



Note No: 648 / 2013

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and has the honour to refer to the latter's letter dated 16 July 2013, requesting for views and proposals of Member States and other stakeholders on the international arrangement on forests (IAF).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations has the further honour to submit the South African views and proposals on IAF in the attached document.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) the assurances of its highest consideration.

New York
5 December 2013



The Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests
United Nations
New York

Country/Organization: SOUTH AFRICA

Date of Submission: 30 NOVEMBER 2013

**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.¹

2. In preparation for UNFF11 in 2015, the Forum has made a number of decisions during the last fourteen years.² 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 IAF³.

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, with copy to Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi at: moeini-meybodi@un.org, and Ms. Thida Sam at: sam2@un.org. All inputs should be sent to the UNFF Secretariat by **30 October 2013**.

¹ 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>

² 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)

³ 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**

Ministry / Organization: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

Name of official submitting the views: Mr AR Madula

Address: Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

110 Hamilton Street

Arcadia, Pretoria

Phone/Fax: +27 12 309 5710

E-mail: DFPS@daff.gov.za

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) -

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:

In its current form, the UNFF structure is not sufficient. Effectively it is a secretariat without an operational arm to make sure that resolutions taken are effectively implemented. The implementation of the resolutions is left entirely on the member states which may not have enough resources for implementation. In Africa, the African Forest Forum plays a significant role in operationalising the UNFF resolutions

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 2006/49⁴:

The UNFF strengthened political commitment to include forests to national and international development agenda by elevating, among other things, the role forests play in sustainable development and ecosystem management. It has led to political elevation of forests and harmonising of policies at the regional and sub regional level. Furthermore, success is noted on the following:

- ☑ Identification of financing needs, and gaps for forest financing;
- ☑ Establishment of Facilitative process;
- ☑ Collaborative work of the CPF which has enhanced focus on forests by many international institutions and;
- ☑ Partnerships' with regional and sub regional groups.

B.3 Please provide your view on the future options for the UNFF:

The current IAF needs to be strengthened in order to meet the needs of the developing countries. The strengthening does not imply a legally binding instrument.

B.4 Please describe the potential roles for UNFF in implementing the UN post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs:

SDGs are not separate from the post 2015 agenda but part of it addressing the three dimensions of the Sustainable development. The role of forests and trees outside of forests should be seen as crosscutting in the environment debate in the post 2015 agenda. The potential role of UNFF could be that of International Forest policy coordination, promoting SFM, reporting on contribution of forests towards achievement of the SDGs, mobilising financial resources for SFM and assisting developing LDCs, LFCCs and SIDS in mobilise financial resources for the same.

B.5 Please describe the role and impact of Country-Led Initiatives and ad hoc expert groups in the work of the UNFF:

The country led initiatives and ad hoc expert groups contributed significantly in the work of the UNFF through knowledge sharing, information dissemination and building international consensus on a range of issues. However, regional and sub regional organisations such as the African Forest Forum need to be capacitated to assist countries in the absence of operational support by the UNFF.

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:

South Africa consults on a broad level with all Stakeholders when preparing for any international engagement. However, in the context of forests, this level of consultation is minimal and at most informal. Engaging Major Groups has the ability to strengthen but not design policy decisions. The UNFF is also an Intergovernmental organisations which implies

⁴ Please see these documents at:

- http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/2000_35_E.pdf
- http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/iaf/2006_49_E.pdf

that decisions are country driven

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:

The IYF and IDF enhanced the efforts of countries in raising the profile of forestry both at a political and community level.

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:

Through the strengthening of regional or sub regional structures (where these exist) guidance can be provided on the implementation of the forest instrument. This would also include access to financing options available to developing countries as well as technology and skills transfer and development as well as capacity building.

C.3 Please indicate progress in achieving the GOFs:

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

GOF 1: Support to developing countries to do proper inventory.

GOF 2: Establishment of a mechanism(s) for payment of ecosystem services will enhance the achievement of this goal.

C.5 Please explain how implementation of the forest instrument has contributed to the implementation of forest-related international conventions, and vice versa:

The successful implementation of the forest instrument and achievement of GOFs by implication contributes significantly to the achievement of goals of other forest related conventions like the UNCSD and UNCCC with regards to Forests and Climate change mitigation to mention a few.

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:

The successful implementation of the forest instrument and achievement of GOFs by implication leads to the achievement of SDGs as they are seen as the final destination looking at poverty eradication as an overarching priority in the post -2015 agenda. Forests furthermore also addresses the three dimensions (i.e social, environmental and economical aspects) of sustainable development in a cross-cutting manner.

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:

The Forum is dependent on voluntary contributions and although such contributions to support the Forum activities have been reported to be increasing, it remains an unsustainable form of financing. The funding maybe adequate for the Secretariat in its current form, however, for the Secretariat to be able to provide adequate support to developing countries with regards to fulfilling its current mandate as well as ensuring implementation of resolutions emanating from other conventions eg UNCSD (Rio+20) especially on green economy and SDG's, sustainable flow of funds are needed. The secretariat will furthermore also benefit from increased human resources to provide support to developing countries in need of support regarding the implementation of Forum decisions and other functions that have been identified by countries.

D.2 Please provide suggestion(s) on strengthening the Secretariat of the Forum to enable it to fulfill its functions more effectively:

The financial contributions should not only be the responsibility of donor countries. As such, ALL member states must be encouraged and commit to do voluntary contributions according to their ability. In this regard, consideration could be given to approaching regional and sub regional organisations as well as the industry. Creation of an operational arm or section to deal with implementation of resolutions is one of the areas that would need to be funded to

make the Forum more effective. The establishment of the implementation will call for added human resources.

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 role played by the Secretariat is acknowledged. All member states should consider contributing to the trust fund faithfully and according to their abilities to ensure sustained financial resources. Acknowledging that the secretariat has limited capacity, it is recommended that staff is seconded to the Secretariat.

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:

The CPF member organisations especially the FAO made significant contributions in helping developing countries in revising their policies to incorporate SD principles; monitoring of forest resources, reporting format, and capacity building. The Secretariat played a significant role in coordinating and organising the substantive preparations for the organisation led initiatives in collaboration with FAO and facilitative processes amongst other things.

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:

South Africa requests that CPF members further contribute to the work of the UNFF by developing a road map for the harmonization of the collection and compilation of data on forest resources, especially non-wood forest products, in order to facilitate the estimation of the full extent of forest resources, building on existing efforts [and others initiatives, including the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services partnership, the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, the Green Economy Initiative, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, the OECD green growth strategy and the Poverty-Environment Initiative of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

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:

A mapping exercise is needed to establish the full picture of what funding is available and

how to access such funds. Furthermore, access to established mechanisms should be simplified to allow for easier access by developing countries. At regional and sub regional level, consideration could be given to create regional specific forest funding mechanisms on the basis of an intergovernmental structure which will afford all members to contribute and access to such a mechanism. Until the global financial situation has improved, the establishment of a Global Forst Fund may only happen on paper and will also be competing with funds such as the Climate Change Green Fund. For the time being a basket approach (therefore the mapping exercise) would allow for expanded financial exposure

F.2 Please suggest concrete steps that UNFF, CPF members and other organizations should undertake to develop forest financing options: .

See the above. Another option would be for the Director of the Forum to be authorised to have discussions with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to establish under which "windows" forest funding can profit in the absence of a forest dedicated window. To request that the 5th Replenishment of the GEF consider a Forest Window is premature and too late at this stage due to the timing of the meeting. Although there is a biodiversity window in GEF, note should be taken that forests are not always within the mandate of the Environmental Ministries and therefore seldom if ever, profit from biodiversity related allocations.