup>16</sup> in December 2023. Due to the increasingly rapid, unpredictable, and unprecedented global changes linked to the twin climate change and biodiversity crises, fostering resilience has become a key policy issue. The capacity to persist, adapt, and transform in the face of change is considered a fundamental prerequisite for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Given the multi-dimensional relationships between forests and social and economic resilience, and the cross-sectoral nature of the topic, a thorough scientific assessment of these relationships is needed. To this end, IUFRO organised a Scoping Meeting with CPF members and key experts in March 2024. Based on the meeting outcomes, Terms of Reference<sup>17</sup> (ToR) for the assessment and the selection of Expert Panel Members were finalized. The Expert Panel comprises of 15 leading scientists, including nine of female, from 11 different countries, including two scientists from CPF member organisations and nine scientists from economically disadvantaged countries. The first Expert Panel meeting took place virtually on 6-7 June 2024, after which the chapter drafts were developed. To discuss and harmonize the drafts, a second meeting was held in person on 8-9 October in Rome, Italy. A new version of the drafts is currently undergoing a double-blind peer and expert review. A third and final Expert Panel meeting will take place in January 2025 to discuss the review comments and guide the finalisation of the assessment report, the publication of which is envisioned for mid-2025.

44. The GFEP assessments and related outreach activities contribute to multiple GFGs by improving the collection, availability and accessibility of forest-related information (GFG target 4.5) and by supporting the integration of forest-related issues into decision-making processes concerning land use planning and development (GFG target 5.4). In addition, the GFEP assessment on forests for social and economic resilience also contributes to GFG 1 target 1.4 ("The resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change is significantly strengthened worldwide") by synthesizing the scientific evidence on the complex interlinkages and feedback loops between forest resilience and resilience of social and economic systems.

*Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Global Forest Goals - harnessing complementarities and addressing fragmentation in the global forest agenda*

45. Based on the mandate requesting a coherent implementation of the UNSPF and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), the Secretariat of CBD is co-leading jointly with the Forum secretariat and FAO the Joint Initiative "Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Global Forest Goals - harnessing complementarities and addressing fragmentation in the global forest agenda". This Joint Initiative aims to assist countries in coherent planning and implementation of forest-related commitments as identified in the KM-GBF, the GFGs and other relevant instruments, consisting of three inter-related components as follows: (i) analytical study "Forest Factor: The role of protection, conservation and sustainable management of forests for the Implementation of the KM-GBF", developed by SCBD, FAO, and the Forum secretariat, was launched at the CBD COP16; (ii) The component implemented by the UNFFS and SCBD focuses on advancing the role of natural forests in global environmental agendas. The work under this component was launched at the Forest and Water Day at the CBD COP16 by the release of a technical note

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.iufro.org/science/science-policy/gfep-initiative/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.iufro.org/science/science-policy/gfep-initiative/panel-on-forests-and-resilience/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.iufro.org/fileadmin/material/science/gfep/resilience-2025/gfep-resilience-terms-of-reference.pdf>



“Towards a coherent forest agenda: the UNSPF, the KM-GBF of the CBD, the Sustainable Development Goals, and other forest-relevant global processes”. This assessment clarifies complementarities, particularly between the Forum and its UNSPF and the KM-GBF based on global goals, targets, and indicators developed under the respective plans, as well as how these targets relate to the SDG targets and indicators. The coherence in policy planning and implementation will be further assessed in a few selected countries to provide evidence and country-driven recommendations. The interim results will be presented at the twentieth session of the Forum; (iii) the third component, led by FAO, focuses on strengthening the contribution of sustainably managed forests and trees outside forests to biodiversity conservation, management, and sustainable use through effective biodiversity mainstreaming initiatives. Direct support to several countries will be provided aiming to mainstream biodiversity in key sectors, develop technical capacities and financial mechanisms, establish participatory monitoring systems, and scale up best practices in biodiversity mainstreaming.

*Streamlining global forest-related reporting*

46. Partners continued to improve the coverage, quality and transparency of forest-related data and information. The current focus is to improve the methodology for reporting on primary forests, revise certain terms and definitions, provide support to Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2025, and advance the global core set of forest-related indicators (GCS).

47. New data related to the GCS 12 “Employment Related to the Forest Sector” are being compiled by FAO in the context of the FRA and in collaboration with the International Labour Organization and the Thünen Institute and will be issued in 2025.

48. Data production is complemented by country case studies on Advancing Employment Data and Promoting Decent Work, carried out initially in Canada and Tanzania. National workshops on the topic were organized in Ottawa, Canada on 13 November 2024 and Morongoro, Tanzania, on 2-4 December 2024. A qualitative assessment of emerging employment and decent work opportunities and challenges in the forest sector was carried out and published by FAO in collaboration with the Natural Resources Institute Finland.

Detailed information on the streamlining of global forest-related reporting is contained in the Note by the Secretariat on monitoring, assessment and reporting: voluntary national reporting; capacity building, for reporting; global core set of forest related indicators; next global forest goals report (E/CN.18/2025/5).

*Strengthening the conservation of primary forests through enhanced partnerships and coordination of support*

49. In 2024, the collaborative partners organized three major events to emphasize the importance of primary forests. On May 7, 2024, a side event was held during the nineteenth session of the Forum. This event, jointly organized by IUCN, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), FAO, the Forum secretariat, Wild Heritage, and Griffith University, focused on the need to strengthen the conservation of primary forests through enhanced partnerships and coordinated support. The event provided a platform for policy dialogue among a diverse group of stakeholders, including policymakers, conservationists, and representatives from various countries and organizations involved in forest conservation. The event highlighted the critical role of primary forests in biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and the provision of essential ecosystem services, elevating their importance in global discourse and decision-making processes. The panel underscored several key issues affecting primary forests, including (i) the insufficient recognition of the importance of primary forests in international policy discussions; and (ii) the ongoing loss of primary forest cover, which is becoming increasingly fragmented. To address these challenges, the panel recommended urgent action to strengthen policy coherence, promote joint initiatives, and build partnerships, and emphasized the need for pragmatic solutions to ensure more consistent measurement and reporting of primary forest extent and trends across different biomes.

50. On October 25, 2024, in Cali, Colombia, during a side event at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (CBD COP16), the project partners including IUCN, GEF, FAO, Forum secretariat,

Wild Heritage, and Griffith University formally launched the GEF-funded medium-sized project entitled: “Strengthening Conservation of Primary Forests through Partnership Enhancement and Coordination of Support.” The side event highlighted the critical importance of protecting and conserving primary forests, particularly in biodiversity-rich tropical countries recognizing the catalytic role played by the GEF in advancing these efforts. Panelists echoed key issues including the lack of understanding and insufficient integration of the values and benefits of primary forests into global policy agendas and forest financing strategies. These challenges have resulted in inadequate prioritization, ongoing deforestation, and the loss of these vital ecosystems. Additionally, they emphasized that the absence of effective coordination and information-sharing mechanisms has hindered donor engagement, hindering the funding gap for effective conservation efforts.

51. On November 20, 2024, in Baku, Azerbaijan, the collaborative partners on primary forests, including IUCN, FAO, the Forum secretariat and the GEF organized a session titled “Mobilizing Finance for Climate and Biodiversity in Primary Forests” in the Forest Pavilion of the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP29). During the event, the urgent need for robust financing mechanisms was emphasized to protect primary forests, recognizing their vital contributions to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. It also highlighted how innovative financing approaches can be leveraged to conserve primary forests and their associated ecosystem services. Looking ahead to COP30, to be held in Belém, Brazil, in 2025, the event stressed the importance of establishing an innovative forest financing mechanism to achieve global climate and biodiversity goals by connecting outcomes from CBD COP16, UNFCCC COP29, and COP30, and leveraging opportunities for developing and operationalizing integrated financing models to support the conservation of primary forests and help countries meet their climate and biodiversity commitments. Additional information about this activity is available in the Secretariat Note on means of implementation contained in document E/CN.18/2025/6.

#### *Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World*

52. The Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW) Initiative works with governments, the private sector, civil society, and academia to promote sustainable and inclusive wood value chains as part of the forest-based climate solutions and as an instrument to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. It emphasizes the improvement of livelihoods, extension of forest contributions to climate change to its harvested wood products, and the provision of a sustainable supply of wood as part of restoration and halting deforestation efforts.

53. The member organizations of the SW4SW have worked collaboratively with other CPF and non-CPF organizations, as well as countries, and have achieved ample recognition of wood as a sustainable material. Through knowledge products and advocacy, as well as capacity building, the SW4SW has worked with countries to create a virtuous cycle of sustainable and inclusive wood production, value addition and adoption of innovation, access to finance, and adoption of wood as carbon-neutral material.

54. In 2025, the SW4SW will launch its second phase based on the results of a review of its activities and results in 2018-2024. The initiative has GFG 3 as part of its core mission, as it seeks to increase sustainable production of wood products, including through promoting the improvement of sustainable management plans.

55. In the second phase, the SW4SW will continue to contribute to advance the GFG 1 through the support of expansion of planted forests and trees to support sustainable wood production and the bioeconomy, increasing forest area and creating buffers for conservation of natural forests. By focusing on wood and its contributions to different sectors and climate and development strategies, the initiative will continue to build country capacities for more policy coherence within the forest sector and across sectors, to produce and consume legal and sustainable wood, providing an important contribution to achieve GFG5.

56. The SW4SW has had a successful role in advocacy for the consumption of sustainable wood contributing to the advancing sustainable forest production and inclusion of wood in global and national strategies.

*Turning the tide on deforestation*

57. The joint initiative, under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General, contributes to GFG 1 through advocacy and targeted activities to promote scaled up global ambitions to halt deforestation. There is a global trend of declining deforestation rates, spearheaded in recent years by Brazil and Indonesia, attributable mainly to domestic policies and enforcement efforts.

58. However, deforestation trends remain high where there is limited political will and where poverty and weak governance remain key drivers. This initiative focuses on supporting countries in their land-use choices and resolving competing land-use demands such as agriculture, mining, and oil and gas reserves.

59. Through *the Joint Call to Action for Forests towards 2030*<sup>18</sup>, at the high-level event on the value of forests during the 2023 UNGA, the CPF communicated the urgency of closing the financing gap to tackle the full scale of deforestation and advocated for stronger integration of land-use change and forestry in enhanced nationally determined contributions. Continuing and intensifying these efforts are a key component of the CPF's work.

60. With a view to the upcoming UNFCCC COP30 in Brazil, the Partnership is planning to release an updated joint statement on challenges and opportunities in turning the tide on deforestation<sup>19</sup>, showcasing the path from pledges to action in advancing solutions to turn the tide on deforestation.

*Wangari Maathai Forest Champion Award*

61. Established by the Partnership in 2012 in memory of Kenyan environmentalist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, the CPF Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award<sup>20</sup> recognizes inspiring individuals who have a track record of outstanding achievements in conserving, restoring and sustainably using forests and thus is a contribution to GFG 1 and 3.

62. The 2024 Wangari Maathai Forest Champion is Ms Nida Collado<sup>21</sup>, from the Philippines, who was awarded for her outstanding achievements and steadfast commitment to forest conservation and restoration and improving livelihoods. The award was presented by the CPF at a ceremony during the 27th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry in Rome, Italy.

63. The community in San Vicente, Palawan, in the western Philippines, where Ms Collado works, faces challenges such as poor reforestation seedling survival rates, poaching, illegal wildlife trading, and destructive farming practices. It is also recovering from the devastation of Typhoon Rai in December 2021. As the President of the Macatumbalen Community-Based Forest and Coastal Management Association (MBFCMA) since 2002, Nida Collado has led the association and community members in restoring and protecting their environment through innovative techniques and strong community involvement. This includes reforesting 1,450 hectares of denuded land and protecting 400 hectares of remaining forests and the community's water source. She has successfully mobilized projects from both government and non-government organizations, further encouraging community participation.

64. The related outreach and communication campaign had far reached impact to share her story. Interviews with the awardee were disseminated social media platforms and they were viewed more than 4,000 times on X (Twitter), played over 13,000 times on Facebook, and received over 100 positive reactions on LinkedIn.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/cpf-joint-call-towards-2030/index.html>

<sup>19</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/16e22031-d17c-4cde-b3f2-7e8984604f8c/content>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.fao.org/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/initiatives/wangari-maathai-forest-champions-award/en>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

### Forests for Food Security and Nutrition

65. This new joint initiative, by FAO and CIFOR-ICRAF, will conduct a review of the current status on forests' contribution to food security and nutrition, including data and information on the links between forests, food security and nutrition, and identify challenges and opportunities for cross-sectoral policies and programmes that enhance the links between forestry, agriculture, food security and nutrition, through a global dialogue.

66. Since the First International Conference on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition<sup>22</sup> held in 2013 in Rome, increasing efforts have been made to enhance awareness and the capacity of forest practitioners, countries and the global community to be better able to achieve forest-related goals and SDGs, in particular SDGs 1, 2 and 15.

67. Building on the progress made over the past decade<sup>23</sup>, this CPF Joint Initiative promotes efforts to scale up actions to unlock the full potential of sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition. Partners are working on a Global Report on the Contribution of Forests to Food Security and Nutrition, which will encompass recommended actions, particularly at the country level. This Global Report is being prepared by FAO in collaboration with CIFOR-ICRAF and is scheduled to be published in 2025.

### Integrated Fire Management

68. The initial aim of this initiative introduced in 2024 was focused on promoting effective integrated forest fire management in tropical forests in the context of promoting fire initiatives, including the Global Fire Hub. Key activities of the initiative include improving policy frameworks, building capacities and skill development for various actors, including local forest communities, and enhancing regional and global cooperation on tropical forest integrated forest fire management.

69. On the sidelines of COFO27, ITTO in collaboration with FAO, held a Tropical Forest Fire Expert Meeting to discuss and validate a draft revision of the ITTO Guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests, first developed and published in 1997. The results of the Expert Meeting highlighted the proliferation of international policy level fire guidelines/frameworks by other bodies since the original ITTO fire guidelines were developed. They emphasized the greater need for tools focused more on the field level and tailored toward integrated fire management approaches in different tropical forest ecosystems, with consideration for differences in institutional/resource capacities and drivers of forest fire between different tropical regions. Thus, the initiative will plan to move forward in this direction.

## **B. Contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities**

70. In advancing the implementation of the relevant provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, the Forum Secretariat continued actively engaging with regional/subregional entities. In October 2024, the Director of the UNFF Secretariat visited the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) headquarters in Seoul, Republic of Korea, and participated in the Second Friends of Asia and Asian Forests Forum (FAAF). The meeting brought together leaders from the private sector and AFoCO's member states to work together on forest conservation, restoration, and management. Moreover, the Director addressed the 11th Session of the

---

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.fao.org/forestry/80696/en/>

<sup>23</sup> The First International Conference on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition; CPF Expert Panel Report on Forests, Trees and Landscapes for Food Security and Nutrition in 2015, High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) Report on Sustainable Forestry for Food Security and Nutrition in 2017; Policy Recommendations on Sustainable Forestry for Food Security and Nutrition

AFoCO Assembly, the highest decision-making organ of this regional intergovernmental organization, and held bilateral meetings with AFoCO and national forest authorities.

71. The Secretariat also facilitated the participation of some regional/subregional partners' representatives in the nineteenth session of the Forum. This allowed these partners to share their perspectives on the important issues under consideration of UNFF19. During COP29 of UNFCCC, the Forest Pavilion was held within the SDG Pavilion hosted by UN DESA.<sup>24</sup> As part of the programme of the Forest Pavilion, some UNFF regional and subregional partners organized or participated in events<sup>25</sup>. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership held a session on "The Forests of Central Africa: Mobilising the Region and International Community to Preserve the Congo Basin's Forests and Biodiversity and Carbon." The International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR) was the lead entity of the segment "Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships," under which the following events were held: "BambooBoost: For Prosperity, Climate Action, Resilience, and Biodiversity;" "Promoting Transformative Innovation for Climate Action in Agroforestry," and "Bamboo Innovation Initiative – Promoting the Circular Economy." Finally, the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and the Pacific – The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC) partnered on the panels "Indigenous Knowledge and Rights in Forest Conservation" and "Empowering Women and Indigenous Leadership in Forest Conservation."

72. To allow the Forum's regional/subregional partners to respond effectively to the invitations by UNFF members contained in Section I of ECOSOC Resolution 2024/15, the Secretariat organized the Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening the Engagement of Regional and Subregional entities in the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests in Bangkok from 21 to 23 January 2025 and facilitated the participation of some experts. The event was attended by representatives of the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet), FAO, INBAR, RECOFTC, and the Tehran Process Secretariat for Low Forest Cover Countries (TPS for LFCCs). Participants discussed and provided views on the six invitations in the ECOSOC Resolution and suggested ways to enhance interaction with other regional/subregional partners and the Forum Secretariat, such as periodic online meetings and publicizing the entities' activities at a dedicated section of the UNFF monthly newsletter. Upon its finalization, the report of the meeting will be posted on the UNFF20 webpage at: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/forum/index.html>

### **C. Contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on major group workplans.**

73. To implement provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, the Forum secretariat continued to strengthen engagement with MGoS. A representative of the UNFF Secretariat attended the monthly meetings of the Interim internal coordination mechanism for UNFF Major Groups and other Stakeholders. The inaugural meeting of the International Arrangement on Forests Major Groups Internal Coordination Mechanism was held in January 2025. The UNFF Focal Points of Family Forest Owners and Farmers Major Group, Youth Major Group, and UNFF NGO Major Group were respectively elected as the co-chairs of the IAF MG ICM for a two-year term. Through the efforts of the Internal Coordination Mechanism, a representative of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) was nominated as the alternate focal point for the UNFF Business and Industry Major Group.

74. The Forum secretariat kept Major Group representatives actively engaged in several of intersessional activities since UNFF19. Under the Forest Pavilion organized during the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, several events were organized by UNFF Major

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/outreach/the-forest-pavilion-at-climate-cop29/index.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/outreach/the-forest-pavilion-at-climate-cop29/index.html#12Nov>

Groups, including the side events on Solving the Forest Finance Puzzle in the Paris Agreement Era; and on Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous Peoples.

75. Major groups are also in the process of providing their feedback to the input of the Bureau of the twentieth Forum session regarding the interlinkages of the GFGs with the SDGs under review of the 2025 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development<sup>26</sup>. The Secretariat is also planning to engage MGs in the observance of the IDF 2025.

76. The Forum secretariat also organized a training workshop to strengthen civil society and forest stakeholders' capacity to contribute to the implementation of the UN strategic plan for forests (UNSPF) in January 2025. The objective of this training workshop was to strengthen forest-stakeholders' capacity for effective implementation of UNSPF through developing an integrated implementation strategy and a joint workplan. This joint workplan aims to identify the main types of interventions/actions through which forest-stakeholder can add value to the UNSPF implementation, and the achievement of GFG and the SDG.

77. During this training workshop, participants reviewed the lessons learned from implementation of the joint major groups workplan (2017-2021), as well as the achievements, challenges, obstacles and gaps that hindered its implementation. Participants identified priority areas for MGoS action, aligned with the thematic priorities for 2025-2028, and the relevant provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15. They included encouraging the inclusion of representatives of MGoS in national delegations attending Forum sessions and intersessional meetings; securing dedicated funding to allow for participation of MGoS in these meetings; and establishing partnerships with indigenous peoples, women, youth, and other stakeholders.

78. Participants also decided to use the intersessional period to continue working on and finalize the joint workplan for submission to the Forum at its twentieth session. Regarding financing implementation of the joint workplan, participants further elaborated on actions/areas for a MGoS funding strategy to ensure successful implementation of the joint workplan and preparation for the MGoS input to the thematic priorities for UNFF20 and UNFF21. The training workshop report will be posted on the UNFF20 webpage at: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/forum/index.html>. The Forum secretariat will continue to support the MGoS in the intersessional period through virtual and in-person meetings to finalize the joint workplan and strategy and to develop the fundraising strategy.

79. The Business and Industry Major Group continued to enhance its presence in the Forum's work. FAO's Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI) and the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA), UNFF's Business and Industry Major Group focal point, intend to meet in New York in the margins of the Forum's twentieth session. Moreover, the International Sustainable Forestry Coalition (ISFC)<sup>27</sup> and the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC)<sup>28</sup>, a member of ICFPA, contributed to the Forest Pavilion, which was organized during UNFCCC COP29; ISFC was a co-lead entity of the segment "Forest Finance, Investment and Trade", and held an event on "Innovations in private forest finance."

#### **IV. Conclusion**

80. The Forum continues to rely on the valuable contributions of its partners, including member organizations of the CPF, regional and subregional partners, and major groups and other relevant stakeholders. These partners play a crucial role in the Forum's work, in particular, in advancing implementation of the United Nations strategic plan 2017-2023 for forests.

---

<sup>26</sup> This input was prepared by the UNFF20 Bureau in response to the letter of the ECOSOC President dated 18 December 2024 inviting the UNFF20 Chair to provide substantive inputs to the 2025 session of HLPF on the theme and SDGs under review.

<sup>27</sup> <https://is-fc.com/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.fpac.ca>

81. Since the conclusion of the nineteenth session of the Forum in May 2024, partners have taken several steps to implement relevant provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15. The actions taken by the partners demonstrate their commitment to the objectives of the IAF and the work of the Forum. Given the wide range of actions contained in ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, and their multi-stakeholder nature, it is crucial to ensure strategic planning on the part of these partners to support the work of the Forum, and stronger mutual collaboration between the Forum and these partners.

## **V. Proposals**

82. The following points are suggested for discussion during the twentieth session of the Forum and inclusion in the Chair's proposals for submission to the twenty-first session of the Forum:

- a. Take note of the activities of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations in implementing relevant provisions of Council resolution 2024/15 and invite the Partnership and its members to continue its efforts to respond to the provision of the resolution, take concrete steps to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the global forest goals by 2030, and to report its progress to the Forum at its twenty-first session.
- b. Strengthen the engagement of regional and subregional partners and major groups in the work of the Forum, encourage their continued support for the implementation of the UNSPF and achievement of the GFGs, and invite member states in a position to do so to support their activities.
- c. Request the UNFF Secretariat, in collaboration with the UNFF partners, to prepare a matrix to demonstrate the progress in the implementation of relevant provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 by the partners.