

Country/Organization: Russian Federation

Date of Submission: 1 June 2014

**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**

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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) -

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 current UNFF Structure and its biennial sessions can be considered as sufficient for the current UNFF agenda. The structure must be substantially strengthened in the future since the conditions and tasks of this organization for the nearest forecast period are becoming more complicated. The biennial sessions should be enough only if they are alternated with intermediate special expert group meetings (AHEG) and continental regional sessions.

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 ECOSOC Resolutions 2000/35 and 2000/49 have been implemented since 2000 in a satisfactory manner within the UNFF capabilities and human and financial resources. The main results are: (*) establishment of CPF, (*) NLBI, (*) Global objectives on forests – GOF, (*)

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

improved accounting on forests, (*) systematization of sources of forest financing in the "Sourcebook on forest financing", (*) holding of the international forests year, week and day.

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

The achievement of global legally binding agreement on forest should be kept in the future agenda. The UN forest forum should constitute a platform for reaching such an agreement as well as regional agreements on forests under the UN auspices. Along with this task the Forum should perform the functions and play the role of a comprehensive "political umbrella" regarding all international issues on forests. To be able to do so the Forum must be substantially strengthened in financial, professional and intellectual terms.

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

The UNFF (or its successor) should not be an executive body or "field agency". After 2015 it should strictly remain a political international forum and a leader in implementing the SDGs. Directly related to the issues of forest ecosystems.

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

The role and impact of Country-Led Initiatives (CLI), Region-Led Initiatives (RLI), and Organization-Led Initiatives (OLI), and ad hoc expert groups (AHEG) are assessed as positive but moderates. The results are often subject to influence of the interests of individual major donors. The UNFF duty station in New-York serves best the political mission of this organization as a global mechanism on forests. In addition it is necessary to maintain the interaction of the forest mechanisms of the international, regional and country scale; to follow the Rio+20 decisions in order to preserve the leading role of the regional organizations (article 100, "The future we want"), especially the UN regional commissions, in addressing the issues of sustainable forest development at the regional level, and to continue the strengthening and implementation of regional agreements, initiatives and procedures on implementation of sustainable forest management in the respective regions of the world.

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:

The engagement of major groups is not quite efficient. Private business actually does not participate in the Forum's work. There is practically no interaction between private business and civil society at the Forum which is its serious shortcoming. In the future the engagement of major groups (civil society and business) should be systematic and aimed at achieving the tasks of SDGs.

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 International Year of Forests (IYOF) and the International Day of Forests (IDOF) are efficient instruments in promoting greater public awareness and strengthening political commitment for world forests. The holding of IYOF (2013) and IDOF in Russia, as a forest

country, became popular and attracted increased attention from the Government and general public. The UNFF should lead the way and increase the efficiency and scope of the international events on forest issues.

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: It is necessary to improve the system of objective assessment of the GOF and NLBI achievements and regularly measure their evolution in time for objective progress assessment.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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:

There are 4 goals to:

- (1) reverse the loss of the world forests through sustainable management;
- (2) improve the forest economy, contribution to social-environmental sphere including the conditions of life of the forest communities;
- (3) substantially increase the areas of sustainably managed forests;
- (4) reverse the decline of official development assistance to sustainable forest management and substantially mobilize the increased new and additional financial recourses from all sources for SFP implementation.

There has no been success so far in reversing the loss of forests (1) and decline of official assistance to SFP (4). A relatively better progress has been achieved on goals 2 and 3.

It is necessary to provide for sufficient financial resources and bring the financing in line with the Forum's mandate.

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

The NLBI (non legally-binding instrument) certainly contributes to achieving the goals of forest-related conventions such as UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN REDD+). On the other hand these conventions have contributed over the recent years to the forest instrument (NLBI) and in particular to the REDD+ process. Despite a positive effect that was achieved it is observed that there is an insufficient linkage and interaction and undesirable competition between the forest instrument and international conventions. Unlike the NLBI the development of a legally-binding instrument on forest at global or regional level would to a greater degree contribute to the achievement of sustainable forest development goals in the entire world or relevant regions.

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:

While the SDGs and UN post-2015 agenda have not been determined yet it is difficult to say how the global goals on forests (GOF) will be consistent with the new agenda.

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 Secretariat Staff is dedicated to the UNFF mission; it shows its integrity and achieved significant results despite its compact composition. It is too compact and insufficiently staffed, and often excessively overburdened. The financial resources of the Secretariat are insufficient, inadequate and unstable and do not meet the current and even more so its future agenda.

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

The Secretariat should not exceed its powers and get involved in the implementation of

political decisions in the sustainable forest management practice (SFM). This is the task for the CPF members with relevant mandate, the countries and major groups. The Secretariat should be strengthened by professional staff with forest education and stable funding so as to increase the efficiency of the Secretariat in achieving the goals of sustainable forest development across the world.

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 establishment of CPF as a working body of the UNFF was a major achievement of the Forum. The Secretariat staff should be strengthened and its structure reexamined in accordance with new mandate for the post-2015 period.

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:

Not all the CPF members actively participate in the UNFF activities in the same way. The impact of participation can be assessed as moderate and limited.

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:

The commitments of the CPF members regarding financial and staff support to the Forum including designated quotas of such participation should be encouraged.

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:

The establishment of the voluntary global forest fund is not a cure for all remedy. Sustainable financing of forest management should be carried out by mobilizing finances from all sources: private and public, national and international. Particular attention should be drawn to mobilizing and stimulating national domestic investments.

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

The Forum should make an emphasis on promoting favorable national investment climate for domestic forest management. It is necessary to increase awareness, transparency and forest

monitoring. The source book on financing requires updating. It is necessary to develop a "Sourcebook" on advance and innovation technologies and contribute to their advertizing and promotion. All existing and new potential including GEF, REDD+ etc. should be better explored.