

Report of the Training Workshop to Strengthen Civil Society and Forest Stakeholder’s Capacity to Contribute to implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests

21-23 January 2025,

Bangkok, Thailand

Summary

The United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS) convened a three-day workshop on strengthening Major Groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and the Forum’s Quadrennial Programme of Work (4POW) 2025–2028. The workshop took place from 21 to 23 January 2025 at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific region (UNESCAP) in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop resulted in a draft joint workplan for MGoS involved in International Arrangement on Forests (see Annex 1).

Prior to this workshop MGoS held an on-line inaugural meeting of the International Arrangement on Forests Major Group Internal Coordination Mechanism (IAF MG ICM) to agree on its terms of reference (see Annex 2) and endorse the focal points for MGoS (see Annex 3) and elect co-chairs as well as to prepare for the training workshop in Bangkok. The inaugural meeting was held from 15 to 16 January 2025

The training workshop was structured to elicit key points around expectations by the MGoS, both of the meeting and of the broader roles and responsibilities of MGoS as envisioned by the experts participating in the workshop.

On Day 1, the workshop focused on reviewing the joint major groups workplan for the period 2017-2021 and the individual major groups workplans for the same period; the challenges and obstacles/gaps in implementing the joint workplan, what achievements had been made so far and lessons learned.

Experts also reviewed the outcome from UNFF19, including the Forum’s quadrennial programme of work for the period 2025 to 2028 and in particular section J of the UNFF19 omnibus resolution. On Day 2, participants elaborated on the priority areas and actions for the MGoS strategy and on actions for the draft joint MGoS workplan 2025-2028.

On Day 3, participants continued discussion on actions for the joint workplan and initiated discussion on a fundraising strategy to ensure successful implementation of the joint workplan.

Moreover, in the final day of the workshop participants also discussed the MGoS input to the thematic priorities for UNFF20 and UNFF21 based on the 4POW. Based on the discussion at the workshop a handful of recommendations were developed and subsequently agreed to by the workshop participants and the IAF MG ICM. These recommendations are submitted through this report for consideration by the Forum.

Introduction

The United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS) held a three-day workshop from 21 to 23 January 2025 at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop aimed to strengthen the engagement of Major Groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) in the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and the achievement of its Global Forest Goals (GFGs).

This was pursued through the development of a joint workplan, based on the UNFF19 omnibus resolution. Experts, representing diverse MGoS, participated in the workshop. The workshop was conducted concurrently with the *“Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening the Engagement of Regional and Subregional entities in the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)”*. On the final day of the workshop, the co-chairs of both meetings convened to explore potential areas of cooperation between MGoS and regional and sub-regional entities.

Background

When sustainably managed, forests can significantly contribute to long term sustainable development through provision of forest goods and services from resilient and renewable ecosystems. Thus, the sustainable management of forests (SFM) and trees outside forests is vital to the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Furthermore, effective implementation of (SFM) depends on the contributions of all relevant stakeholders, including forest owners, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women, children, youth, and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations at all levels.

Since the establishment of the Forum, forest-stakeholders also referred to as Major Groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) have played pivotal roles in the global policy debates as well as working directly at the grassroots level in promoting SFM and poverty eradication.

Forest stakeholders, particularly from developing countries, lack the capacity and financial resources to effectively implement the UNSPF and track progress in achievement of the GFGs and forest-related SDGs. They lack a forest-stakeholder strategy that elaborates an integrated approach that maximizes forest-stakeholder synergies for effective implementation of the UN strategic plan for forests (UNSPF).

Without a clear framework for engagement, forest-stakeholders risk duplicating effort, competing for limited resources, potentially missing opportunities to forge partnerships for joint advocacy and or resource-mobilization, thereby reducing their ability effectively contribute to UNSPF implementation. Conclusions drawn from past experiences show that the main obstacles to effective MGoS engagements in the international forest policy dialogue is due to many factors including:

- Lack of a strategy for stakeholder contribution to implementation of the UNSPF and long-term sustainable development;
- An outdated major groups workplan; and
- Weak capacity to fundraise for SFM and UNSPF implementation.

Both the UNSPF and the Forum's quadrennial programme of work (4POW) provide opportunities for forest stakeholders to engage in the following areas:

- Implementation of SFM and the UN forest instrument (UNFI);
- Identifying ways to enhance civil society contribution to the achievement of the global forest goals and targets at all levels;
- Major groups/civil society interaction with the Forum to raise awareness, foster information exchanges and dissemination; and facilitate coordinated inputs; and
- Engagement and participation in policy and technical forum sessions.

In 2018, MGoS developed a joint major group workplan¹ that identified the main types of interventions through which MGoS add value to efforts of governments, the private sector and other forest stakeholders in UNSPF implementation. This workplan was developed in response to guidance received from the UNFF at its twelfth session, where MGoS were encouraged to continue their involvement in the work of the Forum, including by elaborating proposals or workplans on how they could contribute to UNSPF implementation and the Forum's quadrennial programme of work (4POW). The joint workplan focused on:

- localizing the UNSPF and translation of global UNFF decisions to the people on the ground;
- Publicity and advocacy;
- Mobilizing each major group's constituencies for action; and
- Cooperating with governments, the private sector and other major players to achieve mutual accountability for commitments made and statements of intent in the UNSPF and the Agenda 2030.

Further, a number of MGoS also developed individual workplans in line with the joint plan.

The current joint major groups workplan that identifies the main types of interventions through which forest-stakeholders can add value to implementation of the UNSPF is outdated.

In 2024, the Forum through its UNFF19 omnibus resolution² invited the MGoS to develop a joint strategy and to update their joint workplan in support of both Forum policy dialogue and

¹ <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/major-groups/major-groups-workplan/index.html>

² <https://docs.un.org/en/E/RES/2024/15>

implementation of the UNSPF. The Forum further and invited the UNFFS to organize a capacity building workshop for MGoS on fundraising for major groups and other relevant stakeholders to implement the UNSPF and achieve the GFGs.

Workshop Objective

The objective of this workshop was to strengthen forest-stakeholders' capacity to contribute to implementation of the UNSPF and achievement of the GFGs and forest-related SDGs and the Forum's Quadrennial Programme of Work (4POW) 2025–2028 through the development of a MGoS joint workplan for 2025-2028.

Opening

Ms. Juliette Biao, Director of the Secretariat of the UNFF (UNFFS) in her opening remarks stated that the gathering was a testament to the collective strength of diverse stakeholders including MGoS whose insights, strategies, and innovations were vital. Observing that the 2030 deadline was looming with only five years until 2030, Ms. Biao stressed that it was the imperative for all actors, including MGoS to act boldly, urgently, and collaboratively on SFM at all levels. She urged participants to share their boldest ideas, define concrete actions to ensure the effective achievement of the GFGs and the UNSPF.

Agenda Item 1: Review the Joint Major Groups workplan for the period 2017-2021 and the individual Major Groups workplans for the period 2017-2021

The meeting reviewed the joint major group workplan for the period 2017 to 2021 reflecting on the main challenges, obstacles or gaps that MGoS had encountered in implementing this joint workplan and individual MG workplans for the same period. This session was facilitated by Mr. Andrey Laletin, the NGOs Major Group Focal Point.

Working in two working groups participants focused on the challenges, achievements, and lessons learned. Guiding questions included:

1. What challenges, obstacles, or gaps hindered implementation?
2. What achievements were realized?
3. What lessons were learned?

The key challenges identified included limited financial resources and human resources which hindered the implementation of the joint workplan. While the workplan contained ambitious actions, some were considered difficult to implement within the existing resource constraints. Follow-up on the workplan was complicated by the complexities of coordinating voluntary major group networks. The rotation of MGoS focal points, and instances where replacements were not appointed, significantly hindered follow-up efforts.

The workshop identified key achievements from the previous joint workplan, including:

- Effective coordination of joint MGoS statements at Forum Sessions; and
- Securing speaking rights for MGoS at forest-related meetings, enhancing awareness of SFM. This included an event organized by the International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) and the recently concluded Major Groups Initiative (MGI), among other events.

Key lessons learned included:

- Importance of prioritizing inclusivity and synergy in collaborative efforts;
- The need for stronger commitment from MGoS;
- Recognizing of the importance of strengthening and expanding traditional knowledge;
- The crucial role of strong coordination and strategic messaging for collective action;
- The necessity of increasing the visibility of MGoS contributions to the Forum's decision-making process through enhanced communication and outreach efforts; and
- The critical importance of securing funding for MGoS activities.

During the interactive discussion, the participants stressed that moving forward, there was a need to develop a realistic and feasible joint workplan that focused on concrete priority areas and actions. A key suggestion, welcomed by all, was to align the new workplan closely with specific actions for MGoS outlined in Section J of the UNFF19 Omnibus resolution, which was subsequently used as a foundation for the workplan's development.

Discussions also covered communication strategies and advocacy effectiveness. Participants raised concerns regarding the feasibility of certain actions, the necessity for improved coordination, and the importance of evaluating past achievements. They stressed the need for concrete, implementable actions applicable to all MGoS. Further participants highlighted the importance of incorporating grassroots perspectives, addressing fundraising challenges, and integrating gender considerations into the new joint workplan.

Agenda item 2: Review of the outcomes from UNFF19, including the 4POW (2025-2028) and the UNFF19 omnibus resolution

Ms. Mia Crawford, Focal Point for the Farmers and Small Landowners Major Group presented the key areas for MGoS engagement in UNFF19 omnibus resolution and key areas for action in the 4POW. The omnibus resolution stresses that the Forum encourages MGoS to collaborate with Member States on various aspects, including data collection practices that integrate scientific and traditional knowledge; capacity building related work on UNSPF implementation; advancing SFM and forest-based bioeconomy approaches; ensuring equitable distribution of resources and inclusion of MGoS contributions in relevant reports; and supporting MGoS-led initiatives and their contributions to UNFF sessions.

Following the presentation, participants formed 4 working groups to review the key outcomes of the omnibus resolution and the 4POW. Based on this review, the working groups identified the

following key actions for MGoS engagement with the UNFF process for the period 2025 to 2028 for possible inclusion in the joint workplan.

One key action was to enhance collaboration with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to promote UNSPF implementation. In this context, , the workshop proposed that the UNFFS as the CPF secretariat to explore the best avenues for strengthening interactions between CPF and MGoS.

To enhance communication and outreach, the workshop proposed developing and implementation of a communication and outreach strategy using diverse platforms and formats. Further, MGoS will strengthen collaboration with regional and sub-regional partners to promote sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches and ecosystem restoration.

MGoS will develop a fundraising strategy to support the implementation of their joint work plan that will include a section on financial disclosure to demonstrate stakeholder involvement.

They will also maintain the MGoS Internal Coordination Mechanism to facilitate their effective participation in the Forum's work.

Agenda item3: Elaboration on priority areas and actions: MGoS strategy

Based on the review of actions selected from the UNFF19 omnibus resolution, the workshop focused on identified priority areas and actions for the joint MGoS workplan. This session was facilitated by Ms. Salma Omotara, Focal Point for the Children and Youth Major Group.

Participants discussed and agreed on five criteria to prioritize actions:

1. **Scope and inclusivity:** Ensuring broad reach and inclusivity in each priority area and action.
2. **Human rights-based approach, leaving no one behind, and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC):** This includes ensuring that partnerships respect the rights, knowledge, and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples embedding safeguards rooted in FPIC principle to promote equity, gender equality, sustainability, and mutual benefit.
3. **Collaboration:** Fostering collaboration through building alliances and networks at global and local levels for SFM and climate justice.
4. **Means of implementation/Feasibility:** Ensuring feasibility through fundraising, networking, collaboration, sustainable action, and realistic, holistic and time-bound approach.
5. **Strategic implementation:** Addressing global crises like forest loss, climate change, and poverty, and responding to strategic issues outlined in the UNSPF, GFGs, UNFF19 omnibus resolution, and other Forum decisions.

Using this 5-criteria framework, participants ranked proposed actions. The highest-scoring proposals formed the basis for the draft joint workplan, which was discussed under Agenda item 4.

In addition, participants also developed proposals for action that were discussed with UNFF regional and sub-regional organizations during a joint session held in the morning of the final day of the workshop. These proposals were:

1. IAF MG ICM and focal points from regional and sub-regional partners will organize a joint workshop on the margins of the UNFF 20 session or online to explore ways to strengthen collaboration on sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches and restoration of ecosystems, contributing to improved livelihoods.
2. Invite regional and subregional partners to conduct tailored capacity-building activities. These activities will empower women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities by providing training and resources designed to align with their specific regional contexts. These efforts will then be strengthened by building networks at the regional level.
3. Request that regional and subregional partners engage MGoS in their forest-related activities.

Agenda item 4 Elaboration on actions for the joint MGoS workplan (this section needs more information)

Facilitated by Ms. Fernanda Rodrigues, Focal Point for the Women Major Group, participants further reviewed the prioritized actions from the previous session. The workshop agreed to consolidate these actions into four key areas:

- a. Cooperation and coordination;
- b. Engagement; implementation of the UNSPF;
- c. Accountability; and
- d. Fundraising.

These areas formed the initial draft of the joint workplan, which was subsequently elaborated by the co-chairs (see annex 1).

Workshop participants discussed developing a fundraising strategy, recognizing that the lack of such a strategy hindered the previous workplan's implementation. Key elements identified included:

- Developing clear proposals for potential donors. These proposals should utilize the 5W+H framework (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How) and include defined objectives, intended impact, timelines, locations, and financial needs.
- Establishing safeguards to assess potential funding sources. This ensures complementarity with a human rights-based approach and requires MGoS approval before accepting funds.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities within the IAF MG ICM. This includes specifying who will seek funding and through which channels, including the UNFF Trust Fund.
- Strengthen the long-term sustainability of funding efforts.

Due to time constraints, the fundraising strategy was not finalized during the workshop. Participants agreed that the IAF MG ICM would further develop this strategy after the joint workplan's adoption. To facilitate this, they suggested the IAF MG ICM create a Task Force consisting of a select group of MGoS representatives to advance this work.

Agenda item 5: Preparations for MGoS input to the thematic priorities for UNFF' 20 and UNFF' 21 based on 4POW

Facilitated by Ms. Mia Crawford, this session focused on MGoS engagement and input to UNFF20 technical session. Participants reviewed the UNFF20 provisional agenda and organization of work to identify areas for joint MGoS intervention.

The meeting proposed that MGoS prepare three joint statements for UNFF20: a general opening statement, a joint statement on the outcome of the training workshop held in Bangkok, and another on the UNFF Trust Fund.

Given that the thematic priorities for UNFF20 and UNFF21 are GFG1, GFG3, and GFG5 and the SDGs under review by HLPF 2025 and HLPF 2026, participants were urged to prepare interventions that contributed to the thematic priorities and the SDG's under review by the HLPF. They identified key agenda items for MGoS intervention and potential contribution to panel discussions. Each MGoS was encouraged to contact alumni or professionals in their field to suggest potential speakers for panel discussions during the thematic sessions to the UNFF Secretariat .

Participants also agreed on the following recommendations and key messages to the Forum's consideration:

- Take note of the information provided by MGoS on their internal coordination mechanism work, including its terms of reference and draft workplan.
- Encourage Member States to provide funding to support MGoS participation in UNFF meetings and preparatory processes, including through earmarked funding to the UNFF Trust Fund.

- Invite MGoS representation and participation in presenting case studies and best practices at UNFF sessions and intersessional meetings.

Annex 1

Proposed MGoS Work Plan

Introduction

With support from the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), representatives of Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS) met at the United Nations Office in Bangkok, Thailand (UNESCAP) from January 21-23, 2025, for a three-day training workshop on their contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and the Forum's Quadrennial Programme of Work (4POW) 2025–2028. The workshop aimed to develop a draft joint workplan for MGoS involved in the International Arrangement on Forests. This draft workplan will be presented at UNFF20, and based on feedback, the International Arrangement on Forests Major Group Coordination Mechanism (IAF MG ICM) will further develop and adopt the workplan later in 2025.

The driving ambition behind preparing the draft joint workplan was to enable MGoS to implement the provisions in ECOSOC resolution 2024/14 related to the MGoS, particularly its section J, and work more effectively towards realization of the objectives of the International Arrangement on Forests, and in implementing the UN Strategic Plan on Forests.

The draft joint workplan is based on experiences and lessons learned from the previous joint workplan for 2017-2021. The MGoS representatives at the workshop recognized that the joint workplan should be seen as a living document and a common starting point. Each MGoS is free to develop its own individual workplan to contribute to the joint one. Moreover, it is envisaged that the IAF MG ICM will regularly review progress based on this joint workplan. As actions are delivered, new actions may be added. Furthermore, it is envisaged that this joint workplan will be accompanied by a fundraising strategy, which the IAF MG ICM will develop once the workplan has been approved.

The MGoS representatives at the workshop worked in three working groups and proposed many actions, which were assessed against five criteria:

1. Scope and inclusivity
2. Human rights-based approach (LNOB, FPIC)
3. Foster collaboration
4. Feasibility

5. Significance and strategic approach

The prioritized actions were then grouped under five areas: cooperation and coordination; participation and engagement; implementation of the UNSPF; accountability; and fundraising.

Cooperation and coordination

1. Improve consultations among and within MGoS.

Action: Establish an internal coordination mechanism for MGoS involved in IAF.

Timeline: 2024-2025

Responsible Partners: MGoS

Status: Completed. The inaugural meeting held 15-16 January 2025. Adoption of Terms of Reference. Endorsement of MGoS focal points and election of Co-chairs.

Action: Organize monthly meetings of the IAF MG ICM and regularly invite representatives of coordination mechanisms for MGoS of HLPF, UNEP and MGoS focal points involved in CBD and UNFCCC.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible Partners: Co-Chairs IAF MG ICM

Status: In progress. Monthly meetings of IAF MG ICM are organized online every third Wednesday of each month..

2. Enhance awareness raising about MGoS activities among among MS.

Action: Initiate discussions with interested MS and discuss how to strengthen forest stakeholders' capacity to support the work of the UNFF .

Timeline: 2025-2026

Responsible Partners: MGoS focal points

Status: In progress. MGoS will approach interested countries during UNFF20.

3. Enhance cooperation between CPF and MGoS

Action: The MGoS to coordinate with the UNFFS regarding provisions of the ECOSOC resolution in which the Forum invited the CPF to engage in dialogue and examine joint activities with MGoS to promote implementation of the Strategic Plan³

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible Partners: UNFFS and MGoS focal points

Status: To be initiated. Possibly a first meeting between MGoS focal points and the UNFFS during UNFF20.

Participation and engagement

4. Facilitate the participation of forest-related stakeholders at UNFF Sessions.

Action: Support forest-related stakeholders that wish to seek accreditation with ECOSOC by providing relevant information on the accreditation process.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible Partners: UNFF Secretariat and Co-chairs IAF MG ICM

Status: Paused. Currently, none of the IAF MGoS are in the process of seeking consultative status of ECOSOC.

Action: Facilitate participation of forest stakeholders that do not have ECOSOC accreditation by finding ways for them in the delegations of MGoS that have accreditation.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible Partners: UNFF Secretariat and MGoS focal points

Status: MGoS focal points are currently working with UNFFS to assist with accreditation for UNFF20.

5. Encourage MS to include representatives of MGoS in their national delegations for UNFF sessions.

Action: Share best practices to inspire MS to include MGoS representatives.

³ UNFF 19 Omnibus resolution: Section J: Actions related to the involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders (para 37): <https://docs.un.org/en/E/2024/42>

Timeline: 2025-2026

Responsible Partners: MGoS focal points

Status: Initiated. MGoS will approach those MS that include stakeholders in their delegation for possible input to collect best practices.

Action: Highlight the advantages of inclusive delegations to UNFF sessions, in particular technical sessions which are focusing more on bringing forward diverse experiences and lessons learned.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible Partners: MGoS that participate at the sessions of UNFF

Status: To be initiated.

6. Engage and involve MGoS during UNFF sessions.

Action: Coordinate with UNFFS for MGoS involvement during UNFF Session such as participating in panels and making statements as envisioned in paragraph 35 of the UNFF19 resolution.⁴

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible Partners: Co-Chairs IAF MG ICM, UNFFS

Status: In progress. MGoS have been engaged to provide input to HLPF and suggest names for speakers during panels for UNFF20.

7. Prepare and submit report from MGoS

Action: Submit reports to UNFF20 on the training workshop in Bangkok, including draft joint workplan.

Timeline: 2025

Responsible Partners: IAF MG ICM and UNFF Secretariat

⁴ UNFF 19 Omnibus resolution: Section J: Actions related to the involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders (para 35): <https://docs.un.org/en/E/2024/42>

Status: Completed.

Action: Submit report to technical sessions of the UNFF on MGoS experiences and lessons learned

Timeline: 2027

Responsible Partners: IAF MG ICM and UNFF Secretariat

Status: To be initiated.

8. Continue to engage MGoS in Country-Led Initiatives (CLI) or Organization-Led Initiatives (OLI) and support Major Groups-Led Initiatives.

Action: Encourage active engagement and involvement of MGoS in UNFF CLI/OLI.

Timeline: 2025

Responsible Partners: IAF MG ICM

Status: To be initiated.

Action: Encourage MS to support initiatives led by MGoS to discuss thematic issues in support of the Forum's work.

Timeline: 2026

Responsible Partners: MS and MGoS

Status: To be initiated.

Implementation of UN Strategic Plan on Forests

9. MS to consider supporting capacity-building initiatives for MGoS to enhance their knowledge on the UN strategic plan for forests and the global forest goals.

Action: Organize capacity-building workshops.

Timeline:

Responsible Parties: MS, UNFF Secretariat and MGoS

Status: To be initiated.

10. Work towards ensuring that the engagement of the MGoS with large-scale forest industry is consistent with the existing guidelines developed by UN bodies such as the UN Global Compact⁵ and other similar bodies.

Action:.

Promote partnership with large scale forest industries and regularly monitor that such partnerships are consistent with the existing UN guidelines.

Timeline: 2026

Responsible Partners: IAF MG ICM

Status: To be initiated

11. MS are invited to engage MGoS in advancing sustainable forest management and sustainable, forest-based bioeconomy approaches and restoration of ecosystems.

Action: Contribute to the understanding of different forest-based bioeconomy approaches and engage in the CLI on bioeconomy planed for in 2026.

Timeline: 2026

Responsible Partner: Farmers and Business and Industry and other stakeholders

Status: Initiated. Discussions with organizers have been initiated. Representative from Farmers to be included in the side event at UNFF20.

Accountability

12. Encourage MS to collaborate with MGoS on data collection practices. Establish partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and other stakeholders.

Action: Engage with MS that are reporting to UNFF to enhance data collection by different stakeholder groups such as women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, NGOs, Scientists with a view of leaving no one behind.

Timeline:

Responsible Partners: Indigenous Peoples, women and youth

Status: To be initiated.

⁵ <https://unglobalcompact.org/>

Fundraising

13. Secure dedicated funding to allow for participation of MGoS in UNFF sessions, OLI/CLI, and/or other preparatory meetings.

Action: Develop and execute a fundraising plan.

Timeline: 2025-2026 (development) 2026-2028 (implementation)

Responsible Partner: Women and IAF MG ICM

Status: Initiated. The first ideas of the fundraising were discussed during the training workshop in January 2025. It will be further worked on once the workplan has been completed.

Action: Explore and map existing and emerging funding sources in the international level that could be used by MGoS.

Timeline:

Responsible Partners: IAF MG ICM

Annex 2.

International Arrangement on Forests Major Groups Internal Coordination Mechanism (IAF MG-ICM)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ARTICLE I: PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

The International Arrangement on Forests Major Groups Internal Coordination Mechanism (hereinafter referred to as the “IAF MG-ICM”) comprise of representatives of autonomous social groups and societal constituencies referred to as the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS), as listed in Article IV, Section 1.

1. The fundamental principles for engagement are:

- Commitment to sustainable forest management of all types of forests;
- Utmost commitment to sustainable development, combatting climate change, gender equality, ethnic and intergenerational justice, as well as to the eradication of all forms of discrimination and violence;
- Centrality of inclusive and democratic multilateralism, centered on the United Nations and based upon human rights, equity and justice, solidarity, cooperation and common but differentiated responsibilities.

ARTICLE II: MANDATE

1. The IAF MG-ICM is an autonomous and self-organizing space for internal coordination among the Major Groups, as identified in Agenda 21, and their societal constituencies interested and committed to Sustainable Forest Management, and the advancement of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests, the Global Goals on Forests, as well as its follow-up in the UN Forum on Forests.

2. The mandate of the IAF MGs-ICM emanates primarily from the self-determination and commitment of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS) constituencies to collaborate and coordinate their engagement.

The mandate is supported by the following resolutions and outcomes:

(a) Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations;

(b) Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, which established the nine Major Groups (A/CONF.151/26), as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/190 of 22 December 1992;

(c) ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 establishing the International Arrangement on Forests;

(d) UN Strategic Plan for Forests, ECOSOC resolution 2017/4;

(e) Omnibus resolution from the 19th session of UN Forum on Forests, included in the Forums report (E/2024/42-E/CN.18/2024/9).

ARTICLE III: OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the IAF MG-ICM are the following:

1. Strengthen and improve the contribution of MGoS towards advancement of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests with its Global Goals on Forests in directions and modalities which are coherent with the MGoS principles of engagement, as outlined in Article I;
2. Recognition of the critical role of MGoS in implementing sustainable forest management (SFM);
3. Protection and strengthening of the rights to open, transparent and inclusive participation of MGoS in United Nations Forum on Forests;
4. Enhanced collaboration, coordination and solidarity among MGoS constituencies;
5. Widest possible substantive participation of all social groups and societal constituencies, inclusive to all relevant stakeholders and ensuring geographical, gender, ethnic and age balance while creating the widest possible space for under-represented and often marginalized voices;

ARTICLE IV: CONSTITUENCIES

1. The IAF MG-ICM will comprise of the representatives from the Major Groups as identified in Agenda 21, General Assembly resolution 47/190 of 22 December 1992):

Women; Children and Youth; Indigenous Peoples; Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); Local Authorities; Workers and Trade Unions; Business and Industry; Scientific and Technological Community; and Farmers.

2. Designation and participation of official representatives on the IAF MG-ICM should unfold in accordance with the following modalities:

- (a) Each MGoS will designate two principal and one alternate representative to the IAF MGs-ICM. It is required that these designated representatives belong to different organizations;
- (b) Each MGoS is responsible for its own procedures to identify their representatives, ensuring regional, gender and age balance as much as possible;
- (c) The list of representatives of the MGOS constituency groups will be made available online.

ARTICLE V: RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Each MGoS constituency commits to actively supporting the work of the IAF MG-ICM, including attending its meetings on a regular basis, participating in ad hoc working groups and other activities as required to advance the mandate and objectives of the IAF MG-ICM, which include the following:

- (a) Facilitating the participation of MGoS and provision of inputs, oral and written to UNFF;
- (b) Monitoring the status of preparations for the annual session of the UNFF, including status of reports that have implications for the work of MGoS;
- (c) Facilitating the meaningful integration of broad and diverse perspectives at the UNFF, setting clear, transparent, and inclusive criteria for engagement, in accordance with Article II;
- (d) Liaising with the UNFF Secretariat and Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as appropriate, on matters related to the involvement of MGoS to UNFF and MGoS implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests;
- (e) Soliciting and reviewing nominations and finalizing the selection of speakers, panelists, and moderators for the UNFF sessions in close coordination with the UNFF Secretariat. Selection processes shall be consistent with principles (Article I) and objectives (Article III) and shall be based upon a balanced approach towards MGoSs representatives, taken into consideration regions, genders and age groups, as well as expertise;
- (f) Preparing joint positions, statements, campaigns and advocacy efforts, whenever possible, appropriate and feasible, for the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests;
- (g) Organizing regular IAF MG-CM meetings and hosting MGoS side event during UNFF sessions and other fora, as appropriate;

- (h) Advocating and mobilizing actions, concrete outputs and, when appropriate and necessary, financial resources, that will strengthen the overall credibility, visibility, and influence of MGoS in the IAF and the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests;
- (i) Developing and promoting communication and outreach strategies that support public awareness and increased understanding of sustainable forest management, the UN Strategic Plan on Forests and its Global Forest Goals;
- (j) Exploring the need for direct resource development efforts to support the IAF MG-ICM activities and, if necessary, putting in place all necessary systems and procedures to ensure the proper administration of fund that might be raised.
- (k) Facilitate the management of the mailing lists of the IAF MG-CM as well as the maintenance of information on the IAF MG-CM online;

ARTICLE VI: CO-CHAIRS

1. Elections and terms of office:

- (a) The IAF MG ICM will elect a minimum of two and maximum of three Co-Chairs from different MGoS, striving to ensure North-South and gender balance;
- (b) Each Co-Chair will serve for a period of two-years, with the possibility of one year extension;
- (c) The IAF MG ICM will have a rotating Co-Chair system, on a two-yearly basis but ensure one-year overlap to facilitate smooth transition and necessary institutional memory.
- (d) The incoming Co-Chair will be elected by IAF MG-ICM a month before the expiration of the respective term of office;
- (e) If a Co-Chair cannot complete a term of office, the IAF MG-ICM will convene to elect replacement for the remainder of the term of office. If the remainder of the term of office is less than six months, the replacement Co-Chair will be eligible for a two-year term of office without re-election.

2. The Co-Chairs, who determine allocation of tasks among themselves, will be specifically responsible for the following activities, among others:

- (a) Facilitating the participation and contribution of all the constituencies of the IAF MG-ICM;

- (b) Monitoring the status of preparations and processes for the UNFF and related events of the follow-up to the UN Strategic Plan on Forests with its Global Goals on Forests, throughout the year;
- (c) Convening meetings of the IAF MG-ICM and proposing agendas, ensuring proper note taking, keeping records of participation, circulating the minutes, facilitating follow-up action on agreed decisions;
- (d) Coordinating the activities of the IAF MG-CM, including possible through the task groups or thematic groups;
- (e) Coordinating the ongoing liaison with UNFF Secretariat and ensuring the regular flow of information and reports;

ARTICLE VII: METHODS OF WORK

1. Meetings of the IAF MG-ICM will be held on a regular basis and as needed, primarily through on-line meetings. The meetings will be convened by the Co-Chairs with 5 (five) working day notice, unless an urgent meeting is required;
2. A quorum of two-thirds of MGoS is required to conduct a formal meeting of the IAF MG-ICM where binding decisions are taken, with 5 (five) working days of advance notice;
3. The IAF MG-ICM aims to take decisions based on consensus; however, if consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be conducted with decisions being approved by simple majority of those present (if decisions are taken during meetings). Each MGoS will have one vote only. Should decisions be taken in the absence of a meeting, the proposals need to be served by the Co-Chairs with 5 (five) working days of decision-making space, with decisions being carried with single majority of the IAF MG-ICM;
4. Representatives of MGoS must demonstrate engagement in the work of the IAF MG-ICM and attend at least two-thirds of the meetings during a six-month period and actively participate in the work of the IAF MG-ICM to be able to maintain their right to vote.
5. Representatives of the IAF MG-ICM are expected to participate in or lead at least one or more of the activities carried out by the IAF MG-ICM.

ARTICLE VIII: AD HOC WORKING GROUPS

1. The IAF MG-CM may create ad hoc Working Group to undertake activities for accomplishing their objectives.

2. These ad hoc Working Groups, comprising representatives of the IAF MG-ICM, as well as individual members of the MGoS when appropriate, will carry out their work and report back directly to the IAF MG-ICM. In principles, these ad hoc Working Groups will be facilitated by selected members of the IAF MG-ICM, in coordination with the Co-Chairs;

3. Ad hoc Working Groups should have a limited time bound mandate and can be disbanded by the IAF MG-ICM, when their tasks are considered completed or not relevant anymore.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments by any MGoS of the IAF MG-ICM terms of reference shall be submitted in writing to the Co-Chairs. Approval by the IAF MG-ICM will require a qualified two-thirds majority.

Annex 3.

The Focal Points for the International Arrangement on Forests Major Group Internal Coordination Mechanism

Major Group	Name	Contact details
Business and Industry	Derek Nighbor (he/him)	President and CEO Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) Suite 420–99 Bank Street Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6B9 E-mail: dnighbor@fpac.ca
Business and Industry	Bernard de Galembert (he/him)	Director, Forest Solution Group & Member of the WBCSD Extended Leadership Group Avenue du Bouchet 2bis 1209 Geneva, Switzerland Phone: +41795465832 E-mail: degalembert@wbcسد.org
Business and Industry <i>Alternate</i>	Vacant	
Children and Youth	Salma Omotara* (she/her)	Head of UNFF Sub-Commission 2024-2026 International Forestry Students' Association E-mail: salma.omotara@ifsa.net
Children and Youth	Pooja Pokharel (she/her)	Head of UNFF Sub-Commission 2023-2025 Phone: +977 9869625519 E-mail: pooja.pokharel@ifsa.net
Children and Youth <i>Alternate</i>	Rizka Afif Muhammad (he/him)	E-mail: afif.muhammad@ifsa.net
Farmers and small forest landowners	Mia Crawford* (she/her)	Forest Director EU and International Affairs Federation of Swedish Farmers / Family Forest Owners Board of Directors of the International Family Forestry Alliance Interim co-chair IAF MG ICM Mobil: +46 73 598 75 88 E-mail: mia.crawford@lrf.se Address Stockholm: Franzéngatan 1B, SE-105 33 Stockholm www.lrf.se
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Farmers and small forest landowners <i>Alternate</i>	Bharati Kumari Pathak (she/her)	Women Rights and Resources Network E-mail: bharatipathak_2006@yahoo.com
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Local authorities	Vacant	
Local authorities <i>Alternate</i>	Vacant	
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Scientific and Technological Community	Alejandra Martinez-Salinas (she/her)	Leader, Forests and Biodiversity in Productive Landscapes Research Unit CATIE (Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center)

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Women	Cecile Bibiane Ndjebet (she/her)	African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF) E-mail: cndjebet@yahoo.com
Women <i>Alternate</i>	Danièle Ramiamanana (she/her)	E-mail: ramiamanana.daniele@gmail.com
Workers and Trade Unions	Vacant	
Workers and Trade Unions	Vacant	
Workers and Trade Unions <i>Alternate</i>	Vacant	

* Adopted as co-chairs for IAF MG ICM

** Process of confirmation of nominated focal points are still on-going.