

Summary of Proposals from Working Groups 1 and 2

AM, Wednesday 14 January 2015

Areas of emerging convergence (Working Group 1 and/or Working Group 2)

UN Forum on Forests after 2015

- Maintain the current name of the Forum, retaining universal membership and status of Forum as a functional commission of ECOSOC.
- Clarify the roles and functions of all components of the IAF, including the Forum, secretariat and CPF, as well as the roles/functions of AHEGs and CLIs.
- The functions of the IAF should focus on implementation of the Forest Instrument, including the GOFs and SDGs.
- Policy dialogue/development should continue to be a key function of the Forum.
- The Forum should have a niche role vis-a-vis other intergovernmental bodies and interact with those bodies on an equal footing.
- The Forum should develop a strategy on how to add value, strengthen links and seek synergies with other processes, to engage actors across sectors, within the UN system and across the development agenda.
- The future IAF should place forests firmly within the post-2015 development agenda, strengthen links with the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and use the SDGs to build bridges to other treaties and processes.
- The Forum needs to have the power to “respond, deliver and guide” and to reach out to other forest-related processes, agreements and conventions. It also needs to be more action-oriented and attractive to non-government actors, including the private sector.
- Make greater and creative use of intersessional mechanisms to move things forward, including through subsidiary bodies, informal mechanisms (e.g. working groups, expert groups, task forces, friends of the chairs), and virtual groups. This could lead to shorter (e.g. one week) biennial meetings of the Forum.

UNFF Secretariat after 2015

- The Secretariat needs adequate financial and human resources to commensurate to the functions assigned to it by the Forum.
- The main purpose of the secretariat is to support the Forum’s intergovernmental process. Other functions will flow from the functions of the Forum and decisions at UNFF11 related to, for example, financial mechanisms (facilitative process, UNFF trust fund, strategic trust fund, global forest fund) and the CPF/ CPF successor mechanism.
- The Forum should set clear priorities for secretariat to ensure tasks are commensurate with resources. This could be done through a work plan that identifies priority actions.

Additional proposals

- Maintain the original functions of the Forum while identifying two central functions as proposed in the IAT report regarding (i) providing high-level leadership in order to secure effective stewardship of forests within the global sustainable development agenda; and (ii) promote and facilitate the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests.
- Streamline and better focus the functions of the Forum.
- Explore options to raise the profile of the Forum, to attract participation at the highest political level, including Heads of State.
- Develop a flexible strategy/strategic plan to guide the work of the Forum.
- Improve the role and functioning of the Forum bureau and make greater use of the bureau to facilitate the work of, and provide feedback to, the secretariat.
- The Forum should provide a platform for exchanging experiences and lessons learned (e.g. through voluntary peer reviews of countries' efforts) and might also provide a clearinghouse mechanism for facilitating SFM (e.g. for facilitative process projects).
- Have a dedicated position in the Secretariat to support MAR-related activities.
- The Forum Secretariat should develop a communication strategy targeted at promoting SFM to the most important constituencies, in collaboration with the CPF/UN Forest partners and the Major Groups Partnership on Forests.
- Greater transparency and accountability in secretariat operations are needed, including regarding the use of the UNFF Trust Fund.
- Greater technical capacity within the secretariat would be useful.
- Available resourcing options and secondment arrangements should be considered as part of the actions to strengthen the Forum Secretariat.
- Virtual secondments (e.g. involving 25% to 50% of a person's time) could be a cost-effective way to supplement the secretariat's capacity, including technical capacity.
- The IAT proposal for a UN Forest Assembly goes beyond a name change to capture the potential to strengthen the Forum by include key non-government actors in high level segments and greater involvement of major groups and regional mechanisms.

Area where differences remain: Role of the Forum in implementation (facilitation versus project implementation component).

PM, Wednesday 14 January 2015

Areas of emerging convergence (Working Group 1 and/or Working Group 2)

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests after 2015

- Strengthening international cooperation on forests is one of the main pillars of the post-2015 IAF. The CPF is an important component of the IAF and should continue to exist in a strengthened format (“CPF +”).
- Broaden mandate of the CPF to support forest actions in other intergovernmental processes, including the Rio conventions, and the SDGs.
- Retaining CPF’s voluntary nature enables the Partnership to maintain flexibility, while receiving overall guidance from the UNFF.
- Review links between the Forum and the CPF: clarify the role of the CPF within the IAF and its relationship to the Forum; establish basic guidelines on its method of work and operation; clarify responsibilities, expertise, gaps, common expectations and division of labor, including for the Forum secretariat.
- Formalize further the current CPF arrangement, including through inter alia a GA resolution or multilateral/bilateral memoranda of understanding among CPF members that reflect the CPF mandate, priorities, procedures for increasing or decreasing membership, as well as arrangements for chairmanship and co-chairmanship.
- Develop a strategy and costed workplan for CPF to provide a basis for prioritization, which will also provide clarity to eventual donors.

Involvement of Major Groups after 2015

- Maintaining the multi-stakeholder nature of the Forum, and strengthening the broad and active participation of all stakeholders is fundamental for the successful promotion of SFM.
- Find ways to enhance participation of Major Groups in UNFF sessions and intersessional activities, as well as their contributions to the IAF.

Involvement of Regional entities after 2015

- Provide a framework to encourage closer linkages between regional/sub-regional and thematic (such as SIDS and LFCCs) organizations/processes and global forest policy processes, recognizing that regional/sub-regional and thematic organizations/mechanisms can help to share information about UNFF and to channel information from regions to UNFF; and that rules of procedure may allow greater stakeholder involvement in meetings at the regional/sub-regional and thematic level.
- Facilitative Process proved to be an important vehicle to strengthen and advance regional cooperation, in critical areas of forest financing, including mobilization, and access to funding, in particular in regard to thematic and regional groups of countries such as SIDS, LFCCs, and African countries. This role of the Facilitative Process should be further strengthened.
- Clarify roles for regional and thematic processes, including with regard to the modalities for their input into the Forum.

Additional views and proposals

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests after 2015

- Strengthen science-policy interface to enable systematic interaction that takes into account the overall role of forests in sustainable development and links policy to latest scientific results and assessments; in this regard, science and research related CPF members, such as CIFOR, ICRAF and IUFRO may play an important role.
- Develop a CPF strategic plan that is consistent with the overall IAF/UNFF strategic plan, and includes focus on implementation of the Forest Instrument, the GOFs and the SDGs.
- Increase transparency of CPF work and structure so that all parties, including Member States, can have a better understanding of the Partnership, including on how CPF outputs link to UNFF decisions and resolutions.
- Have a dedicated position to support the CPF Secretariat.

Involvement of Major Groups after 2015

- Encourage collaboration between governments and Major Groups at the national level, including the representation of Major Groups in the official delegations to Forum meetings.
- Encourage business and industry participation by raising the profile of the Forum in the private sector, including through joint activities and the Major Groups Partnership on Forests (MGPoF).
- Consider establishing thematic task forces / advisory group as an additional mechanism for strengthening stakeholder engagement.
- Consider establishing cooperation and collaboration mechanism between the CPF and the Major Groups Partnership on Forests (MGPoF).
- Consider interactive sessions with both civil society and private sector and build partnerships with other stakeholders, including international environment and development NGOs.
- Promote Major Groups participation in regional groups, recognizing the value of joint work by Major Groups and regional groups can contribute to SFM on the ground.

Involvement of Regional entities after 2015

- Strengthen the engagement of the regional and thematic bodies and processes in the FP as a platform of regional and thematic cooperation.
- Strengthen the linkages with the existing sub-regional, regional and thematic bodies and processes, including the UN Regional Economic Commissions and FAO Regional Forestry Commissions.