



Natural Resources  
Canada

Ressources naturelles  
Canada

United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
One UN Plaza DC1-Room 1256  
New York, NY 10017

Please find attached Canada's views and proposals on the International Arrangement on Forests based on the format provided by the UNFF Secretariat.

I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on this important topic, and wish you all the best for the holiday season and the year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

*Jessica Thomson*

*for*

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Canada

Country/Organization: CANADA

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**UNFF Intersessional Activities on the International Arrangement on Forests  
Format for Soliciting Views and Proposals on the International Arrangement on Forests  
United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat  
July 2013**

1. According to the multi-year programme of work adopted in 2007, the overall theme of the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF11) in 2015 will be “Forests: progress, challenges and the way forward for the international arrangement on forests (IAF).” At this session, the Forum will review the effectiveness of the IAF and decide on its future.<sup>1</sup>
2. In preparation for UNFF11 in 2015, the Forum has made a number of decisions during the last fourteen years.<sup>2</sup> Most recently, Member States through Resolution 10/2 of UNFF10 decided to undertake several intersessional activities to ensure UNFF11 has a strong basis to review the effectiveness of the IAF and make a decision on the future of the IAF.
3. One of the three components of the intersessional activities on the IAF, as outlined in Resolution 10/2 of UNFF10, is to solicit views from Member States and other relevant stakeholders on the IAF. Specifically, the Resolution invites countries, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations, other relevant organizations, relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, instruments, organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders to submit views and proposals to the Forum’s Secretariat on the six key issues set out in paragraph 5 of the same resolution, and the full range of options on the future international arrangement on forests. The UNFF Secretariat should provide the compilation of these views and proposals to the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG1) on the IAF<sup>3</sup>.
4. This format has been prepared by the Forum’s Secretariat to facilitate submission of the inputs on the IAF to AHEG1. The electronic version of this format is available at: (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/docs/Views-on-IAF.doc>). Member States and other relevant stakeholders are invited to download this format and use it to submit their views and proposals in English. The explanation in each box should not exceed 150 words. Member States and other stakeholders are kindly requested to submit the original copy of the completed format in word processing software, with a scanned copy of the official letter from their respective organization/ministry/mission, via email to: [unff@un.org](mailto:unff@un.org), with copy to Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi at: [moeini-meybodi@un.org](mailto:moeini-meybodi@un.org), and Ms. Thida Sam at: [sam2@un.org](mailto:sam2@un.org). All inputs should be sent to the UNFF Secretariat by **30 October 2013**.

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution 1 of UNFF7 and its annex (E/2007/42), please see:

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/349/31/PDF/N0734931.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>2</sup> ECOSOC Resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49, Resolution 1 of UNFF7 and its annex (E/2007/42) and Resolution 2 of UNFF10 and its annex (E/2013/42)

<sup>3</sup> OP 5 and 6 of Resolution 2 of UNFF10 and paragraph 2 of its annex- Please see:

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/321/90/PDF/N1332190.pdf?OpenElement>

**Format for Soliciting Views and Proposals on the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)  
July 2013**

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**Section A: Full range of options for the IAF**

A.1 Please select (with X in front of the options below) and explain the preferred option for the future of the IAF:

- A legally binding instrument on all types of forests
- Strengthening of the current IAF
- Continuation of the current IAF
- Other options (please describe) Canada's position on its preferred option will be informed in part by the intersessional work and determined prior to the 2015 UNFF. -  
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- by the intersessional work and determined prior to the 2015 UNFF. -

**Section B: Performance of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and its processes since 2000, and future options for UNFF**

B.1 Please explain if you consider the current UNFF structure and its biennial sessions as sufficient to take necessary actions and to provide policy advice and guidance on all issues related to all types of forests and at all levels: The UNFF structure and its biennial sessions appear to be appropriate at the current time, especially in light of ongoing intersessional work and meetings e.g., AHEGs which allow the momentum and discussion to be maintained.

B.2 Please describe the UNFF's performance and list its key achievements in implementing its principal functions, as stated in ECOSOC resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49<sup>4</sup>: Although it is likely that the UNFF has helped generate political support in some countries, it is difficult to assess the overall impact of the UNFF in delivering results on the ground. It appears that it has not entirely achieved principal function c) listed in ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 which is "To provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation,

<sup>4</sup> Please see these documents at:

- [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/2000\\_35\\_E.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/2000_35_E.pdf)
- [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/iaf/2006\\_49\\_E.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/iaf/2006_49_E.pdf)



coordination and development” given the weak links to actions under the CPF, particularly the FAO, which ideally would broadly support the policy agenda. However, the UNFF has managed to keep forests on the global political agenda, and the Secretariat's location at the UN HQ in New York, offers the potential to build significant linkages to the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda which could be highly beneficial.

B.3 Please provide your view on the future options for the UNFF: Consideration needs to be given to the role that the UNFF can most usefully play, within the context of the UN system, in achieving results, and how its effectiveness can be magnified, drawing on other UN successes and specific forest needs. The UNFF benefits greatly from the strategic support provided by CPF members as the key technical bodies. Recognizing that the CPF is a voluntary arrangement, ideally its work would, in large part, support implementation of the global policy decisions taken by the UNFF. There is somewhat of a disconnect, and this appears to diminish the impact of decisions taken by the UNFF, recognizing that there is a need to also accommodate the unique mandates of other organizations (e.g., FAO's Strategic Objectives and cross-sectoral focus).

It would be useful if the UNFF could be more creative in its approach to addressing forest issues (e.g., lack of enforcement, transparency, pressures from other sectors), for instance by engaging key experts in the main areas of concern and seeking to identify what is required to address problems and drive the agenda, whether in a step-wise or integrated manner, in and outside the UN. The UNFF could then determine what role it could usefully play.

B.4 Please describe the potential roles for UNFF in implementing the UN post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs: The UNFF should ensure that links are made on an ongoing basis with the UN post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs, especially during discussion of the path forward on the international arrangement on forests in 2015. It is important that the UNFF Secretariat inform the development community about the role that forests can play in supporting their objectives, noting the political focus and financing opportunities associated with the development agenda.

B.5 Please describe the role and impact of Country-Led Initiatives and ad hoc expert groups in the work of the UNFF: Ad hoc expert groups have proven useful in advancing awareness and discussion between formal UNFF sessions, and allowed for more open discussion than formal UNFF sessions. Canada has limited experience with CLIs in recent years.

B.6 Please indicate how effective you consider the engagement of major groups in the work of the UNFF and provide suggestions on their further engagement: There is room to better engage major groups, including ensuring that they are engaged early in the process to allow for sufficient time to develop a position among members. Consideration could be given to adding a very short section summarizing the views of major groups in UNFF meeting documents so that there views are more prominent.

B.7 Please explain the role and impact of the International Year of Forests and the International Day of Forests in promoting greater awareness and strengthening political and public commitment for forests: It is hard to say how much impact they have had; however, they do promote a basis on which to promote awareness of forest issues e.g., a stamp was issued in Canada for the International Year of Forests. Their impact on strengthening political commitment is likely less than on

greater public awareness of forests in general.

**Section C: The Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (Forest Instrument) and the four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs)**

C.1 Please indicate progress in the implementation of the forest instrument:

- Adequate  
 Inadequate  
 Not sure

C.2 Please provide suggestions on how to improve progress: Clearly there are weaknesses with implementation of the forest instrument given ongoing issues with regard to the world's forests.

As only 57 countries submitted voluntary reports for UNFF 10 it is difficult to get a complete picture with regard to implementation; further efforts to improve and facilitate reporting would be beneficial.

C.3 Please indicate progress in achieving the GOFs:

|       | Adequate                 | Inadequate                          | Not sure                 |
|-------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| GOF1: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GOF2: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GOF3: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GOF4: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

C.4 Please provide suggestions on how to improve progress: Increased attention and commitment is needed by countries to delivering on the global objectives. Improved reporting and increased support for the preparation of country reports would aid in information-sharing and monitoring progress. Perhaps there could be workshops on this e.g., to discuss case studies of successful and not-so-successful implementation. Improving implementation needs to take into consideration the limitations of the NLBI and GOFs relative to legal agreements.

C.5 Please explain how implementation of the forest instrument has contributed to the implementation of forest-related international conventions, and vice versa: The forest instrument supports other international conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UNFCCC. There is no specific causal relationship or evidence.

C.6 Please describe how the forest instrument and the GOFs can contribute to the post-2015 UN development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: It is important to draw a direct link between the work of the UNFF and the future SDGs and post-2015 development agenda given

the importance of the products and ecosystem services provided by forests e.g., goods such as timber, food, fuel and bioproducts, and ecological functions such as carbon storage, climate change adaptation, nutrient cycling, water and air purification, regulation of water flows, erosion control, and biodiversity conservation.

It is likely that the SDGs will include a heightened focus on integrated landscape approaches and it will be important to promote the role of forests, and forest-related efforts, in this context. Forests can also make a valuable contribution to the green economy.

#### **Section D: The Forum's Secretariat**

D.1 Please indicate if you consider the structure, human and financial resources of the compact Secretariat of the UNFF adequate to fulfill its mandates:

- Adequate
- Inadequate
- Not sure

Additional explanation: It would be useful to have more detail about the tasks and achievements of the Secretariat and the role of each member, noting that the UNFF Secretariat is not as compact as some others.

D.2 Please provide suggestion(s) on strengthening the Secretariat of the Forum to enable it to fulfill its functions more effectively: More attention needs to be devoted to the website which is currently weak, disorganized, and often confusing (e.g., different material for the same meeting can be posted in 2 locations). When one tries to go back it often takes one out of the system, and the web address could be simpler (if appropriate). Significant attention should be given as a priority to producing a streamlined and effective website. Documents for meetings and AHEGs should be as crisp and punchy as possible as longer wordy documents are unlikely to be read. Secretariat staff need to be responsive to email communications from countries - some staff members are very responsive and others much less which no doubt increases the work load for the more responsive individuals.

D.3 Please provide suggestion(s) on how the Forum Secretariat's role, as a CPF member and as CPF secretariat, should be strengthened: The work of the AHEG and the analysis leading to the next UNFF should explore the role of the UNFF Secretariat, remove ambiguities in its mandate, sharpen the mandate where needed, and otherwise charge the Secretariat in more clear, deliberate terms.

#### **Section E: CPF and CPF Member Organizations**

E.1 Please explain the impacts and sufficiency of the programs and actions taken by CPF and CPF member organizations in implementing resolutions and supporting the work of UNFF since its inception: This is not clear. It would be useful if CPF member organizations were willing to report out on what they have done or will do specifically to support implementation of the forest instrument and the results achieved. There needs to be a clearer link between the policy drivers, the actions aimed at facilitating implementation, and the results achieved. There seems to be somewhat of a disconnect between the actions and outcomes of the policy body (the UNFF) and the implementation bodies related to forests (CPF member organizations) - ideally they should be harmonized to a large extent. Perhaps there would be a role for results-based work plans and performance measurement frameworks around this, if appropriate and acceptable.

E.2 Please describe how the CPF and its member organizations can further contribute to the work of the UNFF, and how to ensure availability of necessary resources for its activities in support of the work of the Forum: Close links need to be maintained and strengthened between the global forest policy discussions under UNFF and the work of the CPF organizations.

#### **Section F: Financing options and strategies**

F.1 Please provide views on financing options and strategies, including the creation of a voluntary Global Forest Fund, to generate resources from all sources for sustainable management of all types of forests and trees outside forests: In work on financing options, there needs to be a focus on maximizing the use of existing funds, and determining the contribution of REDD+ funding.

F.2 Please suggest concrete steps that UNFF, CPF members and other organizations should undertake to develop forest financing options: CPF members could help support the development of national forest financing strategies, including ways of raising domestic funds, and/or determine if some kind of brokering system could be useful, at the national, regional and/or global levels, to help countries access existing and emerging financing opportunities.