

Information Paper
on
Workload, needs and gaps of the
UN Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS)

Prepared for the UNFF Secretariat
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List of Acronyms

4POW	Four-year programme of work	ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions	IUCN	World Conservation Union
AHEG	Ad hoc expert group	IYF	International Year of Forests
C&O	Communication and outreach	JPO	Junior professional/programme officer
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
CDPMO	Capacity Development Programme Management Office	MAR	Monitoring, assessment and reporting
CEB	Chief Executives Board on Coordination	MG	Major Group
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research	MGoS	Major Group and other stakeholders
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora	MOI	Means of implementation
CLI	Country-led initiative	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests	MTR	Mid-term review
COP	Conference of Parties	MYPOW	Multi-year programme of work
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	NLBI	Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council	OISC	Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination on Sustainable Development
EGM	Expert group meeting	OLI	Organization-led initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	PBI	Programme budget implications
FRA	Forest resources assessment	POW	Programme of work
GA	United Nations General Assembly	PPB	Proposed programme budget
GCF	Green Climate Fund	RB	Regular Budget
GCS	Global core set of forest-related indicators	RPTC	Regular Programme on Technical Cooperation
GEF	Global Environment Facility	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
GFFFN	Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network	SFM	Sustainable forest management
GFG	Global Forest Goal	UN	United Nations
GOF	Global Objective on Forests	UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
GS(OL)	General Service (Other Level)	UNDP	UN Development Programme
HLCP	High-Level Committee on Programmes	UNEP	UN Environment Programme
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development	UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
HLS	High-Level Segment	UNFF	UN Forum on Forests
IAF	International Arrangement on Forests	UNFFS	UNFF Secretariat
IAG	Informal advisory group	UNFI	UN Forest Instrument
ICRAF	World Agroforestry	UNHQ	UN Headquarters
ICT	Information and communications technology	UNSG	UN Secretary General
IDF	International Day of Forests	UNSPF	UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030
IFF	Intergovernmental Forum on Forests	VNC	Voluntary National Contribution
IPF	Intergovernmental Panel on Forests	XB	Extrabudgetary
IRA	Inter-Regional Advisor		

I. Introduction

1. The 19th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF19), held 6-10 May 2024, concluded its mid-term review (MTR) of the "effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) in meeting its objectives," as required by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 2015/33. Section I of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 (UNFF19 omnibus resolution) outlines a comprehensive set of actions to be undertaken in 10 areas listed under items A through J.¹ Under Item I.B, actions related to the UNFF Secretariat (see [Annex 1](#)), the Forum, *inter alia*:

- Requests the Secretariat to "submit an information paper containing information on its workload, needs and gaps in advance" of UNFF20, in 2025, for final consideration at its 21st session in 2026." *paragraph B.2.a*
- Invites the UN General Assembly (GA), following the discussion at UNFF21 in 2026, "to consider appropriate resourcing of the Forum secretariat to perform its responsibilities and mandates in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner". *paragraph B.3*

2. The UNFF Secretariat (UNFFS) engaged the consultant to prepare, in close consultation with the Secretariat, the information paper on workload, needs and gaps requested in bullet 1 above. The present information paper, which was prepared by the consultant, is organized as follows:

Section II: Reviews the establishment of UNFFS, its evolving responsibilities and functions through 2015 and associated staffing, including UN Regular Budget (RB) posts, extrabudgetary (XB) staff, and secondments from CPF member organizations and Member States, as well as contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund through 2014.

Section III: Analyzes new and expanded Secretariat mandates and responsibilities flowing from ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 and subsequent resolutions leading up to the UNFF19 IAF-MTR (2024) in several core work areas, as well as enhanced activities associated with serving as the Secretariat and a member of an increasingly proactive Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

Section IV: Considers UNFFS responsibilities from the perspective of a division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and part of UN Headquarters (UNHQ), including managing Subprogramme 8, "Sustainable Forest Management" (SFM); staffing the annual cycle of ECOSOC, HLPF and GA sessions; participating in UN sustainable development initiatives; and complying with UN system-wide management initiatives.

Section V: Reviews the UNFFS staffing pattern as reflected in the current organigramme.

Section VI: Looks at UNFFS resources as a DESA division and a CPF member organization.

¹ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/229/59/pdf/n2422959.pdf>

Section VII: Considers the workload implications of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 on the MTR, implications of a potential satellite office of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) in Beijing, and UNFFS needs and gaps going forward.

Section VIII: Offers conclusions and suggestions for addressing UNFFS needs and gaps through 2030.

3. The substance of this information paper, including the conclusions and suggestions, is based on consultations with UNFFS staff, including informal interviews with Professional and General Service staff members; review and analysis of numerous documents (see Bibliography/source material); and extensive internet searches. It also reflects extensive comments provided by DESA's Executive Office on the draft paper. The consultant expresses her appreciation for the support provided by the Forum Secretariat.

II. Mandates/responsibilities assigned to UNFFS and related staffing: 2000-2015

A. ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 -- Establishing UNFF, its Secretariat, Subprogramme 9

4. Governments participating in the fourth and final session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF)² in 2000 agreed to establish an "International arrangement on forests" with the UN Forum on Forests at its center. This decision is reflected in ECOSOC resolution 2000/35³ which, *inter alia*:

- Sets out the "main objective" and six "principal functions" of the IAF
- Establishes the UNFF as an ECOSOC subsidiary body with universal membership
- Invites the executive heads of relevant UN system and other organizations to form a Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) "to support the work of the Forum and to enhance cooperation and coordination among participants"
- Decides that the UNFF will initially meet once a year for up to two weeks and will hold its first substantive session in 2001 to adopt its Multi-Year Program of Work (MYPOW), develop a plan of action to implement the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action⁴, and initiate its work with the CPF
- Decides that the Forum shall within five years "consider, with a view to recommending . . . the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests"

5. In paragraph 10 of resolution 2000/35, ECOSOC requests the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) "to establish a compact secretariat, comprised of highly qualified staff . . . and strengthened through staff

² The IFF was an ad hoc open-ended body with a time-limited mandate (1997-2000) established by the 1997 GA Special Session (Rio+5) to succeed the ad hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) established in 1995 at the 3rd session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. In 2012, in response to Rio+20, the Commission was replaced by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

³chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/2000_35_E.pdf

⁴ The IPF/IFF process produced 270 Proposals for Action to implement SFM at all levels.

from the secretariats of international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, to . . . service the Forum and support the CPF". In subsequent paragraphs, the resolution:

- Encourages the executive heads of relevant UN system and other international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to support the Forum's Secretariat, including by seconding staff, as was done during the IPF/IFF process.⁵
- Recommends that funding for the Forum and its Secretariat "be provided from the regular budget of the UN, within existing resources," the resources of CPF participating organizations, and extrabudgetary resources provided by interested donors.
- Requests the UN Secretary General (UNSG), in proposing future UN programme budgets, to include provisions for the Forum and its Secretariat.
- Calls upon interested donor governments and institutions to make voluntary contributions "to a trust fund to be established in order to facilitate, in particular, an early start of the work of the Forum and its Secretariat".

6. These provisions make clear that ECOSOC envisioned that the "compact" UNFFS and its work would be supported through the UN regular budget and by continued secondments from CPF member organizations as was done during the IPF/IFF process (1995-2000), as well as by the new UNFF Trust Fund.

7. Subprogramme 9. In response to ECOSOC resolution 2000/35, the UN General Assembly (GA) established through resolution 57/282 (20 December 2000) a new Subprogramme 9, entitled "Sustainable Forest Management",⁶ under programme 7 ("Economic and Social Affairs") of Part IV, Section 9 of the UN Programme Budget for 2002-2003. Subprogramme 9 set out, *inter alia*, the resource requirements for the new UNFFS, including operating costs and six UN regular budget (RB) posts: One Director (D) level "Coordinator and Head" (D2)⁷, three Professional (P) level posts (1 P5, 1 P4, 1 P3), and two General Service (GS) posts. These posts were filled in 2002.⁸

B. CPF Secondments to UNFFS: 2002-2005

8. At the CPF inaugural meeting in April 2001, members stressed the value of previous secondments to the IPF/IFF Secretariat and agreed on the benefits that could accrue to their organizations by further secondments to the new UNFFS.⁹ CPF members also emphasized the "necessity

⁵ The IPF/IFF Secretariat was housed in DESA (part of what was then Subprogramme 4, Sustainable Development). Secondments to the IPF/IFF Secretariat were provided by CIFOR, FAO, ITTO, UNDP and UNEP.

⁶ Subprogramme 9 was renumbered Subprogramme 8 beginning with the UN Programme Budget for 2014-2015.

⁷ The title "Coordinator and Head" was changed to UNFF "Director" in 2008.

⁸ UNFF1, which took place in June 2001, was supported by the IPF/IFF Secretariat housed in DESA.

⁹ Initial CPF members were the eight members of the ad hoc "Interagency Task Force on Forests" established to support the IPF/IFF process: CBD, CIFOR, DESA/CSD, FAO, ITTO, UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank.

of securing the commitment of CPF members to second staff or contribute otherwise to staffing" as soon as possible "given the heavy workload expected in the near future".¹⁰

9. As envisioned by resolution 2000/35, the new "compact" UNFFS was substantively supported for a number of years by senior staff seconded from FAO, ITTO and UNEP. These secondments effectively increased the Secretariat's capacity to fulfill its assignments, as shown in [Table 1](#). From 2004 to 2006, UNFFS was also supported by a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) funded by Finland.¹¹

Table 1: UNFFS staff complement: 2002-2005¹²

Biennium	RB Staff	CPF Secondments	XB Staff	Total
2002-2003	6 (1 D2, 1 P5, 1 P4, 1 P3, 2 GS-OL ¹³)	4 (FAO, ITTO, UNEP -- 1 D1, 1 P5, 2 P4)	--	10
2004-2005	6	3 CPF	1 JPO (Finland)	10

C. ECOSOC resolution 2006/49 and UNFF7 report – New UNFF mandates

10. In 2005, UNFF5 initiated a review of the effectiveness of the IAF and considered options for the future global framework on forests without reaching consensus. However, the Forum's follow-on discussions at UNFF6 (2006) led to ECOSOC resolution 2006/49, which decided to strengthen the existing IAF rather than pursue a legally binding agreement on forests. Specifically, the resolution:

- Added three IAF "principal functions" to the six set out in ECOSOC 2000/35
- Established four "shared global objectives on forests" (GOFs) to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals
- Initiated a process of voluntary national reporting on progress toward achieving the GOFs
- Called for agreement at UNFF7 (2007) on the text of a "non-legally binding instrument on forests" enshrining the GOFs, and on the Forum's MYPOW for the period 2007-2015
- Decided that the effectiveness of the IAF would be reviewed in 2015 and that "on this basis, a full range of options will be considered, including a legally binding instrument on all types of forests, strengthening the current arrangement . . . and other options".

¹⁰ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/dde99e5c-14c9-4ed0-bf16-6c856c7cfef0/content

¹¹ JPOs are funded by Member States through voluntary contributions. For DESA, the JPO Programme is under the direct management of the Capacity Development Programme Management Office (CDPMO) (<http://jpo.desa.un.org/about>)

¹² Sources for Table 1: Proposed Programme Budgets (PPBs) for Programme 7 (Economic & Social Affairs) for 2004-2005 (A/58/6, Sect.9) and for 2006-2007 (A/60/6, Sect.9), which list actual RB posts for DESA subprogrammes for the previous biennium.

¹³ GS-OL or GS(OL) refers to "General Service - Other Level", typically GS-6 or below.

11. UNFF7 Report: NLBI & GOFs. Following an intersessional process, UNFF7 successfully concluded the text of a "Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests" (NLBI)¹⁴ and agreed on an ambitious MYPOW for 2007-2015. The MYPOW included as major elements: (a) achieving the four GOFs and advancing the new NLBI; and (b) an intersessional process to facilitate a decision on a "voluntary global mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework" to advance implementation of the NLBI.

12. IYF 2011. The MYPOW 2007-2015 also enshrined the "International Year of Forests (IYF) 2011" declared by GA resolution 61/193 in December 2006. The resolution requested the Secretariat "to serve as the focal point for the implementation of the Year" -- a task that, over the next five years, greatly expanded UNFFS communication, outreach and coordination responsibilities with Forum Members and partners, including CPF, regional/subregional organizations and Major Groups (MGs). (In December 2012, building on the IYF, the GA proclaimed 21 March as the International Day of Forests (IDF) "in order to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests".¹⁵ Since 2013, the IDF has provided a prominent annual platform for highlighting the multiple benefits of forests (see Section III.B.6).)

D. Increased UNFFS responsibilities and reliance on XB posts: 2008-2014

13. PBI on UNFF7 Report. ECOSOC recognized that adopting the NLBI and MYPOW 2007-2015 would significantly increase the long-term substantive work assigned to UNFFS. At its October 2007 resumed substantive session, ECOSOC considered the "Programme Budget Implications" (PBI) of adopting the UNFF7 report.¹⁶ In paragraphs 9 and 13, the PBI acknowledged that adoption would "give rise to a number of new activities" and that "the new and expanded functions resulting from such adoption would require the strengthening of the Secretariat of the Forum".

14. CPF secondments. The PBI also noted in paragraph 19 that since its establishment, UNFFS had been supported by senior staff seconded from FAO, ITTO and UNEP, but that as of August 2007, "no staff from these . . . organizations would be available for secondment" to UNFFS and "no further commitments have been received to date". The PBI concluded that: "Therefore the arrangement envisioned by the Council at the establishment of the Forum would not appear to be sustainable over a long period" (see paragraphs 5 and 6 above).

15. In the absence of CPF secondments, the PBI contained estimates that, should the UNFF7 Report be adopted, the additional post (staff) and non-post (operations) resources required for the UNFFS would amount to US\$1.02 million, including three new Professional RB posts (1 P5, 1 P4, 1 P3). In paragraph 16 of the PBI, the Secretariat proposed that a portion of the new requirements be met by

¹⁴ In December 2007, the GA adopted the NLBI and decided that its effectiveness would be reviewed as part of the overall review of the IAF in 2015 (A/RES/62/98).

¹⁵ A/RES/67/2000

¹⁶ Document E/2007/L.22/Rev.1 (2 October 2007)

reprogramming or absorbing them within existing DESA regular budget resources, including by redeploying one P4 from within DESA's existing staff complement; and that the balance be financed from XB resources, including the required new P5 and P3 posts.

16. Based on a proposal from the UNSG on improving delivery of development-related mandates,¹⁷ the GA approved the establishment of a P5 post for Subprogramme 9 (effective July 2009), in addition to the redeployed P4.¹⁸ From 2008 to 2010, Finland also funded a second JPO to UNFFS.

17. **UNFF Trust Fund:** While two Professional RB posts were a welcome permanent addition to UNFFS, supplemented by the JPO funded by Finland, they did not fully compensate for the loss of three-to-four CPF senior secondments at a time when the Secretariat's workload was projected to significantly increase. As a result, in order to carry out its work assignments, UNFFS began relying increasingly on XB posts funded largely through unearmarked contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund, as shown in [Table 2](#). In 2012, FAO seconded a P3 officer to UNFFS to work on monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR) matters. This temporarily filled a major gap in UNFFS capacity but did not entirely obviate the need for supplemental XB staff to assist UNFFS with other assigned work.

Table 2: UNFFS staffing snapshots: 2002, 2009 and 2014¹⁹

Year	RB posts and levels			Total RB posts	CPF secondments/JPO	XB posts	Total
	Director	Professional	General				
2002	1 D2	1 P5, 1 P4, 1 P3	2 GS(OL)	6	4 CPF	0	10
2009	1 D2	2 P5, 2 P4, 1 P3	2 GS(OL)	8	1 JPO ²⁰ (Finland)	3 (1 P5, 1 P4, 1 P3)	12
2014	1 D2	2 P5, 2 P4, 1 P3	2 GS(OL)	8	1 FAO (P3)	8 (various levels)	17

18. Fortunately for the Forum and UNFFS, the UNFF Trust Fund, from its establishment in 2001 through 2014, had received contributions from 18 Members, totaling over US\$22 million (see [Annex 2](#)). While many contributions were earmarked for specific purposes²¹, the largest donor (USA) had consistently provided unearmarked funds amounting to US\$8.6 million (37% of all contributions).²² These funds were critical to supporting the XB staff needed to supplement the Secretariat's RB posts.

¹⁷ Report A/62/708

¹⁸ A/RES/63/260. The P3 post would still be financed from XB resources.

¹⁹ Sources for Table 2: Staffing information provided by UNFFS; PPBs for Programme 7 (Economic & Social Affairs) for 2004-2005 (A/58/6, Sect. 9), for 2010-2011 (A/64/6, Sect.9) and for 2016-2017 (A/66/6, Sect. 9). PPBs indicate actual RB and XB posts for DESA subprogrammes for previous biennium.

²⁰ Finland funded JPOs to UNFFS during 2004-2006 and 2008-2010.

²¹ Beginning in 2007, several Members and the GEF contributed funds to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund managed by DESA's CDPMO to support UNFFS country capacity building projects, including the Facilitative Process.

²² The Annex to the first Secretariat Note on the UNFF Trust Fund (Document E/CN.18/2009/15) lists contributions for 2001-2009. Thereafter, Secretariat Notes on the Trust Fund were routinely prepared for UNFF sessions.

19. At the same time, the Secretariat recognized that reliance on long-term XB staff to cover core issues was not sustainable. Trust Fund contributions, including unearmarked contributions, are unpredictable and at any point might be reduced or cease altogether, creating uncertainty both for XB staff members and for their assigned work portfolios and related UNFF-requested deliverables.

E. ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33 -- Added Secretariat functions

20. As provided in ECOSOC resolution 2006/49 (see paragraph 10 above), UNFF11 reviewed the effectiveness of the IAF in May 2015. Pursuant to paragraph 6.b of UNFF resolution 10/2 (April 2013) and paragraphs 4 to 9 of its annex,²³ the review was informed by, *inter alia*, a comprehensive "independent assessment" prepared by a team of five consultants (one from each UN regional group) funded through the UNFF Trust Fund.²⁴ The IAF review was also informed by the emerging consensus on the post-2015 development agenda, which was adopted by the UN Summit in September 2015 as the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG15 on terrestrial ecosystems.

21. The IAF review resulted in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33: "IAF beyond 2015",²⁵ by which the UNFF decided to strengthen the existing IAF through 2030 rather than pursuing other options, such as developing a legally binding instrument and/or establishing a global forest fund. Key elements of the resolution are outlined in Box 1, several of which represent new and expanded responsibilities for UNFFS through 2030 (see Section III).

Box 1
Key elements of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33: IAF beyond 2015

- Defines the IAF as composed of the UNFF and its Member States, UNFFS, CPF, GFFFN and the UNFF Trust Fund. *paragraph 1.b*
- Establishes expanded objectives for the IAF and enhanced core functions for UNFF, UNFFS and CPF. *paragraphs 1.d, 3, 17, 20*
- Moves from biennial to annual Forum sessions with a restructured technical-policy session format and enhanced intersessional work. *paragraphs 6.b, c, f, g*
- Decides the Forum will carry out its core functions on the basis of a strategic plan for the period 2017-2030, aligned with the post-2015 development agenda, to serve as a strategic framework to guide and focus the work of the IAF and its components. *paragraph 6.a, section XI*
- Decides the Forum will develop the strategic plan 2017-2030 and operationalize it through quadrennial programmes of work (4POWs), beginning with the period 2017-2020. *paragraphs 38-40*

²³ Document E/CN.18/2013/18

²⁴ Report of the Team of Independent Consultants, September 2014

²⁵ Document E/RES/2015/33 (5 October 2015)

- Upgrades the Facilitative Process to the GFFFN with a clear set of priorities to be set out in the strategic plan 2017-2030, including serving as a clearing house on financing opportunities and a tool for sharing lessons learned. *paragraph 13*
- Calls for a new cycle and format for voluntary national reporting to the Forum and enhanced voluntary monitoring, assessment of reporting under the IAF as part of the strategic plan 2017-2030. *paragraph 16.c*
- Expects the Forum to contribute to the implementation, follow up and review of forest-related aspects of the post-2015 development agenda and contribute to the work of the HLPF. *paragraphs 35-37*
- Requests the Forum to conduct a mid-term review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the IAF in achieving its objectives and a final review in 2030 and, on that basis, submit recommendations to ECOSOC on the future course of the IAF. *paragraph 41*

22. Additional UNFFS functions. Further to the principal functions of the IAF set out in ECOSOC resolutions 2000/33 and 2006/49, which guide the work of the Forum and Secretariat, resolution 2015/33 defines the functions of UNFF, UNFFS and CPF (see Box 1, bullet 2). As shown in Box 2, paragraph 17 of the resolution outlines the functions of the Secretariat, which include in paragraph 17.b four "additional functions" related to supporting the development of the strategic plan 2017-2030 and the Forum's quadrennial programme of work (4POW) for 2017-2020, managing the GFFFN, promoting coherence and collaboration on forest issues, and aligning the IAF with the 2030 Agenda.

Box 2
UNFFS functions set out in paragraph 17 of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33

17.a The Secretariat should continue to:

- (i) Service and support the Forum, its Bureau and related intersessional activities, including by organizing and supporting meetings, providing operational and logistical support and preparing documentation
- (ii) Administer the UNFF Trust Fund consistent with guidance provided by the Forum, including regular and transparent reporting
- (iii) Manage the strengthened Facilitative Process²⁶
- (iv) Promote interagency collaboration, including by serving as a member of and providing secretariat services to the CPF
- (v) Provide, upon request, technical support to country-led initiatives (CLIs) and similar initiatives led by international, regional/subregional organizations and MGs in support of Forum priorities
- (vi) Liaise with and facilitate the participation and involvement of countries, organizations, Major Groups and other stakeholders in Forum activities, including intersessional activities

²⁶ The UNFF9 Special Session (October 2009) launched a "Facilitative Process" to assist countries in mobilizing, accessing and effectively using financial resources from all sources for SFM.

17.b The Secretariat should perform the following additional functions:

- (i) Service and support the working group of the Forum²⁷, including by organizing and supporting meetings, providing operational and logistical support and preparing documentation
- (ii) Manage the GFFFN and implement its activities in collaboration with relevant CPF members
- (iii) Promote coherence, coordination and cooperation on forest-related issues, including by liaising with the secretariats of the Rio conventions
- (iv) Work within the UN system to support countries in aligning forests and the IAF with their considerations on the post-2015 development agenda

III. New/expanded responsibilities flowing from ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 and subsequent resolutions prior to UNFF19

A. Additional posts approved for UNFFS

23. It was generally acknowledged that the prospective new and expanded Forum and UNFFS responsibilities and functions represented by ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 (see Boxes 1 and 2) would outstrip the capacity of the Secretariat's staff complement of eight RB posts, especially in the absence of further CPF secondments. In modest recognition of this eventuality, the resolution contains the following provisions whereby ECOSOC:

- "Decides, in order to strengthen and make the facilitative process more effective . . . to enhance the capacity of the secretariat to effectively and efficiently manage the strengthened facilitative process." *paragraph 13.f*
- "Recommends to the GA that it consider strengthening the secretariat of the Forum, taking into account the provisions of the present resolution". *paragraph 19*
- "Recognizes that the responsibilities of the secretariat of the Forum have changed considerably in their scope and complexity over the years, including in relation to Forum processes and providing substantive support to developing countries." *paragraph 52*
- "Requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide, in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, all appropriate support to the secretariat of the Forum." *paragraph 53*

24. PBI on resolution 2015/33. Considering the provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33, a PBI was submitted for review to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)²⁸.

²⁷ Paragraph 46 of resolution 2015/33 established a time-bound working group (2016-2017) to develop proposals for: (a) replacing the reference to the Millenium Development Goals in the NLBI with an appropriate reference to the SDGs and targets contained in the 2030 Agenda; and (b) the strategic plan 2017-2030 and the Forum's 4POW.

²⁸ The ACABQ is a GA subsidiary organ with 21 members from the five UN regional groups appointed by the GA in their individual capacities for a period of three years.

The PBI contained four posts, including 1 P4, 2 P3 and 1 GS(OL), which were later approved by the Fifth Committee²⁹ and in turn the GA through 31 December 2030 only³⁰, the time horizon of the strengthened IAF (see [Box 1](#), last bullet).

25. IRA position. In a separate action, the GA approved a DESA proposal to add UNFFS as an implementing subprogramme of the Regular Programme on Technical Cooperation (RPTC) within DESA.³¹ This included funding in 2015 an Inter-Regional Advisor (IRA) position for UNFFS at the P5 level to advise and assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to develop national actions plans to advance implementation of the UN Forest Instrument (UNFI).³² Based on reviews of the continuing need for this expertise to support demands from Member States, the IRA post was extended annually up to the maximum of five years, and thereafter renewed annually until the post expired in January 2025.

26. The full complement of UNFFS staff as of December 2016 is shown in [Table 3](#). At that time, the UNFFS office was organized with two sections along the following lines:

- Front Office: Director (D2), Focal point for Communications (P4), Programme Assistant (GS-OL)
- Section for Policy Development and Implementation: Section Chief (P5), IRA-RPTC for UNFI Implementation (P5), Focal points for GFFFN (P4, P3), CPF Secretariat (P3), Programme Assistant (GS-OL)
- Section for Policy Coordination and Partnerships: Section Chief (P5); Focal points for Regional/Subregional Engagement (P4), MG Engagement (P3) and MAR (P3-XB); Programme Assistant (GS-OL)

27. The addition of four time-bound (2030) RB posts and one IRA position was very timely in the face of the increased responsibilities and associated workload posed by ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 (see [Section III.B](#)). That said, as of the end of 2016, the Secretariat was still obliged to rely on finite duration posts funded largely from unearmarked contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund to carry out its assignments.

²⁹ The Fifth Committee is the “Administrative and Budget Committee” of the GA.

³⁰ Document A/70/6 (Sect. 9)

³¹ Established by GA resolution 58(I) in 1946, the RPTC is funded from the UN regular budget and is currently used to respond to requests from Member States for short-term assistance to meet small-scale capacity development challenges related to the SDGs.

³² In December 2015, the GA renamed the “Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests” (NLBI) as the “United Nations Forest Instrument” (A/RES/70/99).

Table 3: UNFFS staffing snapshots: 2002, 2009, 2014 and 2016³³

Year	RB staff and levels			Total RB	CPF secondments/JPO	Other	XB staff ³⁴	Total staff
	Director	Professional	General					
2002	1 D2	1 P5, 1 P4, 1 P3	2 GS(OL)	6	3 CPF	-	0	9
2009	1 D2	2 P5, 2 P4, 1 P3	2 GS(OL)	8	1 JPO ³⁵	-	3	12
2014	1 D2	2 P5, 2 P4, 1 P3	2 GS(OL)	8	1 FAO (P3)	-	8	17
2016	1 D2	2 P5, 3 P4, 3 P3	3 GS(OL)	12	0	IRA-P5	5 ³⁶	18

B. New/expanded core areas of work mandated for UNFFS

28. The Secretariat's work under the "strengthened IAF" increased significantly due to new and expanded functions and responsibilities in several interrelated core areas of work (see [Box 3](#)). These core work areas flow from ECOSOC resolutions 2015/33 and 2017/4 (adoption of UNSPF 2017-2030) and subsequent UNFF/ECOSOC resolutions prior to the UNFF19 mid-term review (see [Annex 3](#)) and are fully reflected in the Forum's 4POWs 2017-2020 and 2021-2024.

Box 3

New/expanded core areas of work for UNFFS since 2015

1. Servicing annual Forum sessions and intersessional Bureau and expert meetings
2. Supporting development and implementation of the UNSPF 2017-2030
3. Management of the GFFFN and its Clearing House
4. Enhanced monitoring, assessment and reporting: UNFI, UNSPF, VNCs
5. Forest contributions to the 2030 Agenda, SDG-GFG interlinkages, inputs to HLPF
6. UNSPF Communication and Outreach Strategy
7. Enhanced collaboration and coherence on forests

B.1. Servicing annual Forum sessions and intersessional Bureau and expert meetings

29. Perhaps the biggest single impact on the Secretariat's workload in the post-2015 era has been the move from biennial Forum sessions of two weeks duration under the MYPOW 2007-2015 to annual Forum sessions of one week duration under the Forum's 4POWs following ECOSOC resolution 2015/33, together with the associated uptick in the pace of intersessional activities.

30. As provided in paragraph 6.f of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33, the Forum's annual sessions are

³³ Sources for Table 3: Staffing information provided by UNFFS and PPBs for 2004-2005 (A/58/6, Sect. 9), 2010-2011 (A/64/6, Sect. 9), 2016-2017 (A/66/6, Sect. 9) and 2018-2019 (A/68/6, Sect. 9). The PPBs indicate actual RB and XB posts for DESA subprogrammes for the previous biennium.

³⁴ Positions funded through the UNFF Trust Fund.

³⁵ Funded by Finland.

³⁶ The FAO P3 secondment for MAR expired in 2015. Given the importance of continuity on the UNFFS MAR portfolio, the individual remained on staff supported by XB resources from the UNFF Trust Fund.

structured to alternate between thematically-linked technical and policy sessions. This has basically doubled the work associated with the “intergovernmental process”, which includes organizing and supporting Forum sessions and intersessional Bureau and expert meetings and providing needed operational and logistical support and document preparation -- all on an accelerated calendar.

31. As shown in [Annex 4](#), since UNFF11 (May 2015), the Secretariat has organized, supported and facilitated nearly 60 Forum sessions and related intersessional meetings as of July 2024, including 9 UNFF sessions (3 with high-level segments/roundtables), 18 intersessional Bureau meetings (as of July 2024), 1 working group meeting, 3 ad hoc expert group (AHEG) meetings, 20 expert group meetings (EGMs), 4 meetings of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) on the GFG flagship publication, 2 interagency meetings on forest-related indicators, and 5 country/partner-led initiatives.³⁷ The Secretariat has also routinely organized briefings for New York permanent mission staff in the run up to Forum sessions, as well as numerous CPF meetings (see [Table 9](#).)

32. These Forum-related meetings, on a highly compressed cycle, collectively represent a substantial and ongoing undertaking by UNFFS staff in support of the Forum’s 4POWs, which has sometimes led to a stressful work environment. The amount of substantive and administrative preparation and support required for such meetings, including organizing travel and DSA for many participants, cannot be overestimated and is not always apparent to participating Member States.

B.2. Supporting development and implementation of UNSPF 2017-2030

33. When the text of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 was concluded in May 2015, few Member States could have predicted that the strategic plan called for in section XI of the resolution would result in the first-ever, highly ambitious “United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030” (UNSPF), with six Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and 26 associated targets aligned with the 2030 Agenda.³⁸

34. [ECOSOC resolution 2017/4](#). Following an intensive 18-month intersessional process involving two consultants and a series of expert meetings organized and supported by UNFFS (see [Annex 4](#)), the text of the ground-breaking UNSPF was agreed at the UNFF Special Session in January 2017 and subsequently adopted in April 2017 by ECOSOC resolution 2017/4 and GA resolution 71/285. ECOSOC resolution 2017/4 ([Annex II](#)) also contains the Forum’s approved 4POW for the period 2017 to 2020.

35. The UNSPF and its GFGs and targets provide “a framework for forest-related contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,” the Rio Conventions, and other “international forest-related instruments, processes commitments and goals”, as well as a reference “for the forest-related work of the UN system” and for fostering enhanced coherence and synergies among UN bodies. The UNSPF also

³⁷ [Annex 4](#) does not include numerous GFFN and UN Development Account-funded capacity building workshops and CPF meetings organized and supported by UNFFS since 2015. These are addressed in [Sections III.B.2 & B.3 and III.C](#).

³⁸ ECOSOC resolution 2017/4.

provides considerable guidance effectively expanding the core work of the Forum and by extension the Secretariat, building on ECOSOC resolution 2015/33.

36. UNSPF Implementation framework. The framework for implementing the UNSPF is set out in section III of the Strategic Plan and focuses on: (a) Roles and responsibilities of various actors, including the Forum, its Secretariat and Members (see Box 4), CPF member organizations, other UN system entities, regional/ subregional organizations and processes, and MGs and other stakeholders; and (b) “means of implementation” (MOI), including the GFFFN (see Section III.B.3).

Box 4

Implementing the UNSPF – Roles of Member States, the Forum and UNFFS (from UNSPF)

29. The individual and collective actions and commitments of Member States are decisive for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan and achieving its GFGs and targets.

30 & 32. Member States may, on a voluntary basis, determine their contributions towards achieving the GFGs and targets (Voluntary National Contributions) and communicate progress on their VNCs to the UNFF at regular intervals.

34. As part of the UN system and the IAF, the Forum, in carrying out its core functions, should be guided by the UNSPF. The Forum’s 4POWs are to reflect the Forum’s contribution to the GFGs and targets.

35. The Forum is the responsible intergovernmental body for follow up and review of implementation of the UNSPF.

36. The Forum Secretariat services and supports the Forum in all matters related to the Forum’s 4POWs.

37. Paragraphs 34-36 in Box 4 clearly place the UNSPF at the center of the Forum’s work while also assigning the Forum and UNFFS the added core responsibility of assessing progress on the Strategic Plan and its GFGs. This responsibility has led to greatly expanded UNFFS activities in the areas of the GFFFN, MAR, GFG-SDG interlinkages and inputs to HLPF, communication and outreach (C&O), and enhanced coherence and collaboration on forest-related issues, as discussed Sections III.B.3 to B.7.

38. UN Development Account. It has also led to enhanced UNFFS efforts to leverage external funding to advance implementation of both the UNFI and UNSPF. Since 2015, the UNFFS has successfully leveraged nearly US\$1.7 million in project funding from DESA’s allocation of funds from the UN Development Account, as shown in Table 4.³⁹

³⁹ The GA established the UN Development Account in 1997 (A/RES/52/12B) as an annual capacity development programme of the UN Secretariat funded from the UN regular budget. The Account has 10 implementing agencies: DESA, the five UN regional commissions, UNCTAD, UNEP, UN-Habitat, and UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). DESA’s allocation is managed by CDPMO. The 2024 Programme Budget adopted by the GA included \$18.5 million for the UN Development Account (see RES/78/254 A-C, section 35).

Table 4 – Funds leveraged by UNFFS from the UN Development Account

Tranche & code	Time-frame	Focus	Target countries	Budget US\$000
T09 1415J ⁴⁰	2016-2020	Strengthen national capacities to develop National Action Plans to implement the UN Forest Instrument (UNFI)	Ecuador, Fiji Gabon, India, Jamaica, Mongolia	413
T10 1617F	2016-2019	Monitoring progress towards Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)	Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Mongolia, Peru, Philippines	509
T15 2326C ⁴¹	2023-2026	Turning the tide on deforestation: Strengthen capacity to develop and implement integrated forest landscape restoration plans to halt deforestation, combat impacts of climate change, forest fires and zoonotic diseases, and advance forest-related SDGs and GFGs	Fiji Malawi Uganda Viet Nam	600
T15 2326B ⁴²	2023-2026	Promote integrated and coherent national COVID recovery strategies promoting social inclusion, macroeconomic stability, effective governance and environmental protection for selected SIDS	Guinea-Bissau Jamaica Mauritius Seychelles	177 ⁴³

Total: \$1.699

39. The UNFI project funded under Tranche 9 (T09) supported inventories of existing forest-related activities and policy documents, needs assessments, and consultations and workshops with a range of government and non-government stakeholders in coordination with relevant CPF members, including FAO, CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC.⁴⁴ Two inter-regional workshops were also held to share experiences and lessons learned with a wider number of countries.

40. UNFFS funding under Tranche 10 (T10) supported and assisted six countries in developing systems of monitoring progress towards SFM. Through the project, UNFFS strengthened national capacities to use forest monitoring data for evidence-based policy making, reporting, and analysis of the contributions of forests goods and services to society and economies in target countries. One global workshop was held on reporting on progress made towards achieving the GFGs and targets.

41. UNFFS funding under Tranche 15 (T15) for 2023 to 2026 is for projects on forest landscape restoration (2326C) and COVID recovery strategies in selected Small Island Developing States (2326B), with some funds under both T15 projects supporting the development of national forest financing strategies. To date, UNFFS has completed the first round of capacity building workshops under these projects.

⁴⁰ <https://da.desa.un.org/node/15831>

⁴¹ <https://da.desa.un.org/node/16195>

⁴² <https://da.desa.un.org/node/16191>

⁴³ UNFFS share of a US\$700,000 project involving four DESA divisions

⁴⁴ Following adoption of the UNSPF in 2017, the national action plan process extended to the Strategic Plan.

42. Role of the IRA-P5. The Secretariat's success in leveraging funds from the UN Development Account is due primarily to the efforts and expertise of its IRA staff. This includes expertise in developing targeted proposals which include "countries in special situations"⁴⁵ and follow a highly detailed and technical format. It also includes expertise in coordinating the many and varied aspects of project implementation (e.g. consultations, contracts, analytical studies, capacity building workshops) and complying with extensive project reporting and evaluation requirements. (As already noted, the UNFFS IRA-P5 position established in 2015 expired at the end of January 2025, thereby leaving a significant gap in the Secretariat's capacity building resources. This gap was partially offset by the addition of an IRA-P4 position in 2023.)

B.3 Management of the GFFN and its Clearing House

43. UNSPF guidance. As noted in Box 1, paragraph 13 of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 upgraded the Facilitative Process to the GFFN and decided that the strategic plan 2017-2030 would "set clear priorities" for the GFFN. Paragraph 62 of the UNSPF states that the GFFN of the UNFF "contributes to the scaling up of SFM by facilitating country access to resources to implement the Strategic Plan and achieve its GFGs and targets" and sets out the four Network priorities shown in Box 5.

Box 5

GFFN priorities set out in the UNSPF 2017-2030 (paragraph 62)

1. Promote and assist Member States in designing national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for SFM within the framework of national forest programmes or other appropriate national frameworks.⁴⁶
2. Assist countries in mobilizing, accessing and enhancing the effective use of financial resources from all sources for SFM, taking into account national policies and strategies.
3. Serve as a clearinghouse and database on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned and best practices from successful projects, building on the CPF online sourcebook for forest financing.
4. Contribute to achieving the GFGs and targets and priorities contained in the Forum's 4POWs.

44. As noted in Box 2, management of the GFFN and implementation of its activities in collaboration with relevant CPF members is a core function of UNFFS routinely addressed in the Forum's 4POWs in the context of "MOI". Since the Network's inception, UNFFS has made substantial progress in operationalizing the Network for the benefit of Forum Members. To date, the GFFN has:

- Supported 39 Member States in designing project proposals for submission to multilateral funding agencies and/or national forest financing strategies to facilitate country access to

⁴⁵ Least Developed Countries, Land-Locked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States, etc.

⁴⁶ The role of forests in addressing climate change is the predominant focal area of forest financing.

financial resources for SFM (see [Annex 5](#))⁴⁷

- Supported five subregional organizations in designing regional forest financing strategies (see [Annex 5](#))
- Organized 41 training workshops to build capacity on forest financing involving over 1,300 government, civil society, and public and private sector stakeholders.

45. These implementation activities and accomplishments represent a significant workload involving the time and talent of a number of UNFFS Professional and General Service staff members.

46. [GFFFN milestones](#). In addition to the above achievements, UNFFS has facilitated extensive intersessional processes, including several EGMs and consultancies, which have led to important GFFFN milestones and accomplishments (see [Annex 6](#)). These include:

- 2018: Adoption by UNFF13 of comprehensive “Guidelines for the Operation of the GFFFN of the UNFF”.
- 2019: Completion of a “Generic guide and modular training package” to assist countries in developing national forest financing strategies.
- 2021: Launch of Phase I of the GFFFN Clearing House as a “one-stop-shop” for forest financing information with three databases: (1) Financing opportunities, (2) Learning materials and (3) Good practices and lessons learned.
- December 2024: Development of Phase II of the Clearing House is well underway to provide a fourth database on the “Flow of financial resources on forests” and help provide data for measuring progress on SDG target 15.b and GFG4.

47. Moreover, as of September 2024, the cumulative number of users of Phase 1 of the Clearing House had reached 89,000 users based in 198 countries. This demonstrates widespread interest in the information provided by the GFFFN Clearing House.

48. The Secretariat has also advanced GFFFN priorities through its participation in the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development, which is coordinated by DESA and comprises 60 UN bodies (see [Section IV.D](#)).

49. [GFFFN resources](#). Since 2015, the above GFFFN accomplishments have been made possible by US\$6.5 million in XB and RB resources, including external resources. As of 2023, these resources included nearly US\$3 million in voluntary contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund, primarily from China (US\$1.86 million), as shown in [Table 5](#).⁴⁸ China also funded a JPO to UNFFS from 2017 to 2019 to work primarily on the GFFFN portfolio.

⁴⁷ The design process involves inception meetings, analytical studies to establish forest sector baseline information, stakeholder consultations, and capacity building workshops.

⁴⁸ To date, nearly all UNFF in-house support to GFFFN operations has been funded from the UNFF Trust Fund.

Table 5 – Earmarked contributions to UNFF Trust Fund for GFFFN: 2015-2023⁴⁹

Donor	Contribution (US\$000)							
	2015-17	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
China	340	350	258	315		315	287	1,865
Finland		35						35
Germany			412					412
Switzerland		472 ⁵⁰					47	519

Total: \$2,831

50. Remarkably, UNFFS has also successfully leveraged nearly US\$3.7 million from external sources for GFFFN operations, primarily from the UN Regular Programme on Technical Cooperation (RPTC)⁵¹ but also from the GEF and the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, as shown in Table 6.⁵² This achievement in support of Member States is largely due to the expertise of the Secretariat's IRA staff in preparing targeted project proposals for submission to CDPMO and in coordinating and reporting on the implementation of funded projects.

Table 6 – External funds leveraged by UNFFS for GFFFN⁵³

Source	Funds leveraged (US\$000)							
	2015-17	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
RPTC	1,300	600	700	296	132	76	376	3,480
IUCN-GEF ⁵⁴	133							133
Peace & Development				85 ⁵⁵				85

Total: \$3,698

B.4 Enhanced monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR): GFGs, VNCs, UNFI

51. UNSPF guidance. As noted in Box 4 (paragraph 35), the UNSPF identifies the Forum as the responsible intergovernmental body for follow up and review of implementation of the UNSPF. Paragraphs 67-69 of the UNSPF provide additional guidance as contained in Box 6.

⁴⁹ Sources for Tables 5 & 6 and paragraphs 49 & 50: Secretariat Notes on MOI 2017-2024.

⁵⁰ 400,000 CHF

⁵¹ The RPTC has 11 "implementing entities": DESA, UN regional economic commissions, UNCTAD, UN-Habitat, UNODC, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The 2024 Programme Budget adopted by the GA included \$46.2 million for RPTC (see RES/78/254 A-C, section 23).

⁵² Table 6 does not include funds leveraged from the UN Development Account (see Table 4), some of which are being used to develop financing strategies in target countries.

⁵³ These funds do not include the salaries of IRAs assigned to UNFFS, which are covered by RPTC-funded contracts.

⁵⁴ GEF funds were received through IUCN for the CPF joint initiative on Forest Landscape Restoration. Project activities were undertaken in Guinea Bissau and Thailand.

⁵⁵ These funds are from the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund of the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund which was established in 2016 following China's pledge to contribute US\$200 million to the UN over 10 years. In September 2020, China announced that it will extend the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund to 2030.

<https://www.un.org/en/unpdf/>

Box 6
UNSPF 2017-2030 guidance on MAR (paragraphs 67-69)

67. The Forum should assess progress in implementing the UNSPF 2017–2030 in the context of its midterm and final reviews of the effectiveness of the IAF, in 2024 and 2030. The assessment should be based on internationally agreed indicators, including SDG indicators, relevant to the GFGs and targets.

68. The assessment should take into account voluntary national reporting on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, UNFI, VNCs and results of the most recent FAO FRA, as well as inputs from the CPF and its member organizations and other partners within and outside the UN system, including regional/subregional organizations and relevant stakeholders.

69. To reduce the reporting burden, the Forum is to establish a cycle and format for voluntary national reporting by its members, taking into account the five-year Global FRA cycle and the SDG review cycle at the global level.

52. Since adoption of the UNSPF, the Secretariat’s MAR-related workload has expanded significantly from voluntary national reporting on the UNFI to reporting on the UNSPF and its VNCs, as well as the UNFI. The UNFFS has also organized, coordinated and supported extensive multi-year consultations and EGM processes on key aspects of MAR based on the guidance in [Box 6](#) and subsequent guidance from the Forum (see [Annex 3](#)). Consistent with the Forum’s 4POWs, these enhanced consultations and processes have focused on three closely interrelated areas of work and associated milestones (see [Annex 7](#)):

1. Post-2015 voluntary national reporting to UNFF. Beginning in 2017, UNFFS coordinated and facilitated the development and pilot testing of the format for the 1st round of reporting to UNFF (2019-2020) on progress in implementing the UNSPF, including the UNFI and VNCs. Based on feedback and lessons learned from the 1st round of reporting, UNFFS initiated consultations in 2021 on the timeline and format for the 2nd reporting round to be aligned with the FRA 2025. In 2024, UNFF19 endorsed the reporting timeline and established an Advisory Group on Reporting to assist UNFFS in finalizing a streamlined 2nd round reporting format, including exploring possible transition to an online reporting format.
2. The Global Forest Goals Report 2021. Launched at UNFF16 and again at the 17th World Forestry Congress (May 2022, Seoul), this milestone UNFFS publication provides the first global stocktaking of progress towards implementing the UNSPF 2017-2030 and achieving its GFGs and targets based on the Secretariat’s analysis and synthesis of 57 voluntary national reports and 19 VNCs from countries representing 75% of the world’s forests (see 1 above)⁵⁶. The report is supplemented by quantitative and bio-physical data primarily from the FRA 2020, reflects the substantive and technical inputs of an IAG comprised of reporting experts, and constitutes the Forum’s first DESA-supported “flagship” publication.
3. Global core set (GCS) of forest-related indicators. CPF initiated work on the GCS of forest-

⁵⁶ The flagship report is available in two versions: The full report and a concise “Overview of Progress”.

related indicators in 2017 in the context of its joint initiative on streamlining forest-related reporting in order to facilitate reporting on a wide range of international forest-related goals, targets and commitments (GFGs, SDGs, Rio Convention targets, etc.) and reduce reporting burdens on countries. The UNFFS has since been actively involved in jointly organizing with FAO a series of expert meetings and capacity building workshops to advance GCS development and practical use.

53. The above activities have been carried out primarily by a P3 seconded from FAO (2012-2015) who was later employed under a finite duration P3 position supported by the UNFF Trust Fund (2016-2024). MAR activities were also supported for a time by a JPO funded by Japan for the period 2016 to 2018.

B.5 Contributions to the 2030 Agenda: Forest-SDG interlinkages and inputs to HLPF

54. UNSPF guidance. Paragraph 70 of the UNSPF provides guidance on UNFF contributions to the 2030 Agenda and the HLPF (see [Box 7](#)). While all UNFF activities contribute in some way to the 2030 Agenda, raising awareness of the vital, multiple interlinkages between forests and the SDGs and bringing these to bear on the HLPF's annual SDG reviews and ministerial outcomes has become a core area of UNFFS work, as reflected in the Forum's 4POWs 2017-2020 and 2021-2024.⁵⁷

55. Primary staff support to the massive and complex annual HLPF process is provided by the DESA Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination on Sustainable Development (OISC). However, all other DESA divisions, including UNFFS, are involved to various extent in the HLPF process.

56. From the outset, the UNFFS has been very actively engaged in the HLPF process. As shown in [Annex 8](#), this has included commissioning analytical background papers on forest-SDG interlinkages; organizing and developing concept notes for panel discussions on these interlinkages during UNFF sessions; supporting and facilitating the preparation and transmission of UNFF Bureau inputs and Chair's summaries to the HLPF process; organizing Bureau-hosted and other special events in the run up to and during HLPF sessions and SDG Summits; and co-organizing HLPF thematic sessions with DESA's Division for SDGs on forest-related SDGs.

Box 7

UNSPF 2017-2030 guidance on the 2030 Agenda and HLPF (paragraph 70)

70. The UNFF, as a functional commission of ECOSOC, should contribute to the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, including through CPF's work on global forest indicators, as well as highlighting the contribution of forests to the SDGs to be reviewed in-depth at annual sessions of the HLPF.

⁵⁷ Rio+20 (June 2012) called for establishing the HLPF to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development (created by the Rio Earth Summit in June 1992). The HLPF meets under ECOSOC auspices three out of four years and under GA auspices as a "UN summit" every fourth year.

57. Forests, energy and livelihoods event. In the run up to the SDG Summit in September 2023, the UNFF18 Bureau convened an event on 4 April 2023 at UNHQ on “Building on the nexus of forests, energy, and livelihoods to accelerate achievement of the SDGs”.⁵⁸ The event presented an overview of key global trends on forests, energy and livelihoods, and showcased the important contributions of forests and SFM to energy, livelihoods and the SDGs, in particular SDG1 on ending poverty, SDG2 on ending hunger, and SDG7 on access to affordable clean energy.

58. In addition, UNFFS has routinely engaged in multiple DESA coordination meetings throughout the HLPF annual cycle, contributed to relevant reports and documents, organized HLPF panel discussions, and coordinated closely with OISC to help ensure that UNFF Chairs are included in HLPF preparatory meetings.⁵⁹ In addition to its substantive contributions, the Secretariat assists OISC in servicing HLPF sessions and panels, including notetaking and the review of VNRs. UNFFS has also been actively engaged in the annual cycle of ECOSOC sessions, which since 2015 has focused on the 2030 Agenda (see Section IV.B).

B.6 UNSPF Communication and Outreach Strategy

59. UNSPF guidance. The UNSPF calls for the development of a communication and outreach (C&O) strategy as shown in Box 8. Following an intensive intersessional process organized and supported by UNFFS, UNFF13 (May 2018) adopted a comprehensive UNSPF C&O Strategy to: (a) Raise awareness of the vital contribution of forests and trees to life on earth; (b) promote SFM and share best practices; (c) raise awareness of the GFGs and targets and encourage implementation of the UNSPF; and (d) amplify communications from the forest community.⁶⁰

Box 8

UNSPF 2017-2030 guidance on the Communication and Outreach (C&O) Strategy

71. Communication and outreach are essential components of the strategic plan, which is itself an important communication tool. A C&O strategy should be developed to raise awareness, within and outside the forest sector, of the vital contribution of all types of forests and trees to life on Earth and human well-being.

73. The Forum should develop the C&O strategy which should identify, *inter alia*, target audiences, key messages, methods, activities and success criteria.

75. The IDF on 21 March⁶¹ provides a powerful annual event to promote UNSPF implementation and a platform for individual and collective public outreach activities on forests by all actors at all levels.

⁵⁸ <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/events/unff18-bureau-event-forests-energy-livelihoods/index.html>

⁵⁹ See Secretariat Note (E/HLPF/2022/4)

⁶⁰ The Forum’s 4POWs include a standing item on implementation of the C&O Strategy of the UNSPF, including activities regarding the IDF for the relevant year.

⁶¹ GA resolution 67/2000 (December 2012) proclaimed 21 March as the International Day of Forests (IDF) "in order to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests."

60. To meet the Strategy’s objectives, UNFFS work in the C&O area has greatly expanded reflecting a multi-prong approach to extend the reach of key messaging, including:

- Annual IDF events
- Events at key international conferences
- Information products: Fact sheets, policy briefs, publications, presentations
- Multimedia products: Films, photographs, posters/art
- Media products: Press releases, news stories

61. IDF events: Since 2019, sophisticated social media activities and digital resources have formed an increasingly important component of UNFFS communication campaigns, in particular for annual IDF events. Each year, in collaboration with the CPF Communicators Group, including FAO’s Regional Forest Communicators Network, UNFFS organizes a special half-day high-level event at UNHQ focused on the year’s IDF theme which is linked to an SDG under review by HLPF, as shown in [Table 7](#). These events typically include panel discussions with noted private sector, academic and non-governmental experts and senior UN officials, amplified by short films, photographs and posters.

Table 7 – IDF events organized by UNFFS at UNHQ since 2015

Year	IDF Theme (21 March)	UNHQ event organized by UNFFS
2016	Forests & Water (SDG6)	“Forests and Water: Sustain life and livelihoods” Organized with UN-Water and the Government of Sweden
2017	Forests & Energy (SDG7)	“Growing forests harness energy for the future”
2018	Forests & Sustainable Cities (SDG11)	“Safeguarding forests for sustainable cities and communities”
2019	Forests & Education (SDG4)	“Celebrating forests and education”
2020	Forests & Biodiversity (SDG15)	“Forests and biodiversity: Too precious to lose” (virtual)
2021	Forest Restoration (SDG15)	“Forest restoration: A path to recovery and well-being”
2022	Forests & Sustainable Production/Consumption (SDG12)	“Sustaining forests for our greener future” Organized with DESA and Permanent Mission of Kyrgyzstan
2023	Forests & Health (SDG13)	“Healthy forests – Healthy People”
2024	Forests & Innovation (SDG9)	“Forest and Innovation: New solutions for a better world”

62. Social media campaigns/digital resources. UNFFS has promoted and covered IDF UNHQ events, as well as Forum sessions, using links to UN TV webcasts and relevant DESA Facebook and Twitter accounts. UNFFS has also used hash tags (e.g. #UNForests, #GlobalGoals, #SDGs) and links to a Trello Board which contains further links, infographics, Twitter and Facebook cards, and GIF images with captions in all UN languages about the importance of forests to peoples’ lives. These digital resources are shared with UN social media focal points, UNFF national focal points and other UNFF partners.⁶²

⁶² Source for paragraphs 62-65: IAF-MTR Assessment Report on actions related to the UNSPF C&O Strategy (David Hendersen-Howat, December 2022)

63. The success of these social media campaigns has been remarkable. For example, the campaign hashtag “#IntlForestDay” was widely used for IDF 2023 on “Forests and health”. The hashtag was included in over 17,000 tweets by over 11,000 contributors during the International Day itself, with over 284 million timeline deliveries and over 153 million accounts reached on Twitter, according to estimates.

64. Traditional information and media products. UNFFS has also produced a number of fact sheets, policy briefs, brochures and other publications to advance the objectives of the C&O Strategy, as well as some 75 press releases on IDF and other newsworthy items, including statements by the UNSG on forests (see [Annex 9](#)). The first-ever UNFFS flagship publication, “The Global Forest Goals Report 2021”, which was developed through an extensive intersessional process (see [paragraph 52.2](#)), has been a milestone information product on progress in implementing the first-ever UNSPF and achieving its GFGs.

65. In undertaking its C&O media campaigns and information products, the UNFFS works closely with and takes advice from DESA’s Strategic Planning and Communications Services and the UN Department of Global Communications. UNFFS also participates in the interdepartmental UN Communications Group SDG task force.

66. UNFFS monthly bulletin. In October 2024, UNFFS launched its monthly internet bulletin, “UNFF Updates”, to highlight activities undertaken in support of UNFF priorities and keep Members and partners informed. Multiple interim bulletins were issued during November 2024 to keep national focal points, partners and other stakeholders apprised of the programmes and events of the inaugural “Forest Pavilion” launched by UNFFS and multi-stakeholder partners at UNFCCC COP29 (see [Section III.B.7](#)).

67. The Secretariat has also initiated a comprehensive process to upgrade and update the UNFF website, beginning with a survey posted on the UNFF website and circulated to users in September 2024.

B.7 Enhanced collaboration and coherence on forests

68. The need for institutional coordination on forests was recognized in ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 in the context of establishing CPF (see [Section II.A](#)) and was later enshrined as an additional UNFFS function in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 (see [Box 2](#), paragraph 17.b.iii).

69. Paragraph 6.f of resolution 2015/33 further provides that odd-year Forum sessions will be dedicated to technical discussions tasked, *inter alia*, with assessing progress and making proposals on “enhancing policy coherence, dialogue and cooperation on forests, fostering synergies in global forest-related processes and strengthening the common international understanding of the concept of SFM as set out in the Forest Instrument”.

70. UNSPF guidance. Enhanced coherence is also enshrined in the UNSPF under GFG6 as shown in [Box 9](#). In line with ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 and in support of GFG6, the Secretariat has enhanced its

collaborative activities and engagement with a wide range of partners to promote implementation of the UNSPF and UNFI and advance the Forum’s biennial thematic priorities which are based on the GFGs.

Box 9 – GFG6 and targets on enhanced coherence on forests

6. Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the UN system and across CPF member organizations, as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders.

6.1: Forest-related targets within the UN system are coherent and complementary and integrate the GFGs where appropriate.

6.2: Forest-related programmes across CPF member organizations are coherent and complementary and together encompass the multiple contributions of forests and the forest sector to the 2030 Agenda.

6.4: A greater common understanding of the concept of SFM is achieved and an associated set of indicators identified.

71. While much of this activity has taken place in the CPF context (see [Section III.C](#)), UNFFS has also enhanced its collaborative activities and engagement directly with CPF member organizations, Member countries and other partners (see Annex 10). This has included entering into new or updated MOUs and joint initiatives with CBD, ITTO and UNCCD; preparing joint publications; co-organizing seminars, events and conferences, often involving Forum Members; and facilitating country-led and partner initiatives, including the MG-Led Initiative in March 2024 which, *inter alia*, formulated key messages to UNFF19 and adopted the “Nairobi Declaration: A Global Call for Stronger Forest Commitment”.

72. Forests and Water Day. The UNFF and CBD Secretariats jointly organized “Forests and Water Day” at CBD COP16 (October 2024, Cali, Colombia) to highlight the importance of conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forests and water-related ecosystems to successful implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). Two sessions, “Securing Forest Biodiversity for Nature, Climate and People” and “Water for Peace with Nature”, brought together representatives from governments, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and youth to share experiences and solutions.

73. Forest Pavilion. The Secretariat launched the inaugural “Forest Pavilion” within the SDG Pavillion at UNFCCC COP29 (November 2024, Baku, Azerbaijan) to provide a collaborative platform for stakeholders to share experiences and showcase forest-based climate solutions and to raise the visibility of forests in the climate context. The Forest Pavilion’s 17 founding partners include financial institutions, CPF members, national governments, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector.⁶³ Events

⁶³ Asia Development Bank, Asian Forest Cooperation Organization, FAO, CIFOR, ITTO, International Network on Bamboo and Rattan, Global Judicial Institute, International Council of Forest and Paper Associations, International Sustainable Forestry Coalition, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, and the Governments of Brazil, Canada, China, Gabon, Japan, Morocco and UK.

taking place on the main stage of the Pavilion were livestreamed on the UN DESA YouTube channel. The Pavilion closed with the communique: “From Baku to Belem: Forests for Climate, People and the Planet”.

⁶⁴ UNFCCC COP30 will be held in Belem in 2025.

74. COP29 Presidency event. Also, at COP29, UNFFS co-sponsored on 21 November the COP Presidency’s “High-Level Event on Forests for Climate, Nature and People: Harnessing Climate Finance for Forests”. The event explored how to harness climate finance to protect, conserve and restore forests and identified solutions to address the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation in achieving the Paris Agreement goals, expand funding for forests, and improve and strengthen global data sharing on forest financing and best practices.

75. Common understanding of SFM. As part of promoting institutional coherence on forest-related issues, UNFFS has also sought to promote a common understanding of SFM. In 2018 in the run up to UNFF14, UNFFS circulated an informal survey to CPF members, regional/subregional partners and MG focal points to collect information on progress and efforts made since adoption of the UNSPF to advance the achievement of GFG targets 6.1, 6.2 and 6.4 (see Box 9).

76. The survey found that while many organizations and groups had yet to fully integrate the new GFGs and targets into their forest-related strategies and programmes, there was general interest in doing so consistent with their mandates. The Forum has since, through its resolutions and ministerial declarations, invited the governing bodies of the Rio conventions and other organizations to utilize the UNSPF as a framework for forest-related contributions to the 2030 Agenda and to integrate the GFGs into their strategic documents to promote coherence in approaches to forests and SFM. In October 2024, the UNFF and CBD Secretariats issued a Joint Information Note, “Towards a Coherent Forest Agenda”, to promote forest-related synergies.⁶⁵

77. As noted in paragraph 52.3, the UNFFS has been actively engaged in the ongoing development of the Global Core Set of Forest-Related Indicators (GCS), including jointly organizing with FAO a series of expert meetings and workshops to advance GCS development and practical use. The process of developing the GCS has effectively helped forge a common view among experts from a number of CPF organizations of what constitutes SFM conceptually and how to measure it pragmatically.

C. Expanding activities as the CPF Secretariat and a CPF Member

78. The CPF has been an integral part of the IAF since its establishment in 2000 (see Section II.A). ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 sets out the core functions of CPF as shown in Box 10. In paragraph 21.c of the resolution, ECOSOC reaffirms, *inter alia*, that the CPF “should continue . . . to receive guidance from the Forum and submit coordinated inputs and progress reports to sessions of the Forum”.

⁶⁴ https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Communique_Forest-Pavilion_UNFCCC-COP29.pdf

⁶⁵ The Joint Information Note is the first deliverable under the CBD-UNFF Joint Initiative: 2024-2030.

Box 10
CPF Core functions set out in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 (paragraph 20)

- 20.a To support the work of the Forum and its member countries
- 20.b To provide scientific and technical advice to the Forum, including on emerging issues
- 20.c To enhance coherence and policy and programme cooperation and coordination at all levels among its member organizations, including through joint programming and the submission of coordinated proposals to their respective governing bodies, consistent with their mandates
- 20.d To promote implementation of the NLBI (UN Forest Instrument), including achieving its GOFs, and the contribution of forests to the post-2015 development agenda

79. UNSPF guidance. Paragraph 38 of the UNSPF (Implementation Framework) invites the CPF to support the Forum and its Members in advancing the GFGs and targets, including through cooperation and partnership among CPF members, implementing a CPF joint work plan aligned with the Forum's 4POWs, and identifying collective actions by all or subsets of CPF members and associated resource needs. In response, the Forum's 4POWs include a standing item on CPF contributions to UNFF thematic priorities and progress on the CPF work plan.⁶⁶

80. Policy, planning, advocacy. Since the adoption of the UNSPF, CPF has been increasingly proactive on several fronts. These include significantly strengthening its policy, planning and operational framework and organizing high-level events and dialogues during climate COPs and HLPF sessions to raise awareness of the critical role of forests and SFM to combatting climate change and achieving the SDGs (see Annex 11). Highlights include:

- Adoption of CPF Work Plans 2017-2020 and 2021-2024 aligned with the Forum's 4POWs
- Adoption in 2017 of the CPF Policy Document
- Adoption in 2020 of the CPF Strategic Vision towards 2030
- The CPF International Conference on Working Across Sectors to Halt Deforestation and Increase Forest Area (February 2018)
- Addition of two new CPF members: CITES (2018) and GCF (2023)
- CPF Organization-led Initiatives (OLIs) on global forest indicators (February 2016) and the IAF mid-term review (February 2023)
- CPF high-level dialogues, events and/or joint statements at UNFCCC COPs 26-28 (2021-2023), HLPF 2022, the SDG Summit (2023) and CBD COP16 (2024), as well as side events at UNFF sessions

81. Joint Initiatives. CPF has also expanded its work on "joint initiatives" to include the multiple ongoing and planned initiatives shown in Table 8.

⁶⁶ Source: UNFF 4POW 2021-2024

Table 8 – CPF joint initiatives⁶⁷

	Joint initiative	Lead(s)
1	CPF Communicators Network: Includes annual IDF celebrations, annual Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award, and the new “Grow the Solution” campaign ⁶⁸	FAO/UNFFS CITES, CIFOR-ICRAF
2	Global Forest Education	FAO UNFFS ITTO IUFRO CIFOR-ICRAF UNFCCC
3	Forest Finance Facilitation	UNFFS
4	Global Forest Expert Panels	IUFRO
5	Streamlining Global Forest-Related Reporting	FAO, UNFFS
6	Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW)	FAO, ITTO
7	Turning the Tide on Deforestation	FAO UNDP UNEP
8	Strengthening the Conservation of Primary Forests through Partnerships and Coordination of Support	GEF IUCN FAO UNFFS
9	Integrated Fire Management in Tropical Forests (planned)	ITTO FAO UNFFS
10	Forests for Food Security and Nutrition (planned)	FAO CIFOR-ICRAF World Bank
11	KMGBF and the GFGs: Harnessing complementarities and addressing fragmentation in the global forest agenda (planned)	CBDS, FAO, UNFFS

82. As a CPF member, UNFFS has been actively engaged in the development and implementation of CPF policy and advocacy activities, as well as in several joint initiatives listed in Table 8. As the CPF Secretariat, UNFFS has been instrumental in organizing, facilitating and supporting more than 50 CPF meetings convened since May 2015 to develop and implement these activities and initiatives, including drafting meeting documents and summary reports (see Table 9). In addition, in 2023 the UNFFS Director served as the CPF Vice-Chair.

Table 9 – CPF meetings organized and supported by UNFFS since May 2015

Year	CPF meetings
2015	2 regular meeting after May 2015
2016	3 regular meetings, 1 OLI on global forest indicators
2017	3 regular meetings, 7 meetings to prepare for the 2018 CPF International Conference on Working across Sectors to Halt Deforestation and Increase Forest Area
2018	2 regular meetings, 1 retreat, 3 meetings to prepare for the 2018 CPF International Conference, 2 CPF donor meetings
2019	2 regular meetings, 2 meetings of the working group on the CPF strategic vision, 1 CPF donor meeting
2020	5 regular meetings, 1 meeting of CPF principals, 2 meetings of the working group on the CPF Work Plan 2021-2024

⁶⁷ Sources: CPF website; CPF Work Plan 2021-2024 (as updated May 2024)

⁶⁸ The “Grow the Solution” campaign is aligned with the SW4SW joint initiative (Table 8, item 6) and aims to strengthen global advocacy and awareness of the role of sustainable wood value chains in advancing SDG12 (sustainable consumption/production). The “Grow the Solution” initiative was launched at the World Congress of Architects in July 2023.

2021	3 regular meetings
2022	2 regular meetings, 1 meeting of “Friends of CPF”
2023	2 regular meetings, 1 OLI on the IAF-MTR, 1 retreat, 1 meeting to prepare for UNFCCC COP28
2024	3 regular meetings (as of September 2024), 3 meetings of the task force on the CPF Work Plan 2025-2028 (as of December 2024)

83. Forum invites/requests to CPF. It is also worth noting that beginning with ECOSOC resolution 2015/33, the Forum has invited/requested CPF to undertake a number of tasks as shown in Annex 12. These tasks extend by association to the UNFFS, both as an active member of CPF and as the CPF Secretariat, and add incrementally to Secretariat’s CPF-related responsibilities and workload. The tasks are in addition to the many requests from the Forum asking UNFFS to undertake activities in consultation with CPF members (see Annex 3). It is likely that few Forum members fully appreciate the cumulative amount of time UNFFS is obliged to spend on CPF-related work.

D. Contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund: 2015-2024

84. A significant portion of the work organized, coordinated and facilitated by UNFFS at the request of the Forum in the last nine years was only made possible by XB resources contributed to the UNFF Trust Fund by donors. Since 2015, contributions to the Trust Fund have amounted to US\$10 million (see Annex 13). In addition to the contributions earmarked for GFFFN operations (see Table 5), other earmarks during this period supported the travel of government representatives to UNFF-related meetings, essential MAR and IAF activities, MG initiatives in support of UNFF, a six-month contract for a P3 Temporary Job Opening Officer (P3-TJO) to handle C&O matters (see Section V), and the Forest Pavilion organized by UNFFS and partners at UNFCCC COP29 in November 2024 (see paragraph 73 above).

85. Unearmarked contributions. Unearmarked contributions to the Trust Fund, including US\$3.4 million from USA, have proved crucial to supporting two staff members and core UNFF work over several years. These include the P3-XB focal point for MAR (supported by XB resources from 2016 to 2024) and the P3-XB focused until recently on GFFFN operations (supported by XB resources since 2020).⁶⁹ Unearmarked contributions have also enabled temporary and short-term GS hires to assist with meeting logistics, administrative tasks and maintaining the UNFF website, as well as a number of consultancies to supplement the Secretariat’s limited capacity.

86. As noted in paragraph 19 above, relying on UNFF Trust Fund resources to support staff working on core issues is not a sustainable situation. Trust Fund contributions, including unearmarked contributions which give UNFFS latitude on how funds are used, are unpredictable and may be reduced or eliminated at any time based on shifts in country priorities. This creates uncertainty for long-term XB

⁶⁹ As already mentioned, from 2016 to 2019, the UNFFS staff complement was enhanced by JPOs funded by Japan (2016-2018) with a focus on MAR activities and by China (2017-2019) with a focus on the GFFFN.

staff and their work deliverables and, in turn, can put pressure on RB staff. Moreover, UNFFS reliance on long-term XB staff to perform core functions is a clear indicator that the existing RB staff complement is insufficient to effectively and efficiently carry out the Forum's mission.

87. At the same time, judicious use of Trust Fund resources, particularly unearmarked resources, for temporary and short-term hires can be an effective way to supplement UNFFS RB resources during peak work periods. These might include, for example, preparing and servicing UNFF sessions and high-level segments (HLSs) and roundtables, assisting in organizing UNFF side events, and undertaking special projects.

IV. UNFFS responsibilities as a DESA Division and part of UNHQ

88. It may surprise some Members to know that UNFFS does not work exclusively for the Forum. In addition to servicing and supporting UNFF as described in Sections II and III, UNFFS has significant responsibilities and assignments as a division of DESA and as part of UNHQ. These include preparing the substantive content of the UN annual budget for Subprogramme 8 on SFM, as well as inputting to activities associated with GA/UNSG forest-related initiatives and complying with UN system-wide management mandates.

A. Management of Subprogramme 8 on SFM

89. Preparation of the UN programme and budget is a standing task for all DESA offices and divisions (see Annex 14). However, in 2022, after a three-year trial, the UN moved officially from a biennial to an annual budget cycle, which has ramped up an already extensive process of programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation involving all UN Secretariat entities, including UNFFS as part of DESA.⁷⁰ Each September, after a year-long preparatory process, the UNSG presents his proposed programme budget (PPB) for the coming year to the GA for approval. The approved UN regular budget includes the post (staff) and non-post (operating) costs for all entities associated with ECOSOC and the UN Secretariat.⁷¹

90. The annual UN programme budget is a massive document with multiple parts, sections and programmes (see Annex 15). Part IV of the document (International Cooperation for Development), Section 9 (Economic and Social Affairs), Programme 7 (Economic and Social Affairs) includes the annual post and non-post cost requirements for the nine subprogrammes managed by DESA divisions, including

⁷⁰ Following a three-year trial (2020-2022), the GA approved an annual UN budget cycle in December 2022.

⁷¹ The GA approved US\$3.59 billion for the UN regular budget for 2024, which covers operating and staff costs of the UN Secretariat in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi; the five regional commissions; numerous Special Political Missions (Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.); and various information centers. Together, these include over 10,000 RB posts. The regular budget does not cover Peacekeeping operations; XB and in-kind contributions; or UN Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, which have their own governing bodies and budget processes.

Subprogramme 8 on SFM managed by the UNFFS.⁷²

91. The UN utilizes a results-based budget process based on performance measures, which applies equally to multi-million-dollar programmes and small subprogrammes like SFM. Not surprisingly, inputting into the annual UN regular budget cycle is an ongoing and time-consuming exercise for all DESA divisions, including UNFFS, with hard deadlines at a number of key points in the calendar year. These deadlines are related to preparing the next year's proposed work programme, monitoring progress on the current year plan, and reporting performance in previous years.

92. For Subprogramme 8, this exercise begins with internal coordination within UNFFS, followed by a series of DESA coordination meetings over the course of several weeks involving division Directors and/or senior staff and senior representatives from DESA's Executive Direction and Programme Support offices. Once DESA has a proposed Programme 7 work programme, which also shows progress on the current year plan and the previous year's performance, the draft moves into the interdepartmental process which involves sequential reviews by:

- UN Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, Office of Programme Planning, Finance and Budget
- ECOSOC's Committee for Development and Coordination (CDC)⁷³
- The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budget Questions (ACABQ)⁷⁴
- The Fifth Committee of the GA⁷⁵

93. It is important that UNFFS attend these meetings at a senior level to monitor deliberations and provide clarifications and justifications on the Subprogramme 8 proposal as needed/requested.

B. Support to annual sessions of ECOSOC, HLPF and GA

94. The Secretariat is also committed throughout the year with providing substantive inputs to and assisting in servicing the annual cycles of ECOSOC, HLPF and GA sessions. These inputs are discussed below.

95. ECOSOC. ECOSOC was established by the UN Charter in 1945 as one of six main UN organs.⁷⁶ Today it oversees a number of subsidiary bodies, including functional and regional commissions and

⁷² See Document A/79/6 (Sect. 9), 8 April 2024, for the proposed programme plan and post and non-post resource requirements for DESA's nine subprogrammes for 2025.

⁷³ ECOSOC established the CDC in 1962 (resolution 920 (XXIV)) as its main subsidiary organ for planning, programming and coordination. The Committee has 34 members who serve for three years.

⁷⁴ The ACABQ is a GA subsidiary organ with 21 members appointed by the GA to serve in their individual capacities for a period of three years.

⁷⁵ The Fifth Committee is one of six main GA committees open to all Member States. It is responsible for administrative and budgetary matters and recommends the annual UN regular budget to the GA for approval.

⁷⁶ The other five UN organs are the GA, Security Council, Trusteeship Council, International Court of Justice (based in The Hague) and the UN Secretariat.

various committees (see [Annex 16](#)), and aims to foster coordination among UN programmes, funds and specialized agencies. UNFF is the only ECOSOC subsidiary body with universal membership. The Council itself has only 54 members which serve 3-year terms, with 18 members elected by the GA each year.

96. As the secretariat of an ECOSOC functional commission, UNFFS has substantive responsibilities throughout the calendar year associated with the annual cycle of ECOSOC sessions which runs from July to July, and since 2016 has been closely integrated with the annual HLPF cycle (see [Annex 17](#)). Subsidiary bodies, including UNFF, are represented in ECOSOC sessions by their respective chairs and other bureau members. A number of these sessions involve substantive preparations and follow up by UNFFS, both as a DESA division and in support of the UNFF Chair and Bureau Members (see [Table 10](#)).

Table 10 – ECOSOC sessions: UNFF Chair/Bureau participation supported by UNFFS

ECOSOC session	Function
Coordination Segment (meets early in the year prior to the 1 st meeting of a subsidiary body)	Provides guidance to ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and the UN system to enhance policy coherence on the 2030 Agenda and better align their work with implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
Dedicated Management Meetings	Holds elections to fill vacancies in its subsidiary and related bodies; takes up other management issues as needed.
Forum on Financing for Development Follow up (meets once a year)	Mandated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to review trends in development finance and advance progress on SDGs in line with international financing commitments based on annual reports by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development (see Section IV.D)
Meetings of the Management Segment (meets twice a year before and after HLPF session)	Reviews and approves latest reports from subsidiary bodies; fosters integration of key messages from subsidiary bodies and the UN system to HLPF; and follows up on actions taken by subsidiary bodies and the UN system in response HLPF ministerial and political declarations
HLPF	Conducts in-depth review of selected SDGs taking into account inputs from ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and UN system bodies (see Section III.B.5 and Annex 8 for UNFF/UNFFS inputs and contributions to HLPF)

97. HLPF. Following Rio+20 in June 2012, the GA adopted a package of management reforms intended to make ECOSOC and its various bodies, including DESA, more effective in supporting "the implementation of a unified development agenda".⁷⁷ Notably, the GA replaced ECOSOC's Commission on Sustainable Development (called for by the 1992 Rio Earth Summit) with the HLPF, which meets annually under ECOSOC auspices for three years and under GA auspices the fourth year. By GA resolution 70/299 (26 July 2016), HLPF became the central UN platform for review of and follow up on the 2030 Agenda at the global level.

98. As discussed in [Section III.B.5](#), UNFFS has from the outset proactively engaged in the annual HLPF preparatory and follow-up processes. This has included providing substantive inputs to relevant

⁷⁷ Set out initially in GA resolution 68/1 and subsequently refined in GA resolutions 72/305 and 75/290.

documents, facilitating the preparation of UNFF inputs to annual HLPF deliberations, and organizing events highlighting the crucial interlinkages between forests and the SDGs under review by HLPF (see [Annex 8](#)). UNFFS staff are also routinely engaged in servicing annual HLPF sessions.

99. General Assembly. The GA is the UN's main policy-making organ with universal membership. It meets in regular sessions from September to December each year, and thereafter as required, to discuss specific issues through dedicated agenda items and to adopt resolutions on the issues discussed. The GA also approves the UN regular budget. As part of the UN Secretariat in New York, UNFFS routinely assists in servicing GA high-level segments, including as session notetakers and assisting the UN Protocol Office in escorting senior officials.

C. UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration: 2021-2030

100. By resolution 73/284, the GA proclaimed 2021-2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to support and scale up efforts to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide and raise awareness of the importance of successful ecosystem restoration.⁷⁸ The Strategy for the Decade includes 10 actions, a number of which note the importance of forests and trees and the need to address deforestation.⁷⁹

101. The Decade is co-led by FAO and UNEP and promotes its aims through five task forces: Best Practices (led by FAO); Financing (led by the World Bank); Monitoring (led by FAO); Science (led by IUCN); and Youth (self-organized by the MG on Children and Youth). From the outset, the UNFFS has been actively engaged in the substantive work of the FAO-led task force on Best Practices, including by:

- Contributing forest-related texts and providing substantive reviews of chapters on terrestrial ecosystems contained in annual task force reports.
- Assisting in crafting the “10 Restoration Principles” of the UN Decade applicable for ecosystem restoration across all sectors, biomes and regions, which were launched in September 2021 during the IUCN World Conservation Congress (Marseille, France).
- Contributing to the capacity, knowledge and learning action plan for the UN Decade and to the development of standards of practice in ecosystem restoration launched at CBD COP15 (October 2023, Montreal).
- Assisting in conducting the capacity needs assessment, which identified financing technical capacity, stakeholder engagement and policy development as the priority areas for capacity-building to enhance ecosystem restoration across all sectors.
- Contributing to the development of multiple capacity development and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

⁷⁸ The Decade was officially launched on 5 June 2021 during World Environment Day celebrations.

⁷⁹ <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/strategy>

D. Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development

102. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development was convened by the UNSG in follow up to the Addis Adaba Action Agenda adopted by GA resolution 69/313 in August 2015. Paragraph 133 of the Addis Agenda mandates the Task Force to: (a) Report annually on progress in implementing the Addis Agenda and other “Financing for Development” outcomes; and (b) advise governments on trends and gaps in development financing. The task force includes over 60 UN bodies and is coordinated by DESA’s Financing for Sustainable Development Office.

103. The UNFFS has been actively engaged in the sessions and substantive work of the Task Force since its inception, primarily by:

- Providing inputs and updates on forest financing for inclusion in the annual reports on Financing for Development submitted to the “Forum on Financing for Development Follow-Up” (see [Table 11](#)) and contributing to the development of the reports’ relevant thematic chapters.
- Contributing substantively to the preparation of additional guidance notes on the Building Blocks for the “Integrated National Financing Frameworks”, especially on forest-related climate finance and disaster risk reduction.⁸⁰ (These additional notes complement the initial guidance jointly prepared on the Frameworks’ Building Blocks.)

E. Other UN sustainable development initiatives

104. UNFFS also engages with and provides substantive inputs to the following UN programme initiatives intended to advance the 2030 Agenda:

- UN DESA Climate Review: Launched by DESA in December 2021, the Climate Review highlights the important work that DESA and its divisions and offices are doing to bring climate issues to the forefront of UNHQ activities and to reinforce SDG13 and the Paris Agreement.
- Beyond GDP: In 2021, the UNSG and Chief Executives Board on Coordination (CEB)⁸¹ established the “High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) Core Group on Beyond GDP”⁸². to consider how the UN could contribute to measuring a country’s progress beyond its Gross

⁸⁰ The “Integrated National Financing Frameworks” are a follow up to the Addis Agenda to help countries strengthen national planning processes and overcome obstacles to financing sustainable development and the SDGs. <https://inff.org/#>

⁸¹ The CEB is the main UN internal policy and management coordination mechanism. It is chaired by the UNSG and comprised of the executive heads of 12 UN programmes and funds, 15 specialized agencies and 3 “related organizations”. <https://unsceb.org/>

⁸² The High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) is one of two CEB standing committees. <https://unsceb.org/high-level-committee-programmes-hlcp>

Domestic Product (GDP) in line with SDG17.19.⁸³ The HLCP Core Group is co-led by DESA, UNDP and UNCTAD. UNFFS contributed to the Core Group's 2022 report⁸⁴ and will continue to be engaged in follow up activities.

- Pact for the Future: The “Pact for the Future” adopted at the Summit of the Future in September 2024 has five broad focus areas: Sustainable Development; International Peace and Security; Science and Technology; Youth and Future Generations; and Transforming Global Governance. In October 2024, the UNFFS provided inputs to the HLCP on how to support countries in implementing the Pact's sustainable development focal area in the context of forests. While the Pact is the most recent summit aiming to advance the 2030 Agenda, UNFFS, as part of DESA, also routinely provides inputs to the ongoing work of HLCP on streamlining and enhancing UN system support to countries to implement the outcomes of major UN conferences and summits.
- Climate Promise: Coordinated by UNDP, the “Climate Promise” aims to accelerate climate action in 140 countries with a focus on five thematic pillars: Adaptation; Mitigation; Carbon Markets; Forests; and Policy). Fifteen key technical areas of work are associated with these pillars, including “Forests and Land”.⁸⁵ In April 2024, the UNSG and UNDP Administrator launched Climate Promise 2025, which “marks the beginning of renewed efforts on climate action across the UN system ahead of UNFCCC COP30 in 2025 when countries will enter into a new 5-year cycle of commitments to limit global warming.”⁸⁶ UNFFS participates in and provides inputs to DESA-related initiatives in support of the Climate Promise.
- UN Development System Contributions to the SDGs: The 2023 report of the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)⁸⁷ synthesizes the contributions of 162 UN country teams and 37 UN entities, including DESA, to advancing the SDGs. As part of DESA, UNFFS provided inputs to the report and will continue to engage in follow up activities.

F. UN system-wide management initiatives

F.1 UN Strategic Framework for Multilingualism

105. Since 1995, the GA has been building a legislative core through its resolutions to promote what it refers to as “multilingualism” to mitigate against the widespread and increasing use of English

⁸³ SDG17.19: “By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement GDP, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries”.

⁸⁴ <https://unsceb.org/valuing-what-counts-united-nations-system-wide-contribution-beyond-gross-domestic-product-gdp>

⁸⁵ <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do>

⁸⁶ <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/un-development-programme-launches-next-phase-flagship-climate-action-initiative>

⁸⁷ <https://unsdg.un.org/>

throughout the UN, including as a language requirement in job openings.⁸⁸ In May 2022, the UNFF17 omnibus resolution (paragraph 9) encouraged “the Forum to enhance its multilingual communication in its work and in its information exchange activities to promote the UNSPF and to further progress towards the GFGs, including activities aimed at raising awareness of the multiple benefits of forests and the visibility of the Forum’s work within and outside the UN system”.

106. In June 2022, following a recommendation from the Joint Inspection Unit,⁸⁹ the GA adopted resolution 76/268 (13 pages) which led to the publication in March 2024 of the 50-page “UN Strategic Framework for Multilingualism”⁹⁰ which aims “to eliminate the disparity between the use of English and the use of the other five official languages”, including the disparity between English and French as the two UN working languages.

107. The Strategic Framework sets out three goals and outlines several “areas of action and next steps” with which all UN Secretariat entities, including DESA and its divisions, are required to comply (see [Annex 18](#)). It is not clear to what extent the action areas will lead to requirements for additional UN documents to be produced in the six official UN languages or for ad hoc meetings like EGMs to provide interpretation in the six languages, both of which would be costly.

108. Website standards. In response to the new Strategic Framework, the Department of Global Communications has set “minimum standards of multilingualism for UN websites” (see [Annex 19](#)). Meeting these new website standards will be a significant challenge for a number of UN entities, including UNFFS since the UNFF website is currently in English only.

109. It is expected that the financial resources needed to upgrade the UNFF and other UN websites in line with the new minimum language standards will be from within the UN regular budget. However, UNFFS does not currently have the RB staff expertise required to develop and maintain the language upgrades or, indeed, to undertake the multiple UNFF19 requests to UNFFS to enhance and expand its C&O activities, including overhauling the UNFF website (see [Section VII](#)).

F.2 Gender parity and disability inclusion strategies

110. The UNFFS participates in and complies with two additional UN system-wide management initiatives mandated by the UNSG:

- The UN System-Wide Strategy for Gender Parity: Launched in 2017 in line with SDG5, the Gender Parity Strategy sets targets to be met by all UN entities by 2028 in the areas of:

⁸⁸ A 2019 UN study found that 94.8% of job openings published on the UN recruitment portal “Inspira” required English, while 11.4% required French (see the UN Strategic Framework for Multilingualism).

⁸⁹ The Joint Inspection Unit of the UN is the only independent external oversight body of the UN system mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations system-wide, with a view to securing management and administrative efficiencies and promoting coordination among UN agencies. <https://www.unjiu.org/>

⁹⁰ <https://www.un.org/en/multilingualism-web-standards>

Leadership and Accountability; Senior Management; Recruitment and Retention; Creating an Enabling Environment; and Mission Settings.⁹¹ UN-WOMEN coordinate reporting on implementing the Strategy.⁹²

- The UN Disability Inclusion Strategy: Launched by the UNSG in 2019, the Strategy sets out a UN system-wide policy to mainstream disability inclusion. The Strategy includes two accountability frameworks, one for UN entities with 15 common indicators and one for UN country teams based on a scorecard. The UNSG reports to the GA annually on progress in implementing the Strategy.⁹³ The UNFFS contributes to DESA inputs to the annual UNSG report.

V. Current UNFFS staffing pattern (as of March 2025)

111. Despite the Forum's expanding requests to UNFFS since 2015 and enhanced Forum/UNFFS responsibilities flowing from the UNSPF 2017-2030, as well as the Secretariat's increased workload as the CPF Secretariat and a DESA division, the UNFFS RB staff complement has not changed since 2016. It remains at 12 RB posts (see Table 3), with essential additional support provided by IRA and XB staff.

112. This status quo in the face of increasing demands has been made more challenging in recent years by several RB staff turnovers representing 25% of the Secretariat's RB staff complement. While staff turnovers and the resulting loss of institutional memory occur in all organizations, the transition period has hit the UNFFS particularly hard given its small size and low absorptive capacity.

113. UNFFS staff turnovers include, *inter alia*, the loss of three long-term, highly experienced professional RB staff in the areas of Finance and administration (P5 Section Chief), C&O (P4) and GFFFN (P3). It also includes the loss in January 2025 of the Secretariat's RPTC-funded IRA-P5 post, which since 2015 has focused on national capacity building for UNFI and UNSPF implementation and GFFFN technical activities.

114. Current organigramme. Figure 1 shows the current UNFFS organigramme. It reflects a new staffing pattern and portfolio shifts in light of the losses noted above and the associated reclassification of two RB positions.⁹⁴ The vacant P5 Section Chief post was reclassified as a D1 Deputy Director (see paragraph 26 above), and the vacant GFFFN P3 post was reclassified as a P2.

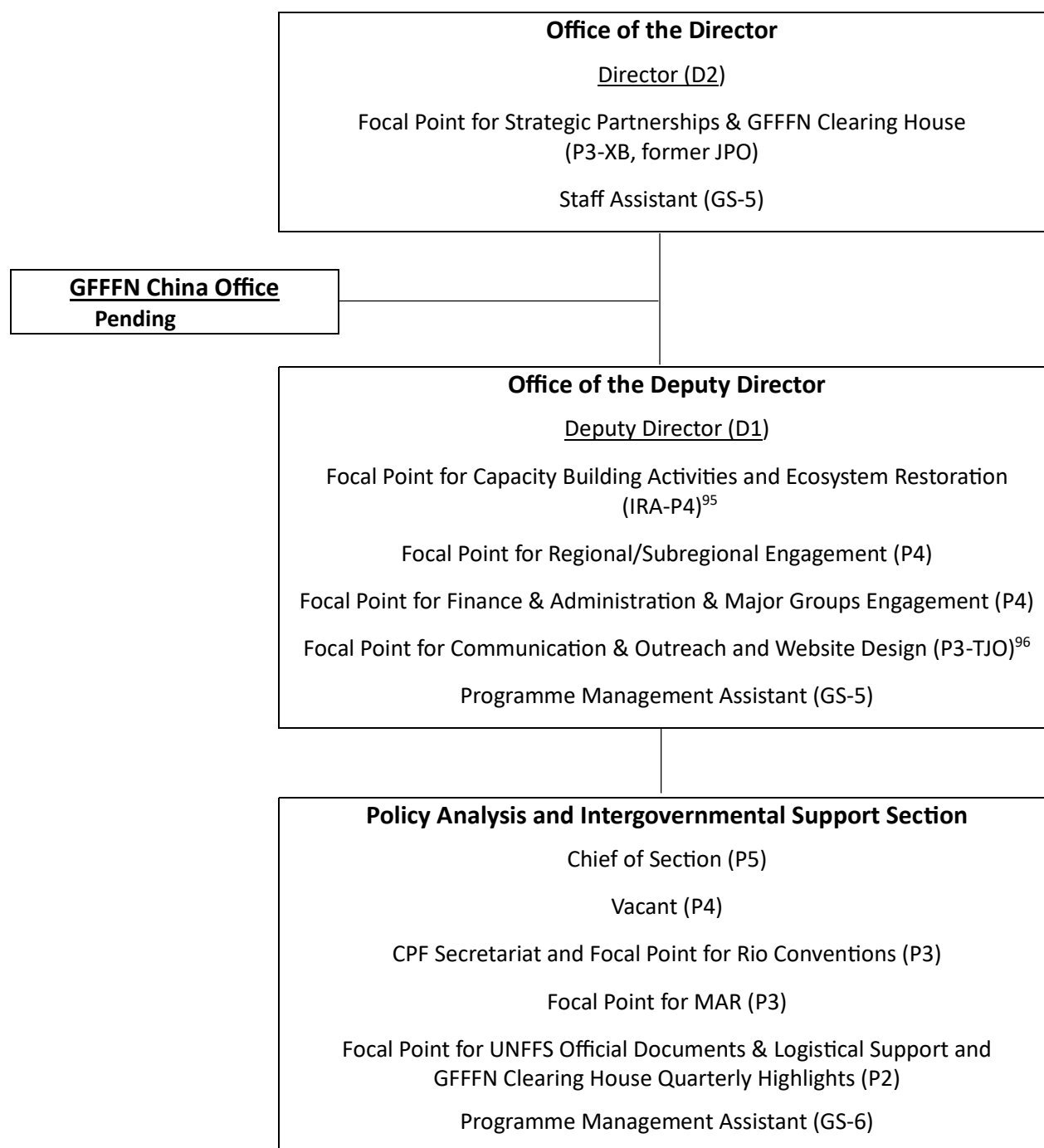
115. Recent changes. The organigramme shows two relatively recent changes to UNFFS staff. These include a new Focal Point (P2) for UNFF Official Documents and Logistics, who also provides

⁹¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/gender-parity-in-the-united-nations/system-wide-strategy>

⁹² An external review of the UN Gender Parity Strategy was commissioned by UN-WOMEN in 2022.

⁹³ <https://www.un.org/en/disabilitystrategy/sgreport>

⁹⁴ UNFFS continues to update staff job descriptions to reflect shifts in portfolios.

Figure 1 – Current UNFFS organigramme (As of March 2025)

⁹⁵ One-year contract renewable up to a maximum of three years, depending on an assessment of demand by Member States.

⁹⁶ Contract position since August 2024 funded by Germany through the UNFF Trust Fund.

support to the GFFFN Clearing House, and an IRA-P4 position focused on capacity building activities, including ecosystem restoration.

116. XB staff. Figure 1 also shows two XB staff members working on core issues who depend on the availability of UNFF Trust Fund resources. These are the P3-XB Focal Point for Strategic Partnerships and the GFFFN Clearing House in the Director's office (formerly a JPO funded by China who became XB in 2020) and the hire in August 2024 of a Temporary Job Opening at the P3 level (P3-TJO) to serve as the Focal Point for C&O and Website Design. Funds for recruitment of the P3-TJO have been provided by Germany through the Trust Fund, including for the current contract which expires in mid-November 2025 unless XB funds are available for an extension.

117. Figure 1 reveals limited UNFFS staff capacity in several core areas. For example, the entire C&O/website portfolio is carried by one short-term contract officer; only one officer is handling finance and administration issues on a part-time basis; and capacity building activities are carried out by one IRA whose contract is expiring in 2026. These and other under capacity areas are discussed in Section VII.

118. Multiple portfolios. In considering Figure 1, it should also be emphasized that while individual staff are designated as focal points for core UNFF work areas, staff members typically have a number of other portfolio responsibilities as well, which can be challenging. In addition, all staff are actively engaged in the "intergovernmental process" throughout the year, which includes organizing, servicing, supporting and preparing documentation for annual Forum meetings and intersessional Bureau, expert, advisory and interagency meetings and processes, as well as following up on meeting outcomes (see Section III.B.1).

VI. UNFFS resources as a DESA division and as a CPF member organization

119. In considering the workload, needs and gaps of UNFFS, it is interesting to look at the resources allocated to UNFFS as part of DESA and the administrative resources of CPF member organizations, recognizing the different mandates, functions and scope of work of DESA subprogrammes and CPF organizations.

120. As noted in paragraph 89 above, the UN regular budget includes post and non-post operating resources. Within DESA, Subprogramme 8 on SFM is the smallest subprogramme with only 12 RB posts (see Annex 20). Operating resources for consultants, experts, staff travel, supplies, furniture, equipment, etc., are also at the low end.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ See Document A/79/6 (Sect. 9), 8 April 2024 (Annex I, page 84).

121. Forest sector focus. The UNFFS/SFM is the only division/subprogramme within DESA focused on a specific sector. All other divisions/subprogrammes look at sustainable development issues broadly without reference to a given sector. While the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues deals with a specific population subset, it sits within the broader context of the DESA Division on Inclusive Social Development (see [Annex 14](#)).

122. In the context of DESA reforms under discussion in 2017, some thought was given to moving UNFFS into the DESA Division for SDGs as a way to directly link and contextualize the Forum's forest-related mandates with the 2030 Agenda. The shift would have meant, *inter alia*, downgrading the Director post from D2 to D1 and making the UNFFS a subset of the SDG Division (as the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is a subset of the Division for Inclusive Social Development).

123. In response, the UNFF13 omnibus resolution, under paragraph 3 of Section VII (Information on reform of DESA pertaining to the Forum) "stresses the importance of maintaining the current and future ability" of the UNFF and Subprogramme 8 on SFM to "fulfil the Forum's important mandate and role, and reaffirms their intergovernmentally agreed mandates".⁹⁸ In the end, the GA retained Subprogramme 8 and maintained the D2 classification of the Director post, a decision the Forum welcomed in paragraph 22 of the UNFF15 omnibus resolution.⁹⁹

124. CPF resources. The 16 members of the CPF represent the secretariats of a wide range of international and intergovernmental forest-related organizations, including:

- 4 conventions: CITES and the three Rio conventions (CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC)
- 1 treaty-based organization: ITTO
- 1 UN specialized agency: FAO (CPF Chair)
- 2 UN programmes: UNDP and UNEP
- 3 international financial institutions: World Bank, GEF, GCF
- 2 international unions with government and non-government members: IUCN and IUFRO
- 2 centers of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR): CIFOR and ICRAF
- 1 ECOSOC functional commission: UNFF (CPF Secretariat)

125. These organizations have unique establishing mandates, memberships, governance systems, operational modalities, funding arrangements and budget cycles. Given these essential differences, meaningful comparisons across organizations in terms of human and financial resources cannot be made. For illustrative purposes, [Table 11](#) provides headquarters information for five CPF member organizations based on information available on their websites.

⁹⁸ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n18/162/00/pdf/n1816200.pdf> UNFF13 report

⁹⁹ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n20/179/07/pdf/n2017907.pdf>

Table 11 - HQ staff and budgets for five CPF member organizations

Member Organization Secretariat	Headquarters (HQ)	No. of HQ Staff	HQ Administrative Budget (US\$000)	Budget year(s)
CITES	Geneva	41	14,405	2020-2022 triennium
GCF	Songdo, Incheon City	220	101,703 ¹⁰⁰	2024
ITTO	Yokohama	26	7,104	2025
UNCCD	Bonn	45	9,154 ¹⁰¹	2022
UNFFS (CPF Secretariat)	New York	12 ¹⁰²	2,843	2024

VII. UNFF19 and outlook for 2025-2030 – UNFFS workload, needs and gaps

A. Workload implications of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15

126. ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 reflects the outcome of the Forum's mid-term review of the effectiveness of the IAF in meeting its objectives, which was mandated by ECOSOC resolution 2015/33. Section I of the resolution contains over 120 actions (requests, invitations, etc.) directed to Members of the Forum and various forest-related bodies in 10 areas from I.A to I.J.¹⁰³

127. Of these 120 actions, 35 are direct requests to UNFFS (see Annex 21). These requests relate to GFFFN, UNSPF/MAR, the 2030 Agenda, C&O and Major Groups, with the majority focused on C&O. A number of these requests represent significant additional work for UNFFS staff, including the following:

- GFFFN requests:

D.10(b) on using digital tools and innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence, to improve GFFFN efficiency.

D.10(c) on supporting Forum Members, upon request, in mobilizing, gaining access to and enhancing effective use of existing financial resources from all sources for SFM to enhance achievement of the GFGs and targets, in line with national forest priorities.

- UNSPF/MAR requests:

F.17(b) on developing a short, concise GFG Report in close consultation with CPF member organizations, within existing resources.

F.17(c) on conducting within existing resources, capacity building activities jointly with FAO and other partners on MAR and provide assistance in preparing national reports, and innovative

¹⁰⁰ Includes Secretariat operations (US\$ 99.962 million) and salary scale adjustments (US\$1.741 million) for 2024

¹⁰¹ Converted from Euros using September 2024 exchange rate

¹⁰² Regular budget posts

¹⁰³ Link to UNFF19 resolution.

techniques, technology and knowledge management.

- Agenda 2030 requests:

G.21(f) on preparing a concise report and/or targeted communication products for a variety of audiences to highlight forest contributions to SDGs under review each year, their interlinkages, especially with SDG15, and the importance of achieving target 15.b to fully realize these contributions.

- C&O requests:

H.25(a) on strengthening cost-effective use of available resources and existing/emerging communication options, including innovative and interactive methods, such as collaborations with influencers, surveys and contests.

H.25(b) on upgrading the structure and content of the UNFF website within existing resources.

H.25(d) on developing with CPF support, short, sharp policy briefs on the Forum's thematic priorities.

H.25(g) on developing communication products to raise awareness on the multiple values and benefits of forests and the important role of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and girls, and people in vulnerable situations.

H.25(h) on raising the visibility of the GFGs by exploring the development of short, memorable titles, in consultation with Forum members for each of the six GFGs, similar to those used for the SDG icons.

H.25(i) on promoting, in coordination with CPF members, educational and youth outreach activities to help young generations understand the multiple benefits of forests and trees and learn about the UNSPF and its GFGs.

- Major Group requests:

J.35(c) on supporting countries with collecting data on best practices promoted by Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth on the implementation of the UNSPF, including tree planting in line with SFM principles and ecosystem restoration.

J.35(d) on organizing a capacity building workshop, subject to funding availability, on fundraising for MGs and other stakeholders to implement the UNSPF and achieve the GFGs, ensuring equitable geographic representation.

128. Invitations to CPF. In addition to the 35 direct requests to UNFFS, ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 includes 14 invitations directed to CPF and its members (see Annex 22). Since CPF can be expected to act on these invitations, there are downstream workload implications for UNFFS, primarily as the CPF Secretariat but also as a CPF member.

129. Invitations to the Forum. ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 also includes a number of invitations which include the Forum itself, among others (see [Annex 23](#)). In the highly likely event that the Forum will decide to act on these invitations, UNFFS will have the task of teeing up relevant topics in the run up to Forum sessions and following up on any additional Forum requests regarding those topics.

B. UNFFS needs and gaps: Areas of under capacity

130. The multiple UNFF19 requests to UNFFS come at a time when the Secretariat is already challenged to fully carryout its expanded responsibilities and assignments flowing from previous UNFF/ECOSOC resolutions. As noted above, a number of requests represent significant additional workload in core areas where UNFFS is already under capacity. Moreover, the Secretariat is currently under capacity in critical crosscutting areas which underpin its core substantive work and will be further taxed in response to UNFF19.

131. These under-capacity core and crosscutting work areas are as follows (see [Figure 1](#)):

- C&O capacity: Currently all C&O activities, including website redesign and other ICT support, are handled by one P3-TJO on a contract funded by XB resources from the UNFF Trust Fund. The contract expires in mid-November 2025 unless additional XB resources are forthcoming. Even with a continued contract, the many UNFF19 C&O requests will likely require more than one person since C&O and website design/maintenance are different skill sets.
- Finance and administration: This includes administration of the financial resources under Subprogramme 8 as part of the UN annual budget cycle, covering programme development, results-based budget planning, implementation, and quarterly monitoring and evaluation (see [Section IV.A](#)). It also includes management of the UNFF Trust Fund, including processing contributions, disbursing funds as directed by donors, managing accounts and reporting to donors. Additionally, it covers the recruitment of contractors, consultants and other experts and facilitating the financial transactions associated with their engagement.¹⁰⁴
- GFFFN capacity: Until recently, there was one IRA-P5 dedicated to GFFFN/UNSPF country capacity building, one RB-P3 Focal Point for the GFFFN, and three staff working part-time or more on GFFFN projects and/or the Clearing House. As already noted, the RP-P3 Focal Point transferred to the GCF in September 2024, and the IRA-P5 position expired at the end of January

¹⁰⁴ Importantly, the increasing limited availability of UN regular budget resources over the past few years has led to greater reliance on XB resources through the UNFF Trust Fund – a trend likely to continue for the foreseeable future. This shift has significantly increased, and will likely continue to increase, the workload in finance and administration as each donor requires specific agreements, detailed documentation, and distinct monitoring and reporting obligations. Currently this UNFFS work is shared on an ad hoc basis by senior management (Director, Deputy, Section Chief) and one P4 staff member – a situation that is far from ideal, especially given the highly specialized nature of UN administration and programme and budget planning for both RB and XB resources

2025, leaving UNFFS without an experienced senior staff member working on GFFFN and other capacity building initiatives.

- Programme support: This includes day-to-day UNFFS management support; logistical support associated with Forum sessions, intersessional Bureau, expert and advisory meetings, and capacity building workshops (travel arrangements, expense reports, DSA disbursements, arrangements for translation services, etc.); contract processing and payment of vendors; and monitoring and responding to the UNFF mailbox. This support is currently provided by only two programme management assistants at the GS-OL level who are already overwhelmed by the current pace of activities and meetings and will be more so in the future.
- CPF capacity: Currently, the multiple tasks and assignments associated with serving as the CPF Secretariat are carried out by one P3 on a half-time basis. This constrains the ability of UNFFS to fully service and support CPF and to initiate, shape and fully participate in the implementation of joint initiatives that advance UNFF priorities.

132. Needs and gaps. Considering the above, there is a clear and urgent need to strengthen UNFFS with additional RB posts and associated non-post resources in order to handle the increased workload and also compensate for the loss after 10 years of the IRA-P5 capacity building position.

133. As noted in paragraph 1 of this information paper, paragraph I.B.3 of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15: “Invites the General Assembly, following the discussion at the twenty-first session of the Forum, in 2026, to consider appropriate resourcing of the Forum Secretariat to perform its responsibilities and mandates in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner.” This statement effectively postponed potential agreement on a PBI recommendation(s) until May 2026. Therefore, the discussions at UNFF20 in May 2025 on the findings and recommendations contained in this information paper will be crucial for consideration and decision of UNFF members at UNFF21.

C. Implications of a potential GFFFN satellite office in Beijing

134. Discussions on the possible establishment of a GFFFN satellite office in Beijing were first broached in 2018. As of UNFF19, the UN and China, after several rounds of consultations, have reached a common understanding on the nature, scope and functions of the proposed office, which is reflected in current drafts of the MOU and host country agreement.

135. The proposed satellite office is aimed to scale up the capacity development activities of the GFFFN in support of countries. Establishment of the office would greatly enhance the capacity of UNFFS to provide GFFFN support to members of the Forum.

136. The current UNFFS organigramme (see [Figure 1](#)) includes a placeholder for the GFFFN satellite office which, if established, would be headed by a D1 reporting to the UNFFS Director. The Secretariat in

New York would remain the manager of GFFFN. Given the technical nature of GFFFN support and assistance to countries, the New York Secretariat would continue to have key posts dedicated to GFFFN operations and to maintaining/updating the GFFFN Clearing House in order to support the UNFFS Director and engage in day-to-day interactions with the satellite office.

VIII. Conclusions and suggestions for addressing UNFFS needs and gaps through 2030

A. Conclusions

137. The following conclusions are based on the foregoing analysis of the Secretariat's evolving responsibilities and associated capacity since its establishment in 2001, with particular reference to the period following adoption of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33.

1. ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 envisioned that the "compact" UNFFS would be supported through the UN regular budget and by continued secondments from CPF member organizations as was done during the IPF/IFF process. In practice, there has been only one CPF secondment to UNFFS since 2007: 1 FAO P3 from 2012 to 2015. There have no further CPF secondments to UNFFS since then. Going forward, it is unrealistic to consider CPF secondments a viable option to supplementing UNFFS RB posts or as an alternative to increasing UNFFS RB posts.
2. Reliance on XB resources through the UNFF Trust Fund to support long-term staff working on UNFF core issues is unsustainable. Trust Fund contributions are unpredictable and subject to donor policy changes, which creates uncertainty both for XB staff members and for their assigned work portfolios and related UNFF-requested deliverables. However, utilizing Trust Fund resources for temporary and short-term hires can be an effective way to supplement UNFFS RB staff during peak work periods (e.g. preparing for/servicing Forum sessions and high-level segments and special projects).
3. The Secretariat's post-2015 workload under a "strengthened IAF" increased significantly due to the annualization of Forum sessions and the associated uptick in intersessional work; significant new/expanded functions, responsibilities and assignments in several interrelated core work areas (e.g. UNSPF, GFFFN, MAR, C&O, 2030 Agenda); and servicing and participating in an increasingly pro-active CPF.
4. Managing Subprogramme 8 has been a responsibility of UNFFS since it was established in 2001 as a division of DESA and part of UNHQ. Nevertheless, the volume of UNFFS work has expanded in recent years in response to the annualization of the UN programme and budget process; increased inputting to annual ECOSOC, HLPF and GA sessions; contributing to new GA/UNSG forest-related initiatives; and complying with new UN system-wide management initiatives.

5. Despite ever-expanding tasks and assignments, the Secretariat's RB staff complement has not increased since 2016. It remains at 12 RB posts, four of which are timebound to 2030. This status quo in the face of increasing demands has been made more challenging in recent years by the loss of three long-term, highly experienced RB staff in the areas of Finance and administration, GFFFN and C&O -- representing 25% of the UNFFS RB staff complement.
6. The Secretariat has met these challenges admirably, but the effort has not been without costs, including the chronic stress of meeting deadlines with effective high quality deliverables.
7. As a further consequence, UNFFS has had to continue to rely on long-term XB staff to undertake and assist with core functions, including MAR and GFFFN.
8. Should the potential GFFFN satellite office be established, there will still be a need for key posts in New York to coordinate and engage in GFFFN technical activities, update and maintain the GFFFN Clearing House, contribute to substantive official reporting to the Forum on the performance of the GFFFN, and liaise and maintain close contact with Beijing on behalf of the UNFFS Director who will continue to oversee GFFFN management and operations.
9. The 35 direct requests to UNFFS contained in ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 come at a time when UNFFS is already challenged to fully carryout its functions and responsibilities from previous resolutions. Many of the 35 requests represent significant additional workload in core areas where UNFFS is already under capacity, including C&O, GFFFN, country capacity building to implement UNSPF and UNFI, and servicing CPF.
10. In addition, with the expiration of the IRA-P5 contract post on 30 January 2025, UNFFS no longer has a senior officer focused on building country capacity to develop forest financing strategies and implement the UNSPF and UNFI.
11. UNFFS is also under capacity in the crosscutting areas of Finance and administration and Programme management support, both of which are essential to supporting the Secretariat's substantive work but tend to be "invisible" to the Forum.
12. This situation is not sustainable and will likely have consequences. The Secretariat's staffing needs and gaps should be addressed as a matter of urgency if UNFFS is to fulfill its multiple assignments from the Forum going forward. Otherwise, the likely consequence is the inability of staff to carry out UNFF mandates, including tasks emerging from the Mid-Term Review, and to fully promote the multiple economic, social and environmental benefits of forests in a holistic and integrated manner. The discussions at UNFF20 in May 2025 will be crucial to potential agreement on a PBI recommendation(s) at UNFF21.
13. In some ways, UNFFS has become the victim of its own success. By meeting the challenges posed by ever-increasing tasks while under-staffed, and making creative compensatory use of

the UNFF Trust Fund, the Secretariat may have fostered a view among Forum members that it can make good on requested deliverables regardless of its human resource circumstances.

B. Suggestions to address the Secretariat's needs and gaps

138. In order for the Forum Secretariat to “perform its responsibilities and mandates in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner”, the following resourcing is essential to address current needs and gaps:

1. Increase the UNFFS RB staff complement from 12 to 17 RB posts as follows:

- a. 1 dedicated P3 or P4 post to serve as the Secretariat's **C&O coordinator** with responsibilities for: Implementing and updating the C&O plan with short- and medium-term priorities in the context of the UNSPF C&O Strategy; developing targeted communication products to, *inter alia*, highlight the contribution of forests to the SDGs and raise awareness of forest values and benefits and the role of Indigenous and local communities and women in this regard; coordinating preparation of the UNFFS Monthly Bulletin; utilizing innovative and interactive communication methods to amplify messaging; and, in coordination with CPF members, developing concise targeted policy briefs, promoting education and youth outreach, and widening participation in the Forum's high-level round tables.
- b. 1 dedicated P3 post to serve as the Secretariat's **Finance, Administration and Human Resources Coordinator**, with responsibilities for: Administering and monitoring financial resources under Subprogramme 8 (SFM), including budget planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; recruiting temporary and short-term staff, consultants and contractors; reviewing, updating and developing job descriptions; maintaining detailed in-house records of contributions to, and disbursements from, the UNFF Trust Fund; and administering donor obligations, including agreements, documentation, reporting, evaluation, and contributions through DESA's CDPMO in support of UNFFS country capacity building projects.
- c. 1 P4 or P5 post to serve as the Secretariat's **Capacity Building Coordinator** (and replace the **IRA-P5**), with responsibilities for: Coordinating GFFFN forest financing initiatives and projects; developing capacity building proposals for funding from the UN Development Account, RPTC and other relevant UN funds to assist countries in implementing the UNSPF and UNFI; and coordinating implementation of and reporting on funded proposals. This post would establish a stable, permanent capacity building expertise within UNFFS.
- d. 1 dedicated GS post to serve full-time as the Secretariat's **ICT/Website Focal Point**, working under the immediate supervision of the C&O coordinator (a. above), with responsibilities for: Upgrading the UNFF website; maintaining and updating the website on an ongoing

basis, facilitating website compliance with UN standards for multilingualism for UN websites; monitoring the UNFFS email box and preparing/coordinating responses as needed; and supporting all staff on ICT-related matters.

- e. Establish a dedicated **CPF Secretary** post at the P4 level. Servicing the CPF and supporting UNFFS as a CPF member is a full-time responsibility, especially given the increasing scope of work of the CPF. The establishment of a new post at the P4 level will allow and facilitate better and more efficient interaction of the CPF Secretary with senior officials of CPF member organizations.

2. Increase RB operating resources accordingly

The Subprogramme 8 non-post operating budget would need to be increased to cover the staff-related costs associated with additional RB posts.

3. Develop a PBI at UNFF21 in May 2026

It is suggested that based on the discussions of the Forum at its 20th session on the findings and suggestions contained in this information paper, and in line with UNFF21 discussions on the matter, the PBI be developed and circulated to enable Members to consult in capitals and with Permanent Missions in New York in a timely manner.

C. Additional suggestions for UNFF20 in May 2025

139. Regardless of the outcome of the above discussions at UNFF21 (May 2026), the UNFFS Director may wish to consider the following actions in the runup to and during UNFF20:

1. Consult with Member countries to secure sufficient funds through the UNFF Trust Fund to extend the current TJO-P3 contract through May 2026 in order to maintain continuity on C&O initiatives, including website upgrades.
2. For clarity and transparency, expand annual reporting on the UNFF Trust Fund through Secretariat Notes or other appropriate information avenues to provide/include:
 - a. Information on earmarked vs unearmarked contributions and the purposes of the earmarks (as was reported prior to UNFF15 in 2020).
 - b. Cumulative contributions to and expenditures from the Trust Fund from 2024 onward.
 - c. Information on contributions by Members and partners through DESA's CDPMO in support of UNFF country capacity building projects.

Bibliography/source material

ECOSOC resolutions and documents

- Resolutions 2000/35, 2006/49, 2015/33, 2017/4, 2020/4, 2021/6 and 2024/15
- Document E/2007/L.22/Rev.: PBI of the recommendations contained in the UNFF 7 report (2 October 2007)

UNFF resolutions, reports, Secretariat Notes, other documents

- UNFF resolutions: 12/1 (CLI guidelines, 4POW 2017-2020), 13/1 (C&O Strategy, GFFFN Guidelines), 19 (Mid-term review)
- UNFF Reports: 2004-2018
- Secretariat Notes on the UNFF Trust Fund: 2009-2024
- Secretariat Notes on: UNSPF implementation; MAR; MOI/GFFFN; Enhanced cooperation/ contributions of partners; Mid-term review: 2015-2024
- UNFF MYPOW 2007-2015 and 4POWs 2017-2020 and 2021-2024
- UNFF Monthly Bulletins: October, November (including regular updates on activities of the Forest Pavilion at UNFCCC COP29) and December 2024
- Concept notes for IDF high-level events at UNHQ: All years available

GA Resolutions

- Resolutions 52/12B (UN Development Account); 61/193 (IYF, 2006); 62/98 (Forest Instrument, 2007); 67/200 (IDF, 2012); 70/1 (2030 Agenda, 2015); 70/199 (UNFI, 2015); 71/285 (UNSPF, 2017); 71/286 (UNFI, 2017); 73/284 (Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, 2019); and 78/320 (Fostering SFM, 2024)

GA Proposed Programme Budgets, Part IV, Section 9, Economic and social affairs

- Documents: 58/6 (Sect. 9) for 2004-2005 (April 2003); 60/6 (Sect. 9) for 2006-2007 (May 2005); 62/6 (Sect. 9) for 2008-2009 (September 2007); 64/6 (Sect. 9) for 2010-2011 (March 2009); 66/6 (Sect. 9) for 2012-2013 (May 2011); 68/6 (Sect. 9) for 2014-2015 (April 2013); 70/6 (Sect. 9) for 2016-2017 (April 2015); and 72/6 (Sect. 9) for 2018-2019 (April 2017); 74/6 (Sect. 9) for 2020 (April 2019); 75/6 (Sect. 9) for 2021 (April 2020); 78/6 (Sect. 9) for 2024 (April 2023); 79/6 (Sect. 9) for 2025 (April 2024)

Other GA/ECOSOC Documents

- 63/648/Add. 1): Programme Budget for the biennium 2008-2009: Report of the Fifth Committee (30 December 2008)
- UN end-of-year Financial Statements
- Junior Professional Officer Handbook (ECOSOC, 2024)

UNFF consultants' reports

- "Assessment on actions related to the UNFF Secretariat", Tiega Anada, March 2023
- "Assessment on actions related to the UNFF Trust Fund", Tiega Anada, March 2023
- "Assessment on Actions related to the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network", Jorge

Illueca, March 2023

- “Report on Assessment G: Actions related to UNFF contributions to the 2030 Agenda”, Stephanie Caswell, December 2022
- "Independent Assessment of the IAF, Report of the Team of Independent Consultants, September 2014

Other

- Job descriptions for UNFF staff
- Internal UNFFS document showing UNFFS human resources (RB posts, XB posts, CPF secondments from 2002 to 2015)
- Informal Briefing Note – UNFFS Human Resources Gaps and Needs, 29 April 2024
- UN Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023: Schedule of 171 Individual Trust Funds (UNFF Trust Fund = Schedule 3.22; DESA Capacity Development Programme Trust Fund = Schedule 3.39)

Annex 1

ECOSOC resolution 2024/15, Section I.B -- Actions related to UNFFS (paragraphs 2 and 3)

2. *Requests the Forum secretariat:*

(a) To submit an information paper containing information on its workload, needs and gaps in advance of UNFF20, in 2025, for final consideration at UNFF21, in 2026;

(b) To continue to use a hybrid or virtual meeting format, whenever the logistical arrangement is possible, for sharing information with members of the Forum, members of the CPF, regional and subregional partners and major groups and other relevant stakeholders and briefing them on the work and preparations for Forum sessions during the intersessional period, taking into full account the need for inclusivity and transparency for virtual meetings;

(c) To facilitate greater cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies, and engage technical and financial organizations and other international cooperation mechanisms to enhance the implementation of sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests to address climate change, desertification, land degradation, biodiversity loss, pollution, water scarcity, poverty and food insecurity, among others, considering different national circumstances and the relevant mandates of those organizations;

(d) To improve and regularly share information with Forum national focal points and permanent missions in New York, through effective communication tools, to inform them of its activities and raise awareness of the multiple economic, social and environmental values and benefits of forests;

(e) To share information with Forum members and partners about changes, accomplishments, as well as challenges affecting implementation of the UNSPF 2017-2030 and achievement of the GFGs;

(f) To maximize participation in and efficiency and value of Forum sessions and other meetings by effective allocation of time, resources, facilitation and agenda development, including use of innovative approaches, as feasible;

(g) To report to the Forum at each session on the progress made on the actions that the Forum secretariat has been invited to undertake;

3. *Invites the General Assembly,* following the discussion at UNFF21, in 2026, to consider appropriate resourcing of the Forum secretariat to perform its responsibilities and mandates in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner.

Annex 2

Contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund: 2001-2014

Donor	Contributions to UNFF Trust Fund (US\$000)									Totals
	2001	2002-03	2004-05	2006-07	2008-09	2010	2011-2012	2012-2013	2014	
Australia	40			37	33					110
Austria		30	12	25			75			142
Canada	32			10						42
China							200	450	250	900
Croatia							25			25
EC		7								7
Finland	37	237		120	47	150	280	129	472	1,659
Germany		216	126	216			800	445		1,928
Luxembourg				18						18
Netherlands				254					133	527
Norway	38	14	48	100			456	50	50	756
ROK				40		20		22	21	103
Russia									142	142
Sweden		30	66				298			394
Switzerland		155	86		50		20		20	331
Turkey								1,160		1,160
UK			19	103		625	2,368	2,385		5,500
USA	1,600	1,525	1,375	1,050	500	500	800	800	400	8,550
Totals	1,747	2,214	1,733	2,301	755	1, 295	5,322	5,441	1,488	22,296

Notes:

- (1) The amounts for 2001-2009 are from the Annex to Secretariat Note E/CN.18/2009/15. The “Notes” in the Annex state, *inter alia*, that in addition to direct contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund, contributions were made to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund managed by DESA’s CDPMO to support UNFFS capacity building projects, as follows:
 - 2007: Netherlands contributed US\$140,000 to the technical cooperation project on enhanced cooperation and regional programme coordination
 - 2008: Germany contributed US\$124,610 to the same project
 - Finland contributed US\$187,373 to the technical cooperation project on interregional cooperation and lessons learned on SFM (year not specified)
- (2) The amounts for 2010 are from the Annex to Secretariat Note E/CN.18/2011/14, which also includes donor contributions to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund for the Facilitative Process.
- (3) The amounts for 2011-2012 are from Table 1 of Secretariat Note E/CN.18/2013/13, which also includes donor contributions to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund for the Facilitative Process, including US\$1 million from GEF.
- (4) The amounts for 2012-2014 are from Tables 1 and 2 of Secretariat Note E/CN.18/2015/8.

Annex 3
UNFF/ECOSOC requests to UNFFS: 2015-2022¹⁰⁵

Year	UNFF/ECOSOC resolution – Request by paragraph	Focus
2015	UNFF11 – ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 requests UNFFS to:	
	14.a. In consultation with Forum and CPF members, make recommendations to further increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation of the strengthened Facilitative Process and submit them for consideration at UNFF13 in 2018.	GFFFN
	14.f. Engage in discussions with the GEF secretariat to facilitate collaboration between the Facility and Forum to support eligible countries gaining access to SFM funding, and report to the Forum.	
	16.c. In consultation with Member States, CPF members, and other relevant entities and processes, propose for consideration at UNFF12 in 2017 a cycle and format for national reporting and for enhancing voluntary MAR under the IAF as part of the strategic plan 2017-2030.	MAR
	16.d. Continue to make reports on UNFF sessions and other inputs available to UN bodies and other forest-related organizations.	All
	26. Consult with regional/subregional forest-related organizations and processes on means to enhance collaboration between them and the Forum, including on the strategic plan 2017-2030 and the Forum's 4POW.	UNSPF/ Regions
2017	33. Promote the involvement of MGs and other stakeholders in the Forum's work, in particular leaders from the private and non-governmental sectors, including forest industries, local communities and philanthropic organizations, and enhance the Forum's interaction with such stakeholders.	MGs
	January: UNFF Special Session – ECOSOC resolution 2017/4 (Adoption of UNSPF 2017-2030 and the Forum's 4POW 2017-2020). No requests to UNFFS apart from guidance contained in the UNSPF and 4POW 2017-2020.	UNSPF
2017	UNFF12 (Technical session) – UNFF Resolution 12/1 requests UNFFS to:	
	1. Further revise the format for voluntary national reporting to the Forum on implementation of the UNSPF, including the UNFI and VNCs, based on consultations with Forum members and other intersessional activities, views expressed during UNFF12, and any pilot testing of the current draft format that may be undertaken with interested Forum members from the five regional groups.	MAR
	23. Prepare, in consultation with CPF, a report containing proposals on actions to accelerate progress in achieving SDG15 and its forest-related targets, as well as background analytical studies on the contribution of forests to the achievement of the other SDGs to be reviewed by the HLPF in 2018, for UNFF13.	UNSPF
2018	25. Synthesize, by 30 November 2017, the inputs received from Forum members, CPF member organizations, UN system partners, regional/subregional organizations/processes, and MGs and other stakeholders on the contribution of forests to issues under consideration by the HLPF in 2018, and submit the synthesis as background information to UNFF13.	HLPF
	UNFF13 (Policy Session) – UNFF Resolution 13/1 requests UNFFS to:	
2018	2. Compile all VNC announcements communicated to UNFFS in a publicly accessible and centralized repository.	UNSPF/ C&O

¹⁰⁵ UNFF14 (2019), UNFF16 (2021) and UNFF18 (2023) were technical sessions with no resolutions or direct requests to UNFFS.

	4. Report progress in implementing the UNSPF C&O Strategy contained in Annex I at UNFF14 and subsequent sessions, and produce, from <u>within existing resources</u> , ¹⁰⁶ a concise print and online publication of the GFGs and targets, featuring infographics, to be used in outreach to a range of audiences within and outside the forest community.	
2018	11. Prepare, on the basis of the initial round of reporting and in consultation with Members, CPF member organizations and relevant stakeholders, a concise “flagship” publication on progress towards achieving the GFGs and targets for release by the end of 2021, <u>using existing resources</u> , suitable for a range of audiences within and outside the forest sector; and report progress at UNFF15 (2020).	MAR
	17. In consultation with interested Forum and CPF members, initiate development of the GFFFN online clearing house mechanism, bearing in mind the benefits of a stepwise approach, and undertake the following additional measures to improve GFFFN effectiveness and efficiency and build capacity in financing SFM: a. Develop a generic guide and a modular training package to assist countries in developing national forest financing strategies b. Share information on lessons learned and best practices on resource mobilization for forests.	GFFFN
	19. Provide further details and regular reporting on possible arrangements for, and operation of, the proposed secretariat office in Beijing, taking into account the ongoing broader reforms in DESA and budget implications.	
	31. Prepare in consultation with CPF members, a document containing proposals on the contribution of forests to accelerating progress in achieving the SDGs, and background analytical studies on the contribution of forests to other SDGs under review by HLPF in 2019, for consideration at UNFF14 (2019).	HLPF
2020	UNFF15 (Policy session) - ECOSOC resolution 2020/14 requests/encourages/invites the UNFFs to:	
	3. Organize a high-level round table during UNFF16 to discuss major forest-related developments.	All
	6. Continue to develop the flagship publication on progress towards achieving the GFGs and targets in close consultation with the informal advisory group and CPF, and launch the publication at UNFF16 and the World Forestry Congress in May 2021.	UNSPF
	7. <u>Within existing resources</u> and in consultation with Forum members, propose refinements to the format for voluntary national reporting based on lessons learned during the current reporting cycle and in developing the flagship publication for consideration by UNFF17 in 2022.	MAR
	11. Continue to work closely with CPF member organizations and other data providers in designing the initial phase of the GFFFN Clearing House to avoid duplication and increase synergies and efficiencies and report to UNFF16 on progress and possible budget implications.	GFFFN
	13. Provide regular updates regarding the proposed office of the GFFFN secretariat in Beijing and provide a progress report at UNFF16.	
	14. Compile, in consultation with other CPF members and with input from Forum Members, an initial assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on SFM, the forest sector and forest-dependent populations, indigenous peoples and local communities, forest financing and international cooperation, and present the assessment to UNFF16.	COVID
	17. Engage actively MGs and other relevant stakeholders, including at UNFF16.	MGs

¹⁰⁶ The phrase “within existing resources” or “using existing resources” is used to qualify a number of actions in [Annex 3](#). It is unclear whether this refers to existing RB resources only or also to XB resources in the UNFF Trust Fund, which vary from year to year. The phrase tends to imply that all other requests to UNFFs would involve additional resources. It would be useful to clarify this in future.

2022	UNFF17 (Policy session) – UNFF Omnibus resolution requests UNFFS to:	
	17. Continue to develop and make operational phase II of the GFFFN clearing house, including its new database on forest financial flows, <u>within existing resources</u> .	GFFFN
	18. <u>Within existing resources</u> , regularly update the GFFFN clearing house databases and communicate information to familiarize Forum members with the databases.	
	19. Identify ways to facilitate contributions from private sector and philanthropic organization, in accordance with the respective UN rules and regulations.	Donor MGs
	20. Provide regular updates on the proposed UNFFS office for GFFFN in Beijing, including at UNFF18.	GFFFN
	22. Amend the format for voluntary national reporting, taking into account proposals from Forum Members, and conduct a pilot phase for use of the refined format in interested countries and report progress to UNFF18.	MAR
	23. Evaluate the impact of the 2021 GFG flagship publication and propose terms of reference, including composition of an IAG on reporting, with due regard for geographical representation, to UNFF18.	
	24. In the context of preparations for the IAF midterm review and in consultation with Forum Members, prepare a road map and timeline for the next reporting cycle, in conjunction with the FRA cycle, and explore options for establishing an online reporting platform for the Forum, recognizing the need for streamlined reporting and minimizing the reporting burden, including challenges faced by developing countries.	MAR/ UNSPF
	25. <u>Through voluntary contributions</u> and in consultation with Forum members, organize jointly with FAO and other relevant CPF member organizations, a global workshop on reporting progress towards the GFGs and targets, with a focus on data sources, collection and methodologies for which there is a lack of systematic data, with modalities for inclusive participation and with due regard to all UN official languages, <u>subject to availability of XB resources</u> .	
	27. Arrange, in collaboration with FAO and other relevant CPF member organizations, further work on tier 3 indicators of the GCS, including improvement of concepts, definitions and voluntary testing in the field.	

Annex 4

UNFF sessions, intersessional Bureau and expert/advisory meetings, and country/partner-led initiatives organized and supported by UNFFS since May 2015¹⁰⁷

Year	Month	Meeting/Activity ¹⁰⁸	City	Topic
2015	September	Interagency (CPF+)	Durban (WFC XIV)	1 st informal meeting on forest-related indicators
2016	March	Expert panel	Tokyo	UNSPF
	April	AHEG 1	New York	UNSPF & Forum 4POW
		Interagency (CPF+)		2 nd informal meeting on forest-related indicators
		UNFF12 Bureau		UNFF12 preparations
	July	UNFF12 Bureau	Rome	UNFF12 preparations
	September	EGM	Tehran	Regional/subregional involvement in IAF
	October	AHEG 2	Bangkok	UNSPF & Forum 4POW
		UNFF12 Bureau		UNFF12 preparations
		EGM		MGoS engagement in IAF
	November	OLI - CPF	Rome	Global forest indicators
2017	January	UNFF Working Group & Special Session	New York	UNSPF 2017-2030 & 4POW 2017-2020 (ECOSOC resolution 2017/4)
		UNFF12 Bureau		
	February	EGM	Brasilia	Voluntary national reporting to UNFF on UNSPF
	April	UNFF 12 Bureau	New York	UNFF12 preparations
	May	UNFF12 ¹⁰⁹	New York	Resolution 12/1; Guidelines for CLIs, OLI, etc.
	September	EGM	New York	UNSPF C&O Strategy
	October	UNFF13 Bureau	New York	UNFF13 preparations
	November	2 EGMS	Nairobi	MGoS contribution to implementing UNSPF
				Regional/subregional input to UNFF
2018	December	UNFF13 Bureau	New York	UNFF13 preparations
	February	UNFF13 Bureau	Rome	UNFF13 preparations
	March	EGM	Chengdu	GFFFN operational guidelines
	May	UNFF13	New York	Resolution 13/1: UNSPF C&O Strategy 2018-2030; GFFFN operational guidelines
		UNFF13 Bureau		
	October	UNFF14/15 Bureau	Telecon	UNFF14 preparations
2019	January	EGM	New York	GFFFN clearinghouse
		UNFF14/15 Bureau		UNFF14 preparations
		2 EGMS	Bangkok	MGoS involvement in UNFF
				Regional/subregional input to UNFF
	March	UNFF14/15 Bureau	Telecon	2 meetings on UNFF14 preparations

¹⁰⁷ Excludes GFFFN & UN Development Account workshops and CPF meetings organized and supported by UNFFS.

¹⁰⁸ UNFF Bureau intersessional meetings are typically one day meetings.

¹⁰⁹ UNFFS routinely organizes briefings for Permanent Mission staff in advance of UNFF sessions.

2019	May	UNFF14	New York	Technical session
	November	EGM	Geneva	Forum's 4 POW: 2021-2024
		UNFF14/15 Bureau		UNFF15 preparations
2020	February	IAG	Virtual	1 st meeting on Flagship publication
	March	MGs-Led Initiative	Nairobi	Cross-sectoral collaboration for inclusive forest landscapes
	May	UNFF15	Virtual	Omnibus resolution: POW 2021, draft POW 2022-2024
	July	UNFF16/17 Bureau	Virtual	UNFF16 preparations
	August	IAG	Virtual	2 nd meeting on Flagship publication
	December	IAG	Virtual	3 rd meeting on Flagship publication
2021	January	EGM	Virtual	Impact of COVID-19 on SFM
	February	IAG	Virtual	4 th meeting on Flagship publication
	April	UNFF16	Virtual	Technical session (informal)
		High-Level Roundtable	Virtual	Major forest-related developments; impacts of COVID-19 on SFM
	November	EGM	Virtual	Preparations for IAF-MTR (2024)
	December	EGM	Virtual	Voluntary national reporting to UNFF on UNSPF
2022	February	EGM	Virtual	Impact of COVID-19 on SFM
	March	EGM	Rome	Global core set of forest-related indicators
	May	UNFF17	New York	Preparations for IAF-MTR: 10 action areas A to J ¹¹⁰
		High-Level Roundtable		UNFF response to, role in, and expectations from forest-related multilateral developments
	June	UNFF18/19 Bureau	New York	UNFF18 preparations
	December	UNFF18/19 Bureau	New York	UNFF18 preparations
2023	January	EGM	Bangkok	IAF-MTR (Assessments G-2030 Agenda, I-Regions, J-MGs)
	February	CPF OLI	Rome	IAF-MTR (C-CPF)
	April	UNFF18/19 Bureau	Virtual	UNFF18 preparations
	May	UNFF18	New York	Technical session
		UNFF18/19 Bureau		
	June	EGM	Nairobi	IAF-MTR (D-GFFFN, F- UNSPF)
	July	UNFF18/19 Bureau	Virtual	UNFF19 preparations
	October	AHEG	Vienna	IAF-MTR (All assessments A-J)
		CLI (India)	Dehradun	Forest fires/wildfires and forest certification and SFM
2024	February	UNFF18/19 Bureau	Virtual	UNFF19 preparations
	March	MGs-Led Initiative	Nairobi	Support for UNFF and recommendations for UNFF19
	May	UNFF19	New York	Omnibus resolution: IAF-MTR 2024
		High-Level Segment		HLS Declaration (Forest-based solutions to the triple planetary threat)
		Partnership Forum		Achieving GFGs on forest, climate change and biodiversity (CPF, NGO, private sector participants)
	July	UNFF20 Bureau	Virtual	UNFF20 preparations

¹¹⁰ Independent assessments were undertaken based on sections A-J in the annex to ECOSOC resolution 2022/17.

Annex 5

Countries and subregional organizations receiving assistance through GFFFN

Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America & Caribbean	Other
Algeria Benin Burundi Botswana Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Comoros Congo Cote-d-Ivoire Ethiopia Guinea Guinea-Bissau Liberia Madagascar Malawi Mozambique Niger Nigeria Senegal South Africa Tanzania Togo Uganda Zimbabwe	Fiji Iran Papua New Guinea Thailand	Dominica Ecuador Jamaica Peru Saint Kitts & Nevis Saint Lucia Suriname	North Macedonia Ukraine Uzbekistan
Sub-regional organizations (5)			
African Union			
Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)			
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)			
Southern African Development Community (SADC)			
The Pacific Community (SPC)			

Annex 6

GFFFN milestones and accomplishments 2015-2024

Year	Milestone/accomplishment
2015	Paragraph 13 of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 upgrades the UNFF Facilitative Process to the GFFFN Upgrades the Facilitative Process to the <u>GFFFN</u> with a clear set of priorities to be set out in the strategic plan 2017-2030, including serving as a clearing house on financing opportunities and a tool for sharing lessons learned.
2017	Paragraph 62 of UNSPF 2017-2030: States that the GFFFN contributes to the scaling up of SFM by facilitating country access to resources to implement the Strategic Plan and achieve its GFGs and targets”; and sets out four Network priorities.
2018	UNFF13 adopts comprehensive “Guidelines for the Operation of the GFFFN of the UNFF”
2019	Completion of a “Generic guide and modular training package” based on experiences gained from GFFFN workshops to assist countries in developing national forest financing strategies. (The guide is broadly applicable while providing room for adaptations and refinements to specific country contexts.)
2021	Launch of Phase I of the GFFFN Clearing House as a “one-stop-shop” for information on forest financing with a new website and three databases on: (1) Financing opportunities; (2) Learning materials related to mobilizing financial resources for forests; and (3) Good practices and lessons learned.
2022	January: 1 st edition of the GFFFN Clearing House Quarterly Highlights – A communications product to disseminate information on forest financing and attract new users to the Clearing House.
2023	Questionnaire circulated to UNFF National Focal Points and regional/subregional partners to gather feedback and suggestions to improve the Clearing House Phase I website, its databases and the quarterly highlights.
2024	<p>As of December 2024, the UNFFS has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported 39 Member States in designing national forest financing strategies¹¹¹ • Supported 5 subregional organizations in designing subregional forest financing strategies • Organized 41 training workshops involving over 1,300 public and private sector stakeholders • Initiated improvements to the Clearing House website and databases based on questionnaire responses <p>Development of a 4th Clearing House database on “Flow of financial resources on forests” is well underway using the UN Unite web platform. The database will help provide data for assessing progress on SDG target 15.b and GFG 4.</p>

¹¹¹ The design process involves inception meetings, analytical studies to establish forest sector baseline information, stakeholder consultations, and capacity building workshops.

Annex 7

MAR timeline and milestones: 2017-2024

2017 (UNFF12)	January: UNFF Special Session adopts the UNSPF 2017-2030 with 6 GFGs and 26 targets
	February: UNFFS organizes EGM (Brasilia) on voluntary national reporting to the UNFF on progress in implementing the new UNSPF 2017-2030.
	May: UNFF12 reviews draft format for reporting on the UNSPF 2017-2030, including UNFI and VNCs, and requests UNFFS to revise the format based on consultations with Members and pilot the revised draft format with interested Members from the five regional groups.
	June-September: Pilot testing exercise on the revised draft reporting format.
2018 (UNFF13)	November: UNFFS organizes EGM (Nairobi) to share experiences gained through the pilot testing exercise and consider how to further improve and streamline the reporting format.
	May: UNFF13 adopts format for 1 st round of post-2015 reporting (results to be reviewed by UNFF15 in 2020) and requests UNFFS to prepare, based on national reports, a concise “flagship” publication on progress towards achieving the GFGs and targets (for release by end of 2021.)
	UNFF13 welcomes progress made by CPF in developing a global core set (GCF) of forest-related indicators aligned with the seven thematic elements of SFM and requests CPF to continue to develop the GCS indicators.
	November: UNFFS organizes EGM (Rome) to further develop the GCS indicators
2019 (UNFF14)	December: GCF endorsed by FAO Council
	October: UNFFS organizes: (1) Capacity-building workshop on voluntary national reporting and (2) Expert workshop (Rome) to review progress on GCF indicators and recommend ways to strengthen the methodology and data availability of selected tier 2 and tier 3 indicators.
2020 (UNFF15)	UNFF15 Bureau creates an Informal Advisory Group (IAG) to provide advice on development and production of the GFG flagship report.
	January: UNFFS has received 50 national reports. Secretariat Note E.CN.18/2020/4 provides a preliminary overview of reporting results by GFG.
2021 (UNFF16)	February-December: UNFFS organizes 3 virtual meetings of the IAG on the GFG flagship report.
	February: UNFFS organizes 4 th virtual meeting of the IAG on the GFG flagship report.
	April: UNFFS launches <i>The Global Forest Goals Report 2021</i> at UNFF16 (full report & overview).
2022 (UNFF17)	December: UNFFS organizes a virtual EGM on lessons learned from the 1 st round of voluntary national reporting on the UNSPF.
	January: UNFFS circulates 2 surveys to all Members to gather feedback on: (1) 1 st round of reporting and possible reasons for not submitting a report; and (2) usefulness and impact of the GFG flagship report.
	May: UNFF17 requests UNFFS to amend the reporting format, taking into account suggestions from Members, and conduct a pilot phase on using the amended format.
	May: UNFFS re-launches <i>The Global Forest Goals Report 2021</i> at 15 th World Forestry Congress
2023 (UNFF18)	As of December: There had been 3,215 downloads of the GFG flagship report.
	March: UNFFS and FAO organize the Global Workshop on Reporting on the GFGs and targets (Rome)
	June: UNFFS organizes EGM (Nairobi) on GFFFN and implementation of the UNSPF, during which UNFFS presents the proposed timeline for round 2 reporting aligned with FRA 2025 and recommends creation of an IAG on reporting.
2024 (UNFF19)	November: Co-Chairs Summary of the AHEG on the IAF-MTR (Vienna) recommends UNFF19 endorse the timeline for round 2 reporting and establish a reporting Advisory Group.
	May: UNFF19 endorses the timeline for round 2 reporting and establishes an Advisory Group to help UNFFS refine the round 2 reporting format.

Annex 8

Forum inputs to the HLPF organized and facilitated by UNFFS

HLPF 2016 (July 2016)	
May 2016	No UNFF session. UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF12 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2016
HLPF 2017 (July 2017)	
May 2017 (UNFF12)	UNFFS organizes panel discussions at UNFF12 on linkages between forests and SDGs 1, 2, 5, 17 under review by HLPF 2017
	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF12 Chair's summary of UNFF inputs to HLPF 2017
HLPF 2018 (July 2018) – 1st review of SDG15	
September 2017	In preparation for UNFF13 (Policy session), UNFFS commissions 3 analytical studies on the linkages between forests and SDGs 6, 7 & 12 (under review by HLPF 2018) as well as a study on ecosystem services
May 2018 (UNFF13)	UNFFS organizes panel discussions at UNFF13 on linkages between forests and SDGs 6, 7, 12
	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of the UNFF13 Chair's summary of UNFF inputs to HLPF 2018
	Resolution 13/1 (paragraph 28) invites HLPF 2018 to recognize implementing UNSPF and achieving the GFGs and targets as an effective means to accelerate the SDGs and targets
July 2018	UNFFS organizes the forest session of the "EGM on SDG15: Progress and prospects"
July 2018	UNFFS organizes a one-day UNFF Bureau event in conjunction with HLPF 2018 on "Forest-based transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies"
HLPF 2019 (July 2019)	
March 2019	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF14 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2019
May 2019 (UNFF14)	In preparation for UNFF14 (Technical session), UNFFS commissions 3 analytical studies on the linkages between forests and SDGs 8, 13 & 16 (to be reviewed by HLPF 2019) as well as a study on ecosystem services
	UNFFS organizes panel discussions at UNFF14 on linkages between forests and SDGs 8, 13, 16
	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of the UNFF14 Chair's summary of UNFF inputs to HLPF 2019
July 2019	UNFFS facilitates the UNFF15 Chair's participation in the HLPF ministerial segment. Paragraph 34 of the ECOSOC President's summary includes a strong statement on role of forests in combatting climate change.
HLPF 2020 (July 2020, virtual)	
March 2020	Secretariat Note on UNSPF implementation reviews the "contribution of the Forum to, and its impact on, the HLPF" since 2017 (E/CN.18/2020/2)
	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF14 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2020
May 2020 (UNFF15)	UNFF15 (Policy session) convenes virtually and adopts its work programme for 2021. Item 2.c includes "interlinkages between GFGs and targets and SDGs under review by HLPF 2021.
July 2020	UNFFS facilitates the UNFF16 Chair's participation in a thematic session of HLPF 2020 on "Protecting the planet and Building resilience"
HLPF 2021 (July 2021, hybrid)	
Feb 2021	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF16 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2021
May 2021 (UNFF16)	UNFF16 adopts the Forum's work programme for 2022-2024. Items 2.c or 2.b for each year includes "interlinkages between GFGs and targets and SDGs under review by HLPF"

HLPF 2022 (July 2022, hybrid) – 2nd review of SDG15	
Feb 2022	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF17 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2022
May 2022 (UNFF17)	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF17 Chair's summary of UNFF inputs to HLPF 2022
	UNFFS, DESA/DSDG, UNEP, CBD and FAO jointly organize a virtual EGM on taking stock of progress towards SDG15
July 2022	UNFFS and FAO jointly organize a CPF side event during HLPF 2022 on the "Role of forests in time of crisis -- sustainable production and consumption patterns to turn the tide on deforestation"
HLPF 2023 (July 2023)	
Feb 2023	UNFFS facilitates the preparation and transmission of UNFF18 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2023
April 2023	UNFFS organizes UNFF18 Bureau event on "Building on the nexus of forests, energy and livelihoods to accelerate achievement of the SDGs", in the run up to the SDG Summit in September 2023
HLPF 2024 (July 2024)	
Feb 2024	UNFFS facilitates preparation and transmission of UNFF19 Bureau inputs to HLPF 2024
May 2024 (UNFF19)	UNFF19 omnibus resolution on the IAF-MTR (paragraphs 19-23) includes actions related to the contribution of UNFF to the 2030 Agenda
	Ministerial Declaration (OP 2.b) commits "... to unlock the full potential of forests to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda"

Annex 9

UNFFS publications and other C&O products since May 2015

Year	Publication/product
2015	Fact sheet on UNFF11 outcome (ECOSOC resolution 2015/33: IAF beyond 2015)
2018	Brochures on: UNSPF 2030, UNFI, VNCs, and GFFFN
2019	Booklet - GFGs of the UNSPF 2030
	UNFF14 Issue Brief #1: Forests and climate change (SDG13)
	UNFF14 Issue Brief #2: Forests, inclusive economic growth and employment (SDG8);
	UNFF14 Issue Brief #3: Forests, peaceful and inclusive societies, reduced inequality and inclusive institutions at all levels (SDG10 & SDG)
2020	Training Package for National Forest Financing Strategies: Generic guide and modular training package to assist countries in developing national forest financing strategies
	Policy Brief - Developing National Action Plans (NAPs) for Implementing SFM
2020	DESA Policy brief #80 - Forests: At the heart of a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic
	DESA Policy brief #88 - Financing SFM: A key component of sustainable COVID-19 recovery
2021	Global Forest Goals Report 2021 – Flagship publication
	Global Forest Goals Report 2021 – An overview of Progress
2022	DESA Policy Brief #111: Wildfires – a growing concern for sustainable development
	Fact Sheet: Forest Heroes Programme and Awards
	UNFF Policy Brief: UNFF18 Thematic Priority #1 (GFG2)
	UNFF Policy Brief: UNFF18 Thematic Priority #2 (GFG3)
2023	UNFF Clearinghouse on Forest Financing - Quarterly Highlights No. 1, 2, 3, 4
	UNFF Clearinghouse on Forest Financing - Quarterly Highlights No. 5, 6, 7
2024	UNFF Clearinghouse on Forest Financing - Quarterly Highlights No. 8
	UNFF Updates (monthly bulletin): October, November (including frequent interim updates on activities at the Forest Pavilion during UNFCCC COP29) and December
	CBD-UNFF Joint Information Note entitled: “Towards a Coherent Forest Agenda”, issued at CBD COP 16 (October)
	“The Forest Factor: The role of protection, conservation and sustainable management of forests for the implementation of the KMGBF”, prepared jointly by CBD, FAO and UNFF
2016-2024	IDF UNHQ high-level events: Concept notes and multiple press releases
2015-2024	50+ press releases on deliberations/outcomes of UNFF sessions and other newsworthy forest-related items

Annex 10

Enhanced UNFFS collaboration and engagement with Forum partners: 2017-2024

Year	MOUs & Joint Initiatives	Objective
2017	UNCCD-UNFF MOU: 2017-2021	Identify, develop and implement targeted joint activities on SFM and sustainable land management, including in support of SDG15.3
2023	UNCCD-UNFF MOU: 2023-2026	Promote targeted activities to advance SFM/GFGs and sustainable land management through projects, partnerships and awareness raising
	UNFF-ITTO Joint Initiative: 2024-2027	Support countries to restore, maintain and sustainably manage tropical forests while promoting sustainable production of timber, non-wood forest products and ecosystem services
	CBD-UNFF Joint Initiative: 2024-2030	Foster collaborative activities to advance the GFGs and KMGBF, including by aligning national forest-related plans/programmes and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
Examples of other UNFFS collaborative/engagement activities since UNFF11		
2017-2023	Co-organized with China's State Academy of Forestry and Grassland five regional seminars on implementation of the UNFI	
2018	Facilitated and supported the development of the Major Group Work Plan on supporting the UNSPF under the Forum's 4POW 2017-2020	
2019	Co-organized the Asia-Pacific Forestry Week (Songdo, Korea) with FAO and the Korean Forest Service and co-organized a side event with FAO and GCF on "Sustainable finance for efficient and effective forest governance"	
2019	Co-organized with Suriname, UNDP and DESA (DSDG and FSDO) an international conference on climate finance for developing countries with high forest cover and low deforestation rates	
2022	During COFO 26, initiated engagement with FAO's Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-Based Industries on areas of collaboration to enhance private sector engagement in SFM	
	Initiated engagement with The Forest Dialogue on mobilizing private sector investments in restoration of degraded forests	
	Co-organized with the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization a hybrid session on strengthening resource mobilization for SFM and forest restoration during the 2 nd Global Bamboo and Rattan Congress	
2023	Facilitated the country-led initiative hosted by India on forest fires/wildfires and forest certification and SFM (26-28 October, Dehradun, India)	
	Launched with the African Forest Forum a joint initiative aimed at developing and implementing targeted joint activities on sustainable land and forest management in Africa.	
2024	Co-organized and facilitated the MG-led Initiative in Support of UNFF (4-6 March, Nairobi) which formulated "key messages to UNFF19", adopted the "Nairobi Declaration 2024: A Global Call for Stronger Forest Commitment", and agreed on draft terms of reference for a new self-organized stakeholder platform: "IAF MGs Internal Coordination Mechanism"	
	Co-organized with the CBD Secretariat "Forests and Water Day" at CBD COP16 (25 October)	
	Initiated discussions with the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization and Korean Forest Service on opportunities for collaboration focused on the private sector	
	Launched the "Forest Pavilion" at UNFCCC COP29 (11-22 November, Baku) with multiple public and private partners, and co-sponsored the COP29 President's high-level event on "Forests for Climate, Nature and People: Harnessing Climate Finance for Forests"	

Annex 11

CPF Milestones since 2015:

Enhanced policy, advocacy and project initiatives facilitated/supported by UNFFS

Year	CPF policy, advocacy and project initiatives
2016-2024	Multiple CPF Joint Initiatives were ongoing or launched during this period
2017	1 st CPF Work Plan 2017-2020 adopted in support of the UNFF 4POW 2017-2020 (CPF work plan updated annually)
	CPF "Policy Document" approved formalizing CPF working modalities and procedures for its effective functioning and operation (includes CPF mission, functions, membership and delivery mechanisms and sets out Rules of Procedure in the annex
	CPF-GEF project approved: "Fostering partnerships to build coherence and support for forest landscape and ecosystem restoration" (\$1,347,000)
2018	CPF International Conference: "Working across sectors to halt deforestation and increase forest area: from aspiration to action" (February 2018, Rome)
	CPF presents the draft Global Core Set of Forest-Related Indicators to UNFF13
	CITES becomes the 15 th member of the CPF
2019	Update of the CPF Policy Document's annex on Rules of Procedure
	CPF Leadership Discussion on Halting Deforestation convened during UNFCCC COP25 (December 2019, Madrid)
	CPF Event "Realizing Forest-based Climate Actions: GFGs, SDGs and the Paris Agreement" convened during UNFCCC COP25
2020	"CPF Strategic Vision towards 2030" approved (January 2020)
	Launch of the "CPF Partnership Dialogue" as part of the High-Level Segment at UNFF15
	2 nd CPF Work Plan 2021-2024 adopted in support of the UNFF 4POW 2021-2024 (CPF work plan updated annually)
	Report of the CPF Global Expert Panel on Forests and Poverty presented during the 75 th GA (September 2020)
2021	CPF High-Level Dialogue on "Upscaling Actions to Turn the Tide on Deforestation" convened during UNFCCC COP 26 (November 2021, Glasgow)
	CPF Joint Statement on "Challenges and Opportunities in Turning the Tide on Deforestation" released at UNFF16 (April 2021)
2022	CPF-CITES Joint Statement "Forest solutions at the heart of COVID-19 recovery strategies" (October 2022)
	CPF High-Level Dialogue on "Turning the Tide on Deforestation" convened during UNFCCC COP 27 (November 2022, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt)
2023	OLI on the Assessment of CPF, part of the IAF-MTR (February 2023, Rome)
	"CPF Joint Call to Action for Forests towards 2030", delivered at SDG Summit (September 2023, New York)
	Green Climate Fund becomes the 16 th member of CPF (February 2023)
	CPF Events at UNFCCC COP28 (December 2023, Dubai): (1) "Climate and Canopy: Amplifying Action for SDG13 & 15"; (2) High-level Dialogue: "Forests for Our Common Future: Halting and Reversing Deforestation by 2030"; (3) "Beyond carbon – Realizing Untapped Potential of Forests to Combat Climate Change"
2024	CPF side event at UNFF19 on the need to strengthen conservation of primary forests
	CPF events organized at the Forest Pavilion, UNFCCC COP29 (November 2024, Baku)
	CPF Work Plan 2025-2028 aligned with UNFF 4POW 2025-2028 (under development)

Annex 12

UNFF/ECOSOC invitations and requests to CPF: 2015-2022¹¹²

Year	UNFF/ECOSOC resolution – Invitation by paragraph	CPF Focus
2015	ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 encourages CPF to:	
	22.a. Strengthen CPF by formalizing its working modalities, including through consideration of a multilateral MOU and by developing procedures for its effective functioning and operation.	Internal workings
	22.b. Identify ways to stimulate broader participation by existing member organizations in CPF activities.	
	22.c. Assess its membership and the potential added value of additional members with significant forest-related expertise.	
	22.d. Identify ways to actively involve MGs and other stakeholders in CPF activities	MGs
	22.e. Develop a work plan, aligned with the strategic plan referred to in section XI to identify priorities for collective actions by all CPF members or subsets of members and the resource implications of such actions.	Work plan
	22.f. Prepare periodic reports on CPF activities, achievements and resource allocations suitable for a wide range of audiences, including potential donors.	CPF reporting
	22.g. Further develop and expand its thematic joint initiatives (JIs), taking into account the strengths and focuses of CPF members.	CPF JIs
2017	UNFF resolution 12/1 invites CPF to:	
	2. Present its proposal on the GCS of forest-related indicators for consideration by UNFF13.	MAR
	14. Take into account inputs from Forum members on the draft workplan in preparation for its meeting in September 2017, and present its workplan to UNFF13.	Work plan
	15. Consider expanding its membership to include intergovernmental partners at the international level that have expressed interest in joining CPF.	Membership
2018	UNFF resolution 13/1 invites/requests CPF to:	
	13. Continue to develop the remaining GCS of forest-related indicators and report on progress in that regard at UNFF14.	MAR
	21. Report progress in implementing its work plan at UNFF14 and 15.	Work plan
	32. Undertake initiatives to accelerate the contribution of forests to achieving the SDGs under review in 2019 and inform UNFF14 of progress made.	HLPF
2020	UNFF15 omnibus resolution invites CPF to:	
	9. Further advance its work on the GCS of forest-related indicators and report to UNFF16.	MAR
	12. Strengthen its joint initiative on forest finance facilitation in the context of its work plans, in particular in support of the GFFFN Clearing House.	GFFFN
	15. Develop its work plan for 2021-2024 in line with Forum's 4POW 2021-2024 and report progress to the Forum annually.	Work plan
2022	UNFF17 omnibus resolution invites CPF to:	
	2. Continue to strengthen its collaboration with the Forum and its support to the work of the Forum and its members in implementing the Forum's 4POW and the UNSPF.	UNFF support
	16. Consider seconding staff to UNFFS to enhance the capacity of the GFFFN with a view to providing adequate and timely support to Forum Members and to scale up support to the activities of the Network.	GFFFN

¹¹² UNFF14 (2019), UNFF16 (2021) and UNFF18 (2023) were technical sessions with no resolutions or direct invitations/requests to CPF.

Annex 13
Contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund: 2015-2024

Donor	Contributions to UNFF Trust Fund (US\$000)									Totals
	2015-2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Australia				52			143			195
Canada									185	185
China	402	341	198	258	315		315	287	198	2,314
Finland	543		63							606
Germany				684	223			243	154	1,304
Japan	53	66								120
Netherlands	53									53
ROK	20	20	21	19	18	20	17	17	16	168
Russia	401	347	102	68	18					936
Slovakia				22						22
Spain									21	21
Switzerland	50			405			101			556
USA	600	400	300		600	300	400	400	350	3,350
IUCN-GEF				67						67
ITTO									2	2
AFoCO									60	60
ICFPA									25	25
ISFC									25	25
Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation									10	10
Totals	2,122	1,174	684	1,575	1,174	320	976	947	1,046	10,018
XB staff supported	1 P4 3 P3 2 GS	1 P3 1 GS	1 P3	1 P3 1 P2	2 P3 1 GS	2 P3	1 P3	1 P3	1 P3 1 P3-TJO	

Notes:

- (1) **Sources:** Secretariats Notes on the UNFF Trust 2015-2024 (Documents E/CN.18/2017/6, 2018/7, 2019/7, 2020/7, 2021/6, 2022/6 and 2023/7).
- (2) Secretariat Notes for 2015-2018 indicate earmarked contributions as follows: China for GFFFN and IAF activities; Finland and Netherlands for travel of country representatives and IAF; Japan for MAR and IAF; Switzerland for travel of country representatives; and Korea for IAF (earmark for 2015-16 only).
- (3) Secretariat Notes for 2019-2024 contain no information on earmarked versus unearmarked contributions.
- (4) In 2022 and 2023, one of the two XB-P3 staff was temporarily transferred to a vacated RB-P3 post while the incumbent took a leave-of-absence to work with the GCF Secretariat. The transfer to the GCF became permanent in September 2024.
- (5) From 2016 to 2019, there were two funded JPOs within UNFFS: One funded by Japan (2016-2018), and one funded by China (2017-2019).

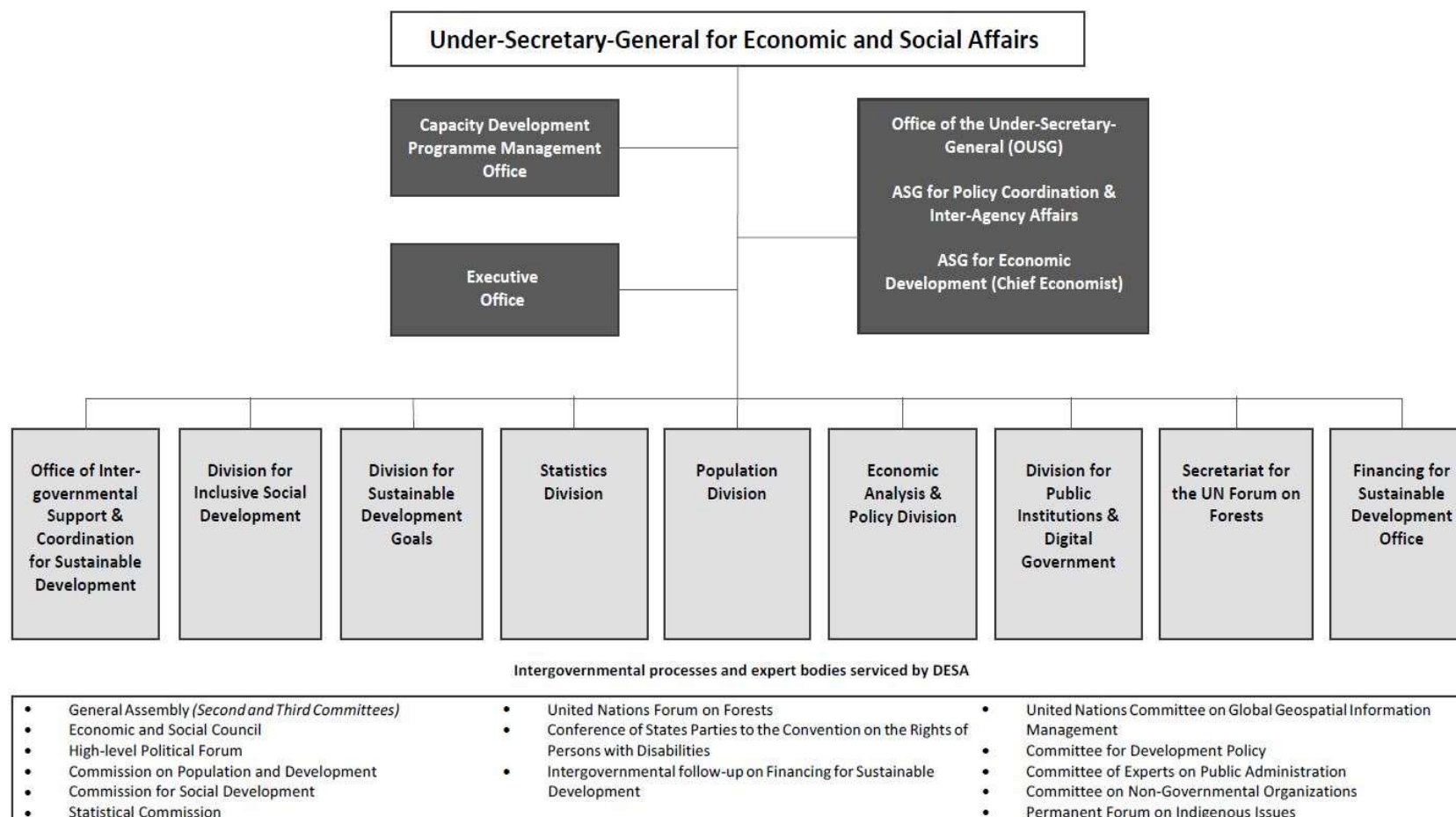
(6) The P3-TJO hired in August 2024 is handling both C&O issues and website upgrades on six-month contracts supported by contributions from Germany to the UNFF Trust Fund in 2023 and 2024. At the time of this writing, the current contract is expected to be extended for another 6 months using XB resources.

(7) In 2024, the contributions from the Republic of Korea (ROK), Spain and USA were unearmarked. All other contributions were earmarked as follows:

- Canada for MAR and C&O.
- China for GFFFN and the UNFCCC COP29 Forest Pavilion.
- Germany for the current MG Initiative in support of UNFF and the six-month P3-TJO contract on C&O.
- ITTO, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, and ISFC (International Sustainability Forestry Coalition) for the UNFCCC COP29 Forest Pavilion..
- AFoCO (Asian Forest Cooperation Organization) and ICFPA (international Council of Forest & Paper Associations) for the Forest Pavilions at UNFCCC COP29 and COP30.

July 2019

DESA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Notes: The Secretariat for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is housed within the Division for Inclusive Social Development. The DESA Strategic Planning and Communications Service was created after 2019 and is not shown in this organigramme.

Annex 14

Annex 15

Outline of the UN Proposed Programme Budget for 2024¹¹³ (14 parts, 36 sections, 27 programmes)

Foreward and introduction

Plan outline

Income Section 1, Income from staff assessment

Income Section 2, General income

Income Section 3, Services to the public

PART I. Overall policy/making, direction and coordination (Section 1, Section 2/Programme 1)

PART II. Political affairs (Sections 3-6/Programmes 2-5)

PART III. International justice and law (Section 7 and Section 8/Programme 6)

PART IV. International cooperation and development (Sections 9-17/Programmes 7-14)

- Section 9/Programme 7: “Economic and social affairs” (includes 9 DESA-managed subprogrammes)

PART V. Regional cooperation and development

- Sections 18-22/Programmes 15-19: Five regional commissions
- Section 23: Regular programme for technical cooperation (RPTC). DESA is one of 11 implementing entities.

PART VI. Human rights and humanitarian affairs (Sections 24-27/Programmes 20-23)

PART VII. Global communications (Section 28/Programme 24)

PART VIII. Common support services (Section 29/Programme 25)

PART IX. Internal oversight (Section 30/Programme 26)

PART X. Jointly financed administrative activities and special services (Section 31/Programme 27 and Section 32)

PART XI. Capital expenditures (Section 33)

PART XII. Safety and security (Section 34)

PART XIII. Development account (Section 35)

- DESA is one of 10 implementing entities

PART XIV. Staff assessment (Section 36)

¹¹³ This is a typical UN Programme Budget outline, although slight variations may occur from year-to-year. In December 2023, the GA approved US\$3.6 billion for the 2024 UN regular budget.

Annex 16

ECOSOC subsidiary bodies¹¹⁴

Functional commissions	Established	Members	Term
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	1946	54	4 years
Commission on Population and Development	1946	47	4 years
Commission on Social Development	1946	46	4 years
Statistical Commission	1946	24	4 years
Commission on the Status of Women	1946	15	3 years
Commission on Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice	1992	40	3 years
Commission on Science & Technology for Development	1992	43	4 years
UNFF	2000	Universal (193)	NA
Standing Committees			
Committee on Programme & Coordination (CPC)	1962	34	3 years
Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations	1946	19	4 years
Expert bodies composed of government experts			
Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals			
Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting & Reporting			
UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names			
Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management			
Expert bodies composed of members serving in their personal capacity			
Committee for Development Policy			
Committee of Experts on Public Administration			
Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters			
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights			
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues			
Other related bodies			
International Narcotics Control Board			
Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS			
UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UN Nutrition)			
Committee for the UN Population Award			
Ad Hoc body			
Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti			
Regional economic commissions (year established)			
Economic Commission for Africa (1958)			
Economic Commission for Europe (1947)			
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (1948)			
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (1947)			
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (1973)			

¹¹⁴ <https://ecosoc.un.org/en/about-us/ecosoc-subsidary-bodies>

Annex 17
ECOSOC calendar: July 2023 - July 2024

2023	ECOSOC sessions	UNFFS involved
July	Organizational session on ECOSOC's work programme: July 2023-July 2024	
October	Joint meeting of the GA 2 nd Committee and ECOSOC on "Leveraging Commodities for Sustainable Economic Development"	
2024		
January	Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	
	Special ECOSOC meeting on the "Future of Work" (in preparation for the "Summit of the Future" to be held September 2024 to forge a new "Pact for the Future" on sustainable development, peace and security, science and technology, youth and global governance)	
	Partnership Forum	
	Coordination Segment ¹¹⁵ (during which ECOSOC takes up coordination matters arising from its subsidiary bodies and UN programmes, funds and specialized agencies in the economic, social and environmental fields)	✓
March	ECOSOC Special Meeting on International Cooperation in Tax Matters	
April	Dedicated Management Meetings (during which ECOSOC, among other things, holds elections to fill vacancies in its subsidiary and related bodies)	✓
	Youth Forum	
	Forum on Financing for Development Follow-up (will inform the 4 th International Conference for Financing for Development to be held in 2025)	✓
May	ECOSOC Special Meeting on "Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for the SDGs"	
	Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs	✓
	Operational Activities for Development Segment	
June	Meeting of the Management Segment ¹¹⁶ (to discuss integrating key messages from ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and the UN system to the upcoming HLPF session)	✓
	Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development	
	Humanitarian Affairs Segment	
July	HLPF 2024 (in-depth reviews of SDG 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17)	✓
	ECOSOC High-Level Segment, including 3-day ministerial segment of HLPF under ECOSOC auspices	✓
	Meeting of the Management Segment (to discuss follow up to the HLPF session by ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and the UN system)	✓
	Organizational Session on ECOSOC's programme of work: July 2024-July 2025	

¹¹⁵ GA resolution 72/290A established the ECOSOC "Coordination Segment" to replace the "Integration Segment" (established by GA resolution 68/1) and the informal ECOSOC Meeting with the Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies.

¹¹⁶ Formerly known as the "Coordination and Management Meeting" (renamed by GA resolution 72/305).

Annex 18

Goals set out in the UN Strategic Framework for Multilingualism

Goal 1. The United Nations as a genuinely multilingual organization

The UN is perceived as a genuinely multilingual organization, both by its external clients and stakeholders and its staff. The characteristics of multilingualism at the UN are:

- Client orientation regarding communication needs as the key driver of workflows, especially in field operations
- The language skills of staff used as a tool and asset for the effective delivery of mandates in a linguistically diverse world
- Equal standing of the official languages reflected in the Organization's external communications and its organizational branding strategy
- Equal standing of the Secretariat's working languages reflected in access to opportunities and the internal functioning of the Organization, with due regard to operational needs

Goal 2. The United Nations as an effective multilingual workplace

The UN recognizes the implications of language diversity across the globe, the linguistic contexts in which it operates and the linguistic backgrounds and language skills of its staff. It values these dimensions of diversity as an opportunity to implement its missions effectively and efficiently at the global and local levels. While job requirements determine the language skills needed in each position, the Organization seeks to leverage the diverse language skills of its staff, including by matching them with its operational language needs, so as to enable:

- The incorporation of diverse viewpoints, through a wide range of sources, in workflows, policies and operations
- The implementation of the Organization's global and local mandates, now and in the future
- The equal treatment of all current and prospective staff regardless of their linguistic backgrounds

Goal 3. The United Nations as a linguistically accountable organization

Secretariat-wide policies are evaluated through quantitative indicators that are based on accurate and standardized empirical data, and through specific procedures to address issues. Accordingly:

- Standard indicators of language requirements, staff language skills and language learning are established, and data are collected and compiled at the entity level
- Periodic reports are produced on: (a) Language requirements in job openings (in line with the levels identified in the UN Language Framework and including both required and desirable languages, where applicable); (b) Staff language skills; and (c) Language learning, including changes in language learning demand and progress in language learning supply
- Workforce diversity policies, such as those aimed at achieving gender and geographical representation goals, addressing racism and promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities, take into account language-related challenges and opportunities

Annex 19

Minimum standards of multilingualism for UN websites¹¹⁷

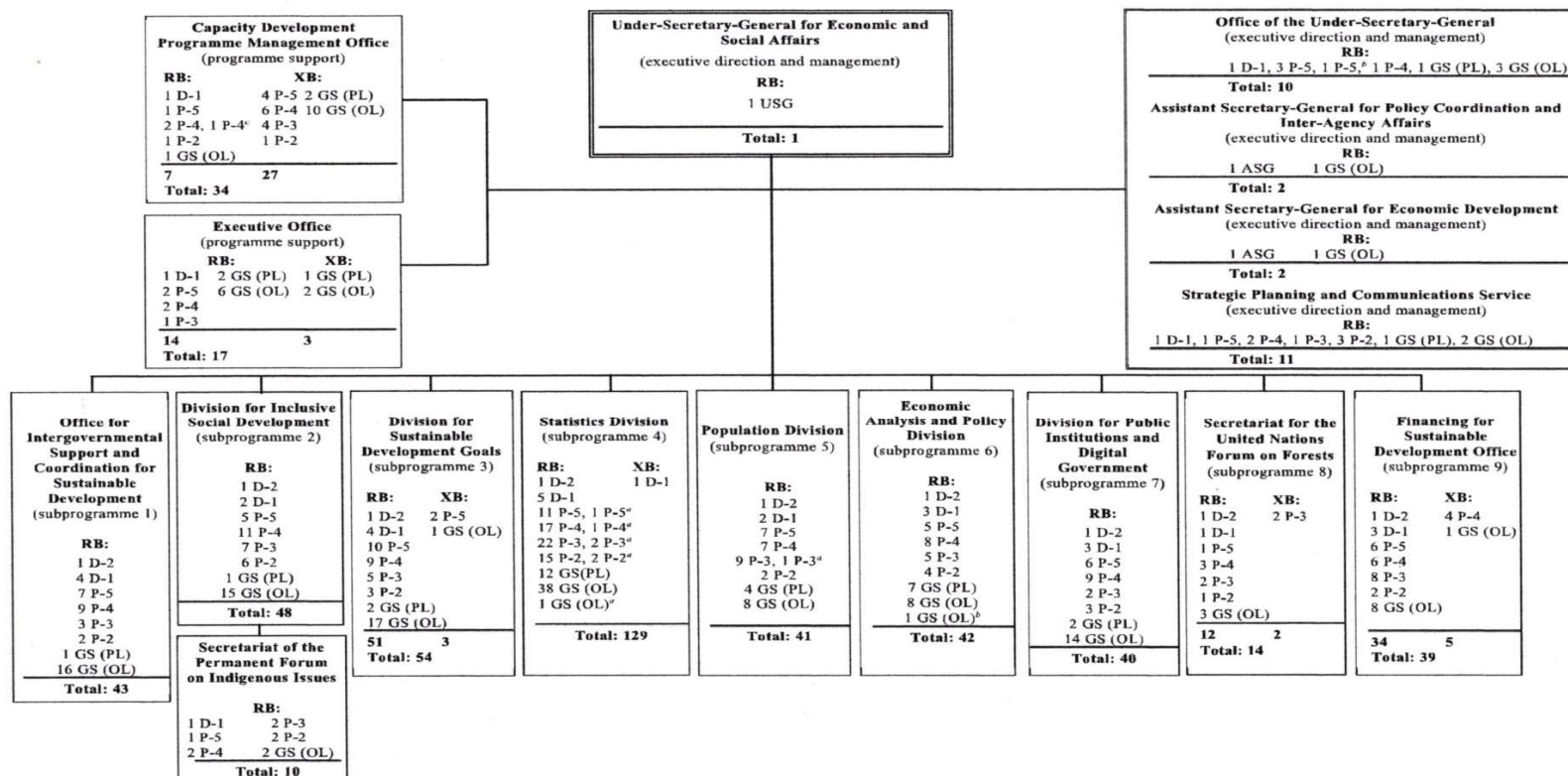
1. Multilingualism should be incorporated from the very beginning of any website project and should not be considered a mere translation exercise.
2. Content authoring offices must ensure that content on their website is made available in all six of the Organization's official languages — Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.
3. A language bar should be used in order to allow the user to switch between language versions of the same site. The order of the 6 official UN languages bar should be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish in their native form as (عربي 中文 English Français Русский Español).
4. Pages cannot jumble up languages or contain news, Twitter, RSS or any other feed content tools in languages other than the one selected in the language bar.
5. Links to content that is not in the official language selected in the language bar should indicate the language of the target content. Those links should be kept to a minimum, so the page does not become a mere skeleton.
6. The use of acronyms in the banner or logo is not recommended. Many acronyms exist only in English.
7. Banners and logos should not contain letters as a design element, nor should design elements be used as letters since they are difficult to adapt across languages.
8. Translations should adhere to the highest grammatical standards of the official languages. Automatic translations or translations made by persons with only some knowledge of the language should be avoided. UNTERM (United Nations Multilingual Terminology Database) should be used as the standard for UN terminology. Acronyms can also be found in the UNTERM database.
9. Footers and disclaimers should be in the official language selected in the language bar.
10. Contact pages and queries should be directed to the substantive offices and indicate the language(s) in which they operate.
11. All static content such as About Us, Background, Bios, Directory, Our Work, and Goals of the Organization should be available in the six languages.
12. Pages should have a back-link to un.org in the respective language.

¹¹⁷ As set by the Department of Global Communications and contained in the UN Strategic Framework for Multilingualism (2024).

Annex 20

Annex I

Organizational structure and post distribution for 2024



Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); GS (PL), General Service (Principal level); RB, regular budget; USG, Under-Secretary-General; XB, extrabudgetary.

^a New.

^b Reassignment.

^c Conversion.

Annex 21

Section I of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15: Requests to UNFFS

B.2. -- Requests UNFFS to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Submit an <u>information paper</u> on its workload, needs, and gaps in advance of UNFF20 in 2025 for final consideration at UNFF21 in 2026. b. Continue to use a <u>hybrid/virtual format</u> when possible to share information with Forum Members, CPF members, regional/ subregional partners, and MGs and other stakeholders and brief them on intersessional preparations for Forum sessions. c. Facilitate <u>greater cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies</u> and engage technical and financial organizations and other international cooperation mechanisms to enhance implementation of SFM and the contribution of forests to address climate change, desertification, land degradation, biodiversity loss, pollution, water scarcity, poverty, and food insecurity, among others. d. Improve and regularly share information with UNFF National Focal Points and Permanent Missions in New York, through effective <u>communication tools</u>, to inform them on its activities and raise awareness on the multiple economic, social, and environmental values and benefits of forests. e. Share information with UNFF members and partners about changes, accomplishments and challenges affecting <u>implementation of the UNSPF</u> and achievement of the GFGs. f. Maximize participation, efficiency and value of <u>UNFF sessions</u> and other meetings by effective allocation of time, resources, facilitation and agenda development, including use of innovative approaches. g. <u>Report to the Forum</u> at each session on progress made on actions UNFFS has been requested to undertake.
D.10 (GFFFN) -- Requests UNFFS to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to update and maintain the GFFFN <u>Clearing House website</u> and publicize the Forest Financing <u>Quarterly Highlights</u> more widely and prominently on the UNFF website. b. Make use of <u>digital tools and innovative technologies</u>, including artificial intelligence, to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of GFFFN activities when feasible. c. <u>Support Forum Members, upon request</u>, in mobilizing, gaining access to and enhancing the effective use of existing financial resources from all sources for SFM to enhance achievement of the GFGs and targets, in line with national forest priorities. d. With a view to informing the Forum at each session on the role, functions and funding of the proposed <u>GFFFN office in Beijing</u>, provide comprehensive written updates on the abovementioned items.
F.17 (UNSPF/MAR) -- Requests UNFFS to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Disseminate relevant information among members regarding preparation <u>of VNRs</u> in a timely manner. b. Consult with the <u>Informal Advisory Group on reporting</u> to make use of information received in the next reporting cycle on the transparent development of a short, concise GFG Report in close consultation with CPF member organizations, <u>within existing resources</u>.¹¹⁸ c. <u>Within existing resources, conduct capacity building activities</u> jointly with FAO and other partners on facilitating the exchange of information related to monitoring, assessment, reporting on GFGs and provide assistance in preparing national reports, and innovative techniques, technology and knowledge

¹¹⁸ As noted in Annex 3, the phrase “within existing resources” is used in ECOSOC resolution 2024/15 to qualify certain action requests to UNFFS. Again, it is unclear whether this refers to existing RB resources only or also to XB resources, which vary from year to year. It would be useful to clarify this in future.

management, utilizing virtual and hybrid means where feasible.
G.21 (2030 Agenda) -- Requests UNFFS to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assist and <u>facilitate the UNFF Bureau</u> and Forum members with respect to paragraph 20 above.¹¹⁹ b. Continue to include in the documentation for UNFF sessions a brief analysis of the extent to which UNFF inputs were reflected in the previous year's HLPF declaration. c. Engage early on with the UNFF focal points of members conducting HLPF VNRs in a given year to encourage and highlight of SDG interlinkages. d. Enhance <u>collaboration with DESA/OISC</u> and the secretariats of the <u>UN regional economic commissions</u> to inform forest-related intergovernmental inputs to the HLPF, including for their regional forums on sustainable development and regional VNR workshops. e. Enhance collaboration on achieving the SDGs with the secretariats of the <u>Rio conventions</u> and other relevant bodies and conventions on forest-related issues of mutual interest, in line with respective mandates. f. Prepare a concise report and/or <u>targeted communication products</u> suitable for a variety of audiences to highlight the contributions of forests to the SDGs under review each year, their interlinkages, especially with SDG15, and the critical importance of achieving target 15.b to fully realize these contributions, drawing on the FRA, the GFG Report and relevant scientific studies.
H.25 (C&O Strategy) -- Requests UNFFS to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengthen cost-effective use of available resources and existing and emerging communication options, including innovative and interactive methods, such as <u>collaborations with influencers, surveys and contests</u>. b. Upgrade the structure and content of the UNFF website <u>within existing resources</u>. c. Develop a <u>C&O plan to set out its proposed short-term and medium-term activities</u> in support of implementing the UNSPF C&O Strategy-related objectives, messages, and communication channels for different audiences, together with metrics for monitoring and evaluation, and share this directly with members for inputs. d. Develop, with CPF support, short, <u>sharp policy briefs</u> on the Forum's thematic priorities and continue its GFG report to highlight the benefits that forests and trees outside of forests bring for other global priorities and to raise awareness in sectors beyond forestry and among high-level decision makers. e. Make greater use of its convening power to <u>widen participation in the Forum's high-level round tables</u> to strengthen engagement beyond the forest sector. f. Prominently <u>post the UNFF Bureau's annual key messages</u> to HLPF on the UNFF home page and provide accompanying infographics and other relevant communication products. g. Develop <u>communication products</u> to raise awareness on the multiple social, economic and environmental values and benefits of forests in a balanced and integrated manner and on the important role of <u>Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women</u> and girls and people in vulnerable situations. h. Raise the visibility of the <u>GFGs</u> by exploring development of <u>short, memorable titles</u>, in consultation with UNFF members, in a fully transparent and inclusive manner, for each of the six GFGs similar to those used for the SDGs icons. i. In coordination with CPF members and their existing educational and youth-oriented programmes, promote <u>educational and youth outreach activities</u>, both formal and informal, to help younger generations understand

¹¹⁹ Paragraph G.20 invites the UNFF Bureau, supported by UNFFS, to: (a) Continue to provide timely inputs to the HLPF and ensure the inputs are concise, targeted and actionable in the form of "key messages"; (b) work closely with UNFF National Focal Points and Permanent Missions in New York to help ensure UNFF key messages are well-reflected in HLPF declarations; and (c) engage with Forum members, MGs and other stakeholders to take into account their views on inputs to the HLPF.

<p>the multiple social, economic, and environmental values and benefits of forests and trees outside forests and learn about the UNSPF and its GFGs.</p> <p>j. Strengthen advocacy, for example by widening <u>participation in the Forum's high-level round tables</u> and other actions that help high-level decision-makers and senior government officials to understand better the contribution that forests and trees can make towards achieving wider policy goals.</p>
<p>1 request to UNFFS related regional/subregional partners (paragraph I.34):</p>
<p>34. <u>Continue collaboration</u> with regional and subregional partners to better understand the needs of countries in those regions and identify actions to address related gaps and problems.</p>
<p>4 requests to UNFFS related to MGs and other stakeholders (paragraph J.35):¹²⁰</p>
<p>a. Promote the engagement of MGs and other stakeholders in the work of the Forum.</p> <p>b. Use UNFF sessions as <u>a platform to exchange ideas</u> and best practices on how stakeholders could better capture action opportunities from forest-related instruments, processes, commitments and goals and track the progress therein.</p> <p>c. <u>Support countries with collecting data</u> on best practices promoted by Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth on the implementation of the UNSPF, including tree planting in line with SFM principles and ecosystem restoration.</p> <p>d. Consider organizing a <u>capacity building workshop</u>, subject to funding availability, on fundraising for MGs and other stakeholders to implement the UNSPF and achieve the GFGs, ensuring equitable geographic representation.</p>

¹²⁰ The chapeau to paragraph 35 begins "Invites the Forum, the UNFF Secretariat, and the UNFF Bureau to:" It is customary for a governing body to "request", rather than "invite", its Secretariat to undertake a task.

Annex 22

Section I of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15: Invitations to CPF and its member organizations

C.4 -- Invites CPF and its member organizations to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies, including through <u>streamlining reporting and data-sharing</u>, as appropriate, on SFM and their forest agendas in a holistic and integrated manner, through addressing the interlinkages of climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification and sand and dust storms, land degradation, pollution, drought, watershed management, poverty and food insecurity, among others, taking into account the respective mandates of its members. b. Consider focusing the <u>CPF workplan</u> on supporting implementation of the UNSPF and achievement of its GFGs, as well as other multilaterally agreed forest-related goals, with clear priorities, actions, joint activities, resources, outputs and indicators for assessing progress, and, in this respect, structure CPF reports on its workplan to the Forum around the GFGs. c. Regularly undertake assessments of its <u>completed joint initiatives</u> to identify challenges, successes, lessons learned and their contributions to the GFGs, and share those assessments with CPF members, Forum members and other relevant stakeholders. d. Enhance <u>interaction and communication</u>, including through a hybrid format, with members of the Forum, regional and subregional partners, MGs and other relevant stakeholders on its activities by organizing short briefing meetings. e. <u>Report to the Forum</u> at each session on progress made on actions CPF has been invited to undertake. f. Conduct an assessment of <u>options to strengthen collaboration within CPF</u> and send consistent and supportive messages on CPF's work to their respective governing bodies, and consider funding of CPF activities, as appropriate. g. Engage more actively in the <u>work of GFFFN</u>.
D.12. Encourages CPF members accredited to financing institutions to continue cooperation with UNFFS in supporting the work of GFFFN, including in the facilitation and preparation of project proposals, and mobilizations of resources to this end.
F.18. Invites CPF and its member organizations to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue ongoing work on the <u>global core set of forest-related indicators</u>, in particular all tier 3 indicators. b. Further enhance coordination, <u>streamline reporting and data-sharing activities</u>, and make use of the existing global publications and reports on forests. c. Organize a <u>joint workshop on international reporting on forests</u> for focal points of all relevant CPF member organizations to enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies, in line with their respective mandates, and reduce the reporting burden on countries.
G.22. Invites CPF and its members to coordinate on "topline" key messages to HLPF on forest interlinkages to the SDGs under review each year, including benefits of, challenges and threats to forests.
H.27. Encourages CPF members engaged in the Global Forest Education Initiative and Forum members to make full use of opportunities it presents to raise awareness of the importance of forests and trees outside forests and the role of SFM, through elementary (primary) and secondary school curricula, as well as promoting forest-related studies at the tertiary level.
J.37. Invites the CPF to engage in dialogue and examine joint initiatives with MGs and other relevant stakeholders to promote implementation of the UNSPF.

Annex 23

Section I of ECOSOC resolution 2024/15: Invitations to the Forum

A.1 Invites UNFF and its Members to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengthen <u>international cooperation</u>, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels, to promote SFM. b. Strive to advance <u>means of implementation</u>, including new and additional financing from all sources for reversing the loss of forest cover, protecting and conserving forests, halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation, restoring degraded forests, enhancing technological collaboration, sharing best practices, and scientific exchange at all levels. c. Involve <u>political leaders and high-level officials</u> in international forest-related decision-making processes to help to implement the UNFI and UNSPF and achieve the GFGs, and increase efforts to sustainably manage forests, and halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation. d. Highlight the significant <u>contributions of forests and trees</u> outside forests in achieving the SDGs, in particular in relation to poverty eradication and food security. e. Promote inclusive and <u>participatory decision-making modalities</u> at national and subnational levels to, inter alia, enable the effective engagement of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other stakeholders, and promote gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls and mainstream a gender perspective in the implementation of SFM. f. Strengthen implementation of forest-related <u>national legislation</u> and provision and mobilization of means of implementation from all sources for SFM and achievement of the GFGs, taking into account the specific challenges of developing countries. g. Enhance cooperation, coordination, <u>coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels</u> to support implementation of the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, CBD and the KMGBF adopted at CBD COP 15, and UNCCD, including the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, in line with their respective mandates. h. Promote <u>science-policy dialogues</u> to support science-based decision-making on forests at the local, national, regional and global levels. i. Promote effective consideration of <u>traditional knowledge</u> of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities in decision-making processes at the local, national, regional and global levels. j. Continue facilitating and catalysing <u>access to technical, financial and scientific resources</u> to strengthen the capacity of Forum members to implement SFM, considering, in particular, the specific challenges faced by developing countries.
C.5(a) -- Invites the Forum and Bureau to proactively reach out to the governing bodies of CPF member organizations to strengthen collaboration and support to the work of CPF.
J.35 -- Invites the Forum, UNFFS and the Bureau to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote <u>engagement of MGs</u> and other relevant stakeholders in the work of the Forum. b. Use sessions of the <u>Forum as a platform</u> for the exchange of ideas and best practices on how stakeholders could better capture action opportunities from forest-related instruments, processes, commitments and goals and track the progress therein. c. Support countries <u>with collecting data on best practices</u> promoted by Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth, on implementation of the UNSPF, including tree planting in line with SFM principles and ecosystem restoration. d. Consider <u>organizing a capacity-building workshop, subject to funding availability</u>, on fundraising for MGs and other relevant stakeholders to implement the UNSPF and achieve the GFGs, ensuring equitable geographical representation.