

# **Independent Assessment of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)**

## **Report of the Team of Independent Consultants**

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### **Independent Consultants (“Team”)**

BLASER, Juergen (WEOG- Switzerland)

CHIPETA, Mafa Evaristus (Africa –Malawi)

LOBOVIKOV, Maxim (Eastern Europe – Russian Federation)

ILLUECA, Jorge (Latin America and the Caribbean – Panama)

UMALI, Ricardo Martinez (Asia – the Philippines)

### **Co-Facilitators**

HOOGEVEEN, Hans (The Netherlands)

ABDULLAH, Saiful (Malaysia)



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## ACRONYMS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ACTO    | Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (OCTA is the Spanish acronym)  |
| ADG     | Assistant Director General (FAO)  |
| AFF     | African Forest Forum  |
| AFP     | Asia Forest Partnership   |
| AFPNet  | Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation   |
| AGF     | Advisory Group on Finance of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests   |
| AHEG    | Open-Ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group. (In this Report, unless otherwise stated, AHEG 1 and AHEG 2 refer, respectively, to the first and second meetings of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests.) |
| ASEAN   | Association of South East Asian Nations   |
| C&I     | Criteria & Indicators for sustainable forest management   |
| CBD     | Convention on Biological Diversity  |
| CIFOR   | Center for International Forestry Research  |
| CITES   | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora   |
| CLI     | Country Led Initiative  |
| COFO    | FAO Committee on Forestry   |
| COMIFAC | Commission on Forests in Central Africa   |
| COP     | Conference of the Parties to a convention   |
| CPF     | Collaborative Partnership on Forests  |
| CSD     | Commission on Sustainable Development   |
| DESA    | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs  |
| ECOSOC  | Economic and Social Council of the United Nations   |
| EMG     | Environmental Management Group of the United Nations  |
| EU      | European Union  |
| FAO     | Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nation  |
| FCPF    | Forest Carbon Partnership Facility  |
| FE      | Forest Europe, formally Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE)   |
| FFF     | Forest and Farm Facility  |
| FI      | Forest Instrument: full title is Non Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI)  |
| FIP     | Forest Investment Programme   |
| FLEG    | Forest law enforcement and governance (process)   |
| FLEGT   | Forest law enforcement and governance and trade (EU initiative)   |
| FP      | Facilitative Process of the UNFF  |
| FRA     | Global Forest Resources Assessment  |
| FSC     | Forest Stewardship Council  |
| GA      | United Nations General Assembly   |
| GEF     | Global Environment Facility   |
| GESAMP  | Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection   |
| GFEP    | Global Forest Expert Panel  |
| GFIS    | Global Forest Information System  |
| GHG     | Greenhouse gas  |
| GOF     | Global Objective on Forests   |
| HLPF    | High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development   |

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| IAF            | International Arrangement on Forests   |
| ICRAF          | World Agroforestry Centre  |
| IDF            | International Day of Forests   |
| IFF            | Intergovernmental Forum on Forests   |
| IGO            | Intergovernmental Organisation   |
| INC            | Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe   |
| IPBES          | Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services  |
| IPCC           | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  |
| IPF            | Intergovernmental Programme on Forests   |
| ITTA           | International Tropical Timber Agreement  |
| ITTF           | Interagency Task Force on Forests  |
| ITTO           | International Tropical Timber Organization   |
| IUCN           | The World Conservation Union   |
| IUFRO          | International Union of Forest Research Organizations   |
| IYF            | International Year of Forests  |
| JLG            | Rio Conventions' Joint Liaison Group   |
| LDC            | Least Developed Country  |
| LFCC           | Low Forest Cover Country   |
| LULUCF         | Land use, land use change and forestry (term used in context of UNFCCC)  |
| MAR            | Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting   |
| MCPFE          | Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe: known as Forest Europe (FE)   |
| MDG            | Millennium Development Goal  |
| MEA            | Multilateral Environmental Agreement   |
| MGI            | Major Group-led Initiative   |
| MoI            | Means of Implementation  |
| MoU            | Memorandum of Understanding  |
| MRV            | Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (term in REDD+)   |
| MYPOW          | Multi-year programme of work   |
| NAMAs          | Nationally Appropriated Mitigation Actions   |
| NFF            | National Forest Fund   |
| NFPF           | National Forest Programme Facility   |
| NFPs (or nfps) | National Forest Programmes   |
| NGO            | Non-Governmental Organization  |
| NLBI           | Non Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests: also known as Forest Instrument (FI)   |
| OCTA           | Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation (the Spanish acronym for ACTO)  |
| ODA            | Official Development Assistance  |
| OECD           | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development   |
| OLI            | Organisation-led Initiative  |
| OWG            | Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)   |
| PEFC           | Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes  |
| PROFOR         | Program on Forests of the World Bank   |
| RB             | Resources from the UN regular budget   |
| REDD           | Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation  |
| REDD+          | Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon |

|         |   |
|---------|---|
|         | Stocks  |
| RLI     | Regional-led Initiative   |
| SBSTA   | UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice  |
| SIDS    | Small Island Developing States  |
| SDGs    | Sustainable Development Goals   |
| SFM     | Sustainable Forest Management   |
| SPC     | Secretariat of the Pacific Community  |
| STFM    | Status of Tropical Forest Management (ITTO reports published in 2005, 2011, planned for 2016)                       |
| TST     | Technical Support Team (DESA/UNDP) for the OWG on SDGs  |
| UN      | United Nations  |
| UNCCD   | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification   |
| UNCED   | United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio Earth Summit), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 |
| UNCSD   | United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+ 20), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 2012                         |
| UNDA    | United Nations Development Account  |
| UNDP    | United Nations Development Programme  |
| UNECA   | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa   |
| UNECE   | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe   |
| UNECLAC | United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean  |
| UNEP    | United Nations Environment Programme  |
| UNESCAP | United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific  |
| UNESCWA | United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  |
| UNFCCC  | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change   |
| UNFA    | United Nations Forest Assembly (proposed in chapter 6 of this Report)   |
| UNFF    | United Nations Forum on Forests   |
| UNFFS   | United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat   |
| UNGA    | United Nations General Assembly   |
| WEOG    | Western Europe and Others Group   |
| WSSD    | World Summit on Sustainable Development (informally known as Rio+ 10), Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002             |
| XB      | Extra-budgetary resources   |

## DEFINITIONS AS USED IN THE IAF INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

**Addendum (to the Forest Instrument).** An addendum is an additional document not included in the main part of an agreement (in this case the Forest Instrument). It is compiled and executed after the main document was agreed upon. It contains a proposed change or explanation of the main document (the Forest Instrument) and/or additional items that have been the subject of negotiation after the Forest Instrument was originally proposed. An Addendum could be adopted by the Forum<sup>1</sup> and attached to the original agreement so that there will be no confusion as to what is included or intended. (An Addendum is to be distinguished from other appendices to an agreement which may contain additional terms, specifications, provisions, standard forms or other information which have been separated out from the main body of the initial agreement.)

**Biological Diversity / Biodiversity.** The variability among living organisms from all sources, including *inter alia* terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part: this includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems. (Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 2)

**Deforestation.** The conversion of a forest to other land-use or the permanent reduction of the tree canopy cover below the minimum 10 percent threshold. (FAO 2012a)

**Ecosystem Services.** The direct and indirect contributions of ecosystems to human well-being. (TEEB 2010, Annex 1)

**Food Security.** Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (World Summit on Food Security, Rome, November 2009)

**Forest.** In general terms, forests comprise land with a minimum area of tree cover, where the trees will reach a minimum height and have a minimum canopy cover when mature. The UNFF/FAO definition is: Land spanning more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than five metres and a canopy cover of more than 10%, or trees able to reach those thresholds *in situ*; it does not include land that is predominantly under agricultural or urban use (FAO 2012a). UNFCCC (2001) and CBD (2002) as well as UNFF/FAO have provided generic definitions of forests.

**Forest degradation.** Reduction of the capacity of a forest to provide goods and services. (FAO 2012a)

**Forest Instrument.** Short term for the Non-legally Binding Instrument on all types of forests (NLBI), adopted by the General Assembly in December 2007 through its Resolution 62/98.

**Forestry.** Forestry is the art and science of managing forests and trees, embracing a broad range of concerns which include providing timber, fuelwood and non-wood forest products, biodiversity management, wildlife habitat management, watershed management and water quality management, recreation, landscape protection and erosion control, employment, and sinks for atmospheric carbon dioxide. (ITTO 2014)

**(Forest) Governance.** A policy and political approach related to defining the elements needed to conserve and sustainably manage forests. (ITTO 2014)

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<sup>1</sup> Non-legally binding agreements or addendums are often not signed. The Forest Instrument was not signed and so an Addendum may be “adopted by the Forum” and not signed.

**Governance.** Governance is the process of governing, the way in which society is managed and how the competing priorities and interests of different groups are reconciled. It includes the formal institutions of government but also informal arrangements. Governance is concerned with the processes by which citizens participate in decision-making, how government is accountable to its citizens and how society obliges its members to observe its rules and laws. “**Good governance**” is generally regarded as being participatory, consensus-oriented, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, as well as following the rule of law; it assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account, and the voices of the most vulnerable are heard. (UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific<sup>2</sup>)

**International Arrangement on Forests (IAF).** As outlined on Section III of the TORs for this report (see Annex 1), the IAF is an informal title given to the actors which constitute the UNFF’s “membership”. The first and primary component is the Member States and countries who are members of the Forum, acting individually and working together as the Forum. The second component is the UNFF Secretariat. The third component is the voluntary partnership of the CPF and other relevant IGOs in contributing to the work of the UNFF individually and collectively, including implementation of the Resolutions of the Forum. The fourth component comprises regional organizations and their processes, and Major Groups who take part in the Forum’s sessions. The centrepiece of the IAF is to promote conservation and sustainable management of all types of forests through implementation of the Forest Instrument and achievement of its four shared GOFs and subsequent Resolutions of the Forum, as well as the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The primary focus is on implementation of policies in these areas.

**Legally Binding Agreement (LBA).** Used in this Report to mean an international agreement, synonymous with ‘treaty’ or ‘convention’, concluded between States in written form and recognized in international law as comprising binding commitments for the States that are party to it.

**Legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.** A proposed regional forest agreement that was being negotiated by the Intergovernmental Negotiated Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe. (INC 2013<sup>3</sup>)

**Major Groups.** Within the UN sustainable development context, Major Groups consist of Business and Industry, Children and Youth, Farmers, Indigenous Peoples, Local Authorities, NGOs, the Scientific and Technological Community, Women, and Workers and Trade Unions. (Agenda 21, 1992)

**Non-legally Binding Instrument on all types of forests.** See Forest Instrument.

**REDD+.** Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. (UNFCCC 2009<sup>4</sup>)

**Stewardship of forests.** As used in this Report, stewardship of forests means providing leadership to promote the vital significance of forests for economic and social development and environmental protection of all countries, to integrate forests in the broader sustainable development agenda and to promote implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests and trees outside forests at all levels through *inter alia* providing relevant policy recommendations and advice, fostering coordination and collaboration with relevant

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf>, accessed 28 August 2014.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.forestnegotiations.org/>, accessed 28 August 2014.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://unfccc.int/methods/redd/items/8180.php>, accessed 28 August 2014.

stakeholders, mobilizing resources and high level political support, effective influencing of major international/intergovernmental processes, and providing substantive support for activities carried out to this end.

**Sustainable Forest Management (SFM).** As explained in the Forest Instrument adopted by General Assembly Resolution 62/98, SFM is a dynamic and evolving concept that is intended to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental value of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations.

**Treaty.** The term “treaty” has regularly been used as a generic term embracing all instruments binding at international law concluded between international entities, regardless of their formal designation. In order to speak of a “treaty” in a generic sense, an instrument has to meet various criteria. First of all, it has to be a binding agreement, which means that the contracting parties intended to create legal rights and duties. Secondly, the instrument must be concluded by states or international organizations with treaty-making power. Thirdly, it has to be governed by international law. Finally, the engagement has to be in writing. (United Nations Treaty Collection<sup>5</sup>)

**User rights.** The rights to the use of forest resources as defined by local custom or agreements or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. These rights may restrict the use of particular resources to specific harvesting levels or specific extraction techniques. (ITTO 2014)

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<sup>5</sup> See [https://treaties.un.org/pages/Overview.aspx?path=overview/definition/page1\\_en.xml](https://treaties.un.org/pages/Overview.aspx?path=overview/definition/page1_en.xml), accessed 28 August 2014.

# 1 Key Messages

## *The challenges we face*

1-01 Forests occupy nearly a third of the Earth's land area and provide vital goods and services. Many of the poorest people in the world depend directly on forests for their livelihoods. The destruction of forests is a major contributor to net emissions of atmospheric greenhouse gases. Forests are also home to two-thirds of terrestrial biodiversity. Yet, forests are still undervalued because markets often fail to take full account of their true environmental, social and cultural values; this means that short-term economic pressures can lead to continued deforestation and forest degradation. Forest cover is being lost at a rate of about 11-13 million hectares per year, and this is only partially offset by forest restoration and planting new forests. Global challenges, such as population increase and even faster growth in consumption, will put further pressure on forests. Unfortunately, there is still a lack of commitment to immediate and sustained action to address these problems.

1-02 The review of the IAF offers a window of opportunity for renewed effort, but this window is rapidly closing. Key ecosystem services are facing critical thresholds. A coordinated global approach to forest policy is needed to generate political commitment, by explaining why forest loss represents a threat to humanity, and to secure effective action. The future IAF must build on the achievements of the past and also integrate forests fully with the global development agenda.

## **The current IAF**

1-03 Key components of the current IAF include the UNFF, with its 197 Member States and its secretariat; the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which is a voluntary partnership of 14 international bodies that can support implementation, for example through research, financing and technical information; Major Groups; and regional processes. A major achievement of the current IAF was the adoption, by the UN General Assembly in 2007, of a "non-legally binding instrument on all types of forest" (or Forest Instrument for short) and four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs). Since it was established by ECOSOC in 2000, the IAF has also developed a common understanding of what sustainable forest management (SFM) means; it has forged some good collaborative partnerships; it has helped build capacity for national reporting; it has undertaken analytical work and raised the profile of forests in the outcomes of major UN Summits, for example at WSSD, UNCSD and most recently on the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); it raised the awareness on multiple benefits of forests through the International Year of Forests in 2011 and the International Day of Forests, and it promoted knowledge and better understanding on critical forest-related issues, such as financing, through carrying out analytical studies and by organizing global and regional expert group meetings and workshops on these issues.

1-04 However, over the past seven years UNFF has followed a relatively rigid multi-year programme of work (MYPow), which has restricted its ability to react fully to some important emerging issues, such as climate change, forest governance, trade, investment and the valuation of ecosystem services. Many of these policy issues have been developed outside UNFF, which has not exercised its perceived convening power well enough to minimize fragmentation of the global forest agenda. This fragmentation can also be attributed to inadequate coordination within the governments of Member States on forest-related matters.

1-05 There is also concern about inadequate implementation of the Forest Instrument and its GOFs. As a policy forum, UNFF has no direct capacity for implementation of the Forest Instrument: this is ultimately the responsibility of Member States. However, the Forum can help to promote implementation. There are also opportunities to work more closely with regional and sub-regional organizations that can engage at the national level. In addition, UNFF could be more selective and focused in identifying implementation priorities. Successful implementation depends on strong financial and institutional foundations. It also requires effective participation and support from all Major Groups (where there is a need to encourage more active engagement by business and industry, and mainstream environmental NGOs, in particular).

### ***The Forest Instrument***

1-06 The adoption of the Forest Instrument in 2007 was the result of fifteen years of difficult and complex negotiations. This instrument is the only global agreement on sustainable management of all types of forests, and it remains valid. However, direct causal relationships between the Forest Instrument itself and national actions are not always obvious and can be hard to prove.

1-07 The Forest Instrument (including its GOFs) should be updated to take into account major developments, including in particular, the SDGs and their targets. An Addendum<sup>6</sup> to the Forest Instrument could address issues that have become more prominent since 2007, including climate change, the CBD Aichi targets, new trade rules and forest governance issues. This would also provide an opportunity to review the time frame for the GOFs and establish a set of clear quantifiable targets, taking into account the SDGs.

### ***Financing Sustainable Forest Management***

1-08 Financing has two key components: the financing of actions to achieve SFM itself, and financing to support institutional arrangements for the operation of the post-2015 IAF process. There is a large and growing gap between forest financing needs and actual current financing flows. Private sector finance is mainly invested in forest plantations and processing industries, rather than the management of natural forests, and private investors do not normally aim to directly finance the delivery of “public goods”, such as forest social and ecological functions. To help address the long-term character of forest investments and the failure of markets to capture more of the true value of forest ecosystems, there is a need for a public accounting system that recognizes these values, for example in relation to carbon sequestration, water management, biodiversity conservation, soil erosion control and other ecosystem services. In the absence of such recognition, there will continue to be insufficient political will, at both national and international levels, to support adequate public funding for forests.

1-09 The Team suggests adopting a three-prong approach to forest financing. The three prongs are: (i) catalytic initial upfront investment, for example for analytical work and information systems, especially where these are weak, as in some developing countries; (ii) mainstreamed upfront investment for institutional, infrastructure and capacity development; and (iii) sustainable financing resulting from capturing a higher proportion of the full value of forest goods and services. This approach to SFM should also take full advantage of wider funding opportunities, such as REDD+, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and support for FLEGT.

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<sup>6</sup> See definition on page 9.

1-10 Thus, the main financial elements to be developed by the post-2015 IAF could include expert groups to consider all major potential and newly emerging forest-related mechanisms and funding sources, and continued development of the Facilitative Process.

1-11 Another important element would be the creation of a strategic trust fund for strengthening capacity to support the implementation of the Forest Instrument. This strategic trust fund would catalyze SFM at the national level, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It must also provide priority support to develop national action plans for implementation of the Forest Instrument, to prepare national reports on implementation progress, and to help mobilize further resources for the implementation of SFM. In addition, trust funds would be needed to strengthen the science-policy interface as well as human and budgetary resources of the post-2015 IAF Secretariat in its extended tasks.

### ***Connecting the future IAF to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)***

1-12 Forests have the potential to make direct contributions to implementing two of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), namely MDG1 (eradicating extreme poverty) and MDG7 (ensure environmental sustainability). Progress was made, but despite the absence of specific forest-related development targets, UNFF did not pursue adoption of proxy targets which its sectoral membership could have sought to achieve under the MDG process; however, this has been remedied in the proposals for the SDGs, published in July 2014, which do contain forest-related targets. Seventeen SDGs have been proposed, and forests are explicitly mentioned in SDG 15:

- *Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.*

SDG15 also includes two forest-specific targets, namely 15.2 (*by 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests, and increase afforestation and reforestation by x% globally*) and 15.b (*mobilize significantly resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management, and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance sustainable forest management, including for conservation and reforestation*). The multiple functions of forests are also explicitly recognized in one of the targets for SDG6 on sustainable water management, namely 6.6 (*by 2020 protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes*).

1-13 The SDGs and related targets should be taken as a key element for the post-2015 IAF, which should have a strong relationship with the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The Team proposes that, in addition to the secretariat undertaking strategic and analytical work to support the HLPF in this respect by providing integrated inputs on forests to broader development processes, the Secretary-General should appoint a Special Envoy on Forests to facilitate top-level connections and support.

### ***Strategic Planning***

1-14 In order to improve the effectiveness of the work of the IAF, Member States could consider replacing the inflexible MYPOW with a long-term strategic plan, which would be developed to guide and focus the work of the IAF. It could be implemented, and adapted as necessary, on a four or five year

“rolling” basis. Such a plan would identify priority actions relating to the (re)newed role of the post-2015 IAF and would include measurable targets.

### ***Options for the future***

1-15 The Team proposes a number of options for the post-2015 IAF with the intention of elevating the forest policy dialogue and in order to address the current fragmentation of global forest policy, divided among multiple processes and programmes. The post-2015 IAF should focus on two central functions:

- A stewardship role, providing leadership to promote the vital significance of forests in the global sustainable development agenda at the “policy-making level”, where forest-related issues are intrinsically inter-connected with other policy areas and where, within the forest agenda itself, there is need for reduced fragmentation among processes. This role implies coordination of global forest policy-making with other natural resource utilization sectors, as well as such issues as responsible trade and sustainable production and consumption patterns. This function directly addresses one element of the purpose of the IAF defined by ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35, namely: “to provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development”.
- Promoting and facilitating sustainable management of all types of forests. This function addresses another element of the purpose defined by ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35, namely “to promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels”. This “umbrella” or “chapeau” role for the post-2015 IAF includes the provision of a suitable environment for *inter alia* generating the necessary means of implementation to achieve SFM, knowledge sharing and technology transfer, while recognizing that ultimate responsibility for SFM lies with Member States and those stakeholders who own and use the forests.

1-16 To fulfil such central functions, the Team considered a full range of options, based on a series of building blocks that can be assembled and connected in different ways. Out of the full range of options, the Team found four options to be the most feasible and practical and thus focused on these four options for change. The building blocks are a UN Forest Assembly (UNFA), to replace UNFF in reporting to ECOSOC and to provide an “umbrella” for all international initiatives and agreements relating to forests, with universal membership of all countries; regional forest assemblies; and a UN Forest Support mechanism, with its own trust fund, to provide a science/policy interface and support the UNFA in policy development and SFM implementation. To support these building blocks there would be an adapted CPF to facilitate voluntary agencies that promote SFM; a strengthened UNFA Secretariat attached to DESA to, *inter alia*, support coordination and organization of UNFA; the Special Envoy on Forests, appointed by the Secretary-General to raise the political commitment to forests within the broader development agenda; and Major Groups and other stakeholders (e.g. philanthropic foundations) to support the deliberations of the UNFA. The performance and function of all these building blocks will need to be based on strengthened policy, institutional and financial foundations.

1-17 The following four options are presented by the Team to stimulate thinking about the possible approaches, alongside an “option 0” which is continuation of the current IAF:

- Option 1. An enhanced IAF that is based on current arrangements, but includes updating the Forest Instrument through an Addendum, the establishment of a UN Forest Assembly to replace UNFF, Regional Fora, the creation of UN Forest as a science-policy interface, the appointment of

the Special Envoy on Forests, the development UN Trust Funds (including the Strategic Trust Fund) and a strengthened UNFA Secretariat.

- Option 2. This is more radical. As well as incorporating many of the elements of option 1, the concept of UN Forests is further developed to put forward the idea of a new institution/mechanism supporting global forest policy and SFM implementation.
- Option 3. This also builds on option 1, but in a different way. The concept presented here would offer individual Member States the option of making firmer, legally-binding, commitments to SFM – but only if they wish to do so – by having a parallel political track.
- Option 4. This includes regional level legally-binding agreements, as a variant on option 3.

Under any of these options (or some combination), it will be essential for the post-2015 IAF to have a strategic plan that can be adapted to reflect changing circumstances and new and emerging issues.

### ***Moving towards SFM on a planetary scale in the post-2015 period***

1-18 There are some positive signs of increasing global political commitment to forests in all regions of the world. The post-2015 IAF should build on the strengths and success of the current arrangement, address the weaknesses, and use the opportunities. It should aim to establish a strong forest stewardship role, mobilizing necessary actions and resources so that the importance of forests and trees is fully reflected in the sustainable development agenda at the global, regional, national, sub-national and local levels. The post-2015 IAF should also be able to promote implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests and trees outside forests. In this regard, the current IAF should be transformed into a more authoritative body to coordinate and steer the global forest agenda and to provide a global framework for SFM. The future IAF, with renewed commitment from all its members and associated parties, has the potential to achieve this: but it needs to be strengthened, for the sake of all who benefit, directly or indirectly, from the world's forests.

## **2 Background, Rationale and Scope of the Independent Assessment of the IAF**

2-01 In its Resolution 10/2, the UNFF decided that the review of the effectiveness of the IAF should include consideration of all options and have three components, namely: (a) submissions by countries, the CPF, its member organizations, other relevant organizations, relevant regional and sub-regional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, instruments, organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders; (b) an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on the IAF; and (c) an independent assessment of the IAF, the Report of which is the present document. This Independent Assessment is a critical element of the review, complementing other relevant inputs. The objective of the Independent Assessment is to assist and inform the second meeting of the AHEG on the IAF (AHEG2) in preparing for the deliberations of UNFF 11 on a post-2015 future IAF; the Terms of Reference of the Independent Assessment are set out in Annex 1.

2-02 This Independent Assessment draws lessons from the successes and challenges faced by the current IAF since 2000, and proposes future options that build on the strengths and opportunities of the current arrangements. Based on the collection of information by its five consultants, one from each UN geographic region (see short biographies in Annex 7), the IAF Independent Team has prepared this single comprehensive Report that assesses the achievement of the current IAF and offers expert views on options for its future. The Report is being presented to the UNFF Bureau in September 2014 and to AHEG2 in January 2015. After consideration of all inputs, including this report, AHEG2 will then propose a set of recommendations for consideration at UNFF 11, providing a strategic direction on the function and institutional arrangements of the IAF for the period beyond 2015.

2-03 The Team established to carry out the Independent Assessment of the IAF has taken seriously the term “independent” in its name, and has adopted an analytical, forward-looking approach which draws on studying past performance through the review of relevant texts and documents as well as interchanges with a representative cross-section of IAF stakeholders. In this Report, the Team provides an evidence-based analysis of the achievements of the current IAF with regard to its objectives, strengths and shortcomings of past and current work. The Team has recognized that activities since 2000 have built upon much work regarding forests and the fundamental requirements of SFM that was carried out before 2000 – including that of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). The Team has not considered it necessary to reproduce much of this historical material, which is well known to many UNFF stakeholders and available on the UNFF website. Instead, the Team has sought to present a crisp Report focused on the future and actionable options that can lead to positive impacts on SFM.

2-04 In looking at the past, but even more at the future, the Team has made judgements about the appropriateness - for achieving practical progress towards SFM - of the IAF’s ambitious agenda and aspirations, institutional arrangements and considerations of sustainability. As mandated, the Independent Assessment focuses on the period since 2007, taking into account the development since 2000, and adds value by making proposals which, if properly implemented, should accelerate the pace at which the IAF can help its stakeholders achieve SFM in reality.

2-05 In its recommendations for future post-2015 IAF, this Independent Assessment has adopted a time frame of up to 2030, which is aligned with the calendar of many of the proposed Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets.

2-06 As elaborated in section V of the Terms of Reference, the scope of the Independent Assessment includes consideration of a full range of options; the past performance of the UNFF and its processes since 2000; review of the Forest Instrument (FI)<sup>7</sup>, including progress towards achieving the four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs); review of the Forum's Secretariat (UNFFS); review of the CPF; review of financing for implementing of the FI, the Facilitative Process and financing options; and the UNFF within the context of the UN Sustainable Development framework. With the exception of the options, which are presented in Section 6, all these issues are considered in Section 5 of the Report. Key messages from the Report are highlighted in Section 1, while Section 7 sets out conclusions and recommendations, and Section 8 presents the Team's view of the way forward.

### 3 IAF Assessment Methodology

#### 3.1 Assessment tools

31-01 The Team has based its work on formal and informal interviews to acquire an understanding of results of the work of the IAF, the concerns of stakeholders and implementation dynamics. Through a sample of interviews, the Team sought to understand perceptions about the functioning of the IAF and its possible future mandate. The Team tried to get views from a balanced cross-section of the IAF constituency/stakeholders regarding the extent and efficacy with which the functions have been achieved. It also looked for insights about how far the performance of the IAF has helped to realize the most important ambitions for achieving SFM on the ground. As agreed with interviewed parties, this Report has preserved anonymity and has not attributed any statements to particular interviewees. The Team also reviewed all main UNFF documents, reports, publications and collected facts from countries.

31-02 The Team has worked over a time span of 10 months (October 2013 – August 2014). It organized its work in three phases:

- The ***inception phase***, with the preparation of an inception report<sup>8</sup>, consisted of developing a common understanding amongst Team members of the issues relating to its task and of gathering more in-depth data and information regarding various aspects of the work of the IAF through background research, in order to scope the review work more accurately (October – January 2014).
- The ***inquiry phase***, which followed immediately, included an early Team briefing (in January 2014) and comprised the bulk of the data collection and analysis work by each Team member at the regional level. It included reviewing the past performance of the IAF (including the UNFF) and its processes since 2000. The work entailed background research, desk reviews of specific areas of work, country and institutional visits and interviews with key informants. This phase included reporting to and receiving feedback from AHEG 1 in February 2014 (December 2013 – March 2014).
- The ***conclusion and recommendation phase*** started in April 2014, with the Team meeting to assemble findings, and formulate preliminary conclusions and recommendations. This phase included the assessment of a full range of options for a post-2015 IAF. At the beginning of this phase, each Team

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<sup>7</sup> Throughout this Report the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2007 is referred to as the Forest Instrument, or FI.

<sup>8</sup> IAF Team Inception report, January 2014. Available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/iaf/IAF-Inception-Report-Feb2014.pdf>. The Table of Contents of the inception report can be found in Annex 8 of this Report.

member contributed specific inputs to particular sections of the overall Report; thereafter, drafting of the Report was a joint team effort. The Team also benefitted from the guidance and support of the co-facilitators (see 3.2). A briefing meeting with the UNFF Bureau was held on 1 July 2014 in New York to outline initial findings. The final Report was delivered to the Bureau in mid-September 2014.

31-03 The Assessment addresses a number of core questions (as listed in the inception report) as appropriate and to the extent possible. However, in early interviews with stakeholders, some Team members found that it was impractical to retain the attention of those interviewed for all the questions. Pragmatism was needed in selecting what approach yielded the best information and deciding how to formulate follow-up questions that would elicit clearer insights. The Team structured its work around the following criteria:

- *key performance* in terms of reaching tangible results that are widely recognized;
- *relevance* in terms of meeting UN Member country needs and responding to global forest challenges and opportunities;
- *convergence* with other interventions, if more than one intervention or party is engaged;
- *effectiveness* of the work carried out, including both global and country level; and
- *impacts and sustainability of impacts* produced by the UNFF, and the IAF collectively.

### 3.2 Quality assurance

32-01 ***Role of facilitators and UNFF Bureau.*** A significant component of the quality assurance process was the regular exchange with the co-facilitators and the UNFF Bureau. A total of seven physical meetings were held between co-facilitators and consultants in the period between September 2013 and September 2014 in Vienna (1), Nairobi (1) and in New York (5). The role of the two co-facilitators is described in Section IV, §9 of the TORs. Three briefing meetings were held, in October 2013 in Vienna, in February 2014 in Nairobi and in July 2014 in New York, to report on progress and to present open questions.

32-02 ***Internal exchange within the consultants' Team.*** The Team interacted through regular e-mail exchanges and a number of bilateral skype exchanges to organize their work and to develop an internal review panel. The Team coordinated with an editor to assure consistency and clarity of language.

32-03 ***Credibility of the assessment.*** The credibility of the assessment was supported by the efforts of each consultant to validate the evidence gathered through a systematic triangulation of information sources. The Team tried to ensure that stakeholders with diverse views were consulted to ensure that the assessment was based on a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives on issues, performance and outcomes. References and footnotes are used to identify sources of evidence. The Team of consultants applied their own technical judgment in the assessment of this evidence and in making sure that there was a logical connection between this evidence and their findings, conclusions and recommendations. Inevitably, compromises had to be made as Team members came from different regions, origins and backgrounds and had a range of experiences in the development and implementation of international forest policy. However, independence and rigour of analysis underpinned the whole Independent Assessment process.

### **3.3 Challenges and limitations to the Independent Assessment of the IAF**

33-01 The Team acknowledges that its work faced a number of challenges and limitations, which were actively considered and mitigated to the greatest extent possible. These included:

1. The complex nature of the assessment, which required a high level of analysis across a broad range of activities. Given the wide range of activities of the IAF since 2000, there was a risk that the Team could not cover all activities in equal depth.
2. As is typical with such a global, strategic assessment, the number of country and institutional exchange visits was limited and there was a risk that the findings originating from these visits might cause a bias where the Team could not secure balanced access to institutions, globally, regionally and at country level. The Team tried to address this problem by consulting documents, databases and previous assessment reports on those institutions and stakeholders that could not be contacted directly.
3. There is a substantial number of stakeholders within the international forest arena with a range of agendas influencing the direction of the global debate on SFM. This required the Team to be well-informed with regard to these issues, and the broader global forest institutional architecture, in order to provide an independent perspective.
4. There is a lack of reliable information on the level and type of efforts made to secure SFM, especially with regard to developing countries and private sector activity. Information about funding levels can be used as a proxy, but only to some extent.
5. Finally, a major challenge for the Team was to distil the wealth of available information in order to convey the key or essential messages about the performance and effectiveness of the IAF and future options without being side-tracked. The Team also recognized the need to complement findings derived from other components of the review, including the AHEG process.

## 4 Global Forest Context

### Forest extent and condition

4-01 Approximately 4 billion hectares, or nearly a third of the Earth’s land area, is covered by forests (Table 1). Forests are well known for their age-old role of providing economic goods which enter trade and consumption networks and so are of social importance in generating wealth and meeting more basic needs. They are also known for their functions in protecting natural resources essential to human survival, including in particular by conserving land and water and by offering habitat for wildlife and other biological resources. In many locations, forests also carry spiritual and cultural values that are beyond valuation in monetary terms.

4-02 More recently, there has been increased recognition of the importance of forests in preserving biological diversity, regulating freshwater flows, supporting food security and addressing future potential energy crises through the use of wood as a renewable resource, as well as mitigating of and adapting to climate change. Given this appreciation that the range of forest contributions is much wider than formerly perceived, humankind needs to act proactively so as to avoid the threats that forest loss (deforestation) and forest degradation pose to the world.

**Table 1: Forest-related characteristics based on the 4 main global biomes<sup>9</sup>**

| Country Data   | Boreal      | Temperate           | Subtropical         | Tropical            | Global              |
|--|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Land Area<sup>10</sup></b><br>(‘000 ha)                 | 2,659,547   | 2,894,298           | 1,985,421           | 5,386,567           | 13,010,510          |
|  | 21%         | 22%                 | 15%                 | 42%                 | 100%                |
| <b>Forest Area</b><br>(‘000 ha)                            | 1,179,682   | 671,003             | 342,035             | 1,839,303           | 4,033,063           |
|  | 29.3%       | 16.6%               | 8.5%                | 45.6%               | 100%                |
| <b>Relative proportion of Forest</b>                       | 44.4%       | 23.2%               | 17.2%               | 34.1%               | 31%                 |
| <b>Trend in Forest Area</b>                                | increasing  | slightly increasing | increasing          | decreasing          | slightly decreasing |
| <b>Change Rate (annual)</b>                                | 0.4%        | 0.2%                | 0.4%                | -0.4%               | -0.1%               |
| <b>Carbon in living forest biomass</b><br>(Megatons and %) | 48,890      | 38,171              | 8,563               | 179,535             | 275,207             |
|  | 17.8%       | 13.9%               | 3.1%                | 65.2%               | 100%                |
| <b>Population</b>  | 194,300,000 | 2,260,032,000       | 973,640,000         | 3,311,683,000       | 6,750,525,000       |
|  | 2.9%        | 33.5%               | 14.4%               | 49.1%               | 100%                |
| <b>Trend in Population</b>                                 | decreasing  | slightly increasing | slightly increasing | strongly increasing | increasing          |

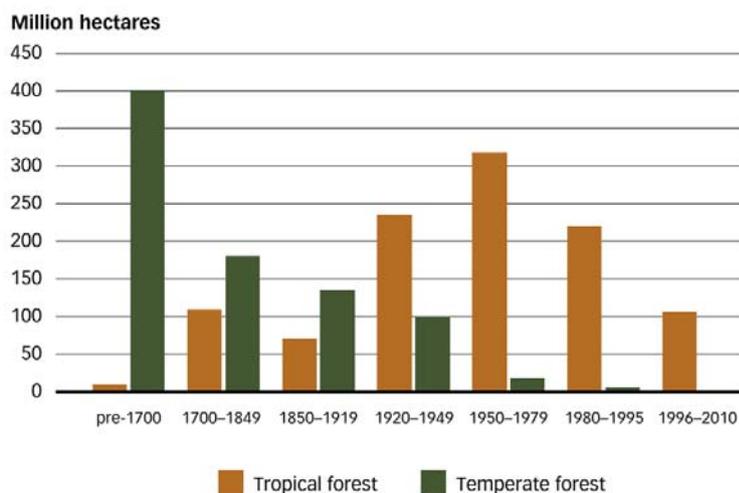
4-03 International policy level attention to forests has become more prominent since the 1980s, and since the UNCED Rio Summit in 1992 there have been multiple processes attempting to formulate a global

<sup>9</sup> Blaser et al (in prep.): The World’s forest extension – country data and satellite-based assessment. Data based on the “State of the world’s forests 2005” (FAO 2005), the “Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010” (FAO 2010) and country-based data.

<sup>10</sup> Antarctica is not included

policy on forests. Despite these efforts, the global rate of deforestation over the last three decades continued to rise for some time; it has decreased since 2000, but only minimally<sup>11</sup>. Gross forest cover was lost at a rate of about 11-13 million hectares per year between 1980 and 2010 – a rate that has remained essentially unchanged over the past 40 years<sup>12</sup>. Deforestation is mainly occurring in tropical and subtropical countries, while in some temperate and boreal countries expansion of secondary forests (through natural regrowth, reforestation, assisted natural regeneration and afforestation) is leading to net increases of forested land. Figure 1 illustrates the change in forest cover in tropical and temperate/boreal regions over a longer period of time.

4-04 Continued rapid population growth, especially in developing countries, as well as rising per capita incomes, is accelerating the global consumption of resources, including forests. The net loss of forest area since the early 1700s is estimated to be about 1 billion hectares<sup>13</sup>. Based on FAO FRA figures (2010) there are currently some 77 countries where the area of forests is stable or increasing, due to reduced deforestation or expansion of planted or re-growth forests. The figures do not however show the change in forest quality; many existing natural forests (including, for example, many temperate forests) were heavily altered at the peak of their utilization or are still subject to unsustainable use, with the result that these forests are degraded and can no longer fulfil the variety of functions associated with a healthy forest. Based on a careful estimation, about 700 million hectares of forests are degraded today<sup>14</sup>.



**Figure 1: Net Change in forest cover (forest loss) in the tropical biome and temperate /boreal regions.**  
(Sist et al, 2014)

4-05 On the other hand, the area of planted forests has increased steadily, from an estimated 178 million hectares in 1990 to more than 270 million hectares in 2012. Between a third and a half of the industrial roundwood used globally now comes from planted forests.

<sup>11</sup> FAO (2010) Global Forest Resource Assessment 2010.

<sup>12</sup> The Global Forest Resource Assessment concludes that deforestation has slowed down over the past ten years. Nevertheless, the data show a more or less stable trend of net deforestation between 6 and 9 million ha per year. This trend remains unchanged even with the slightly more positive figures that have been published recently.

<sup>13</sup> Blaser, J. and Gregersen, H (2013)

<sup>14</sup> Sist et al. (in prep.)

## Forests in a Global Change Perspective

4-06 Today, the rapid pace of key global changes<sup>15</sup> supersedes all other issues that previously preoccupied humankind in matters of forest use and conservation. The unprecedented increase of the human population over the past 60 years or so and the even faster growth of human consumption continue to increase the threats that have for long been a reality for more than 60% of the Earth's population: soil and forest degradation, scarcities in vital resources such as drinking water, loss of productive soils for food, feed, fibre and fuel products; and loss of forest-based resources, including biological diversity and cultural heritage.

4-07 The full effects of deforestation and forest degradation have only begun to be fully appreciated in the last 40 years. Previously, it was recognized that deforestation can cause or exacerbate natural disasters through, for example, the loss of soil cover, loss of freshwater or the exacerbation of flood conditions. However, it is now also recognised, for example, that forests are home to two-thirds of terrestrial biodiversity and so a considerable part of the Earth's biodiversity has been lost through the decline of forest cover. It is also widely accepted that the destruction of forests is a major contributor to the net growth in atmospheric greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, there is evidence that deforestation significantly contributes to impoverishment of already poor people since, for them, forests can contribute significantly to the supply of food, shelter, employment and health.

4-08 The transformation of a natural forest to another form of land cover represents one of the most irreversible changes that can occur to a local environment. There are no guarantees of benign environmental and economic outcomes when forests disappear or are replaced by scattered trees or mono-species plantations. Yet, to date, forests have been seriously and consistently undervalued in economic, social and even ecological terms. It is estimated that as much as two-thirds of the planet's original<sup>16</sup> forest cover may already have been destroyed or seriously degraded. However, it is unrealistic to expect all deforestation to be avoided in the future, as the food, feed, fibre, fuel and space needs of the world's growing population will not allow that<sup>17</sup>. In fact, certain policies aimed at addressing these needs can be direct drivers of forest loss: for example the political goal in much of the developed world to substitute biofuels for fossil fuels drives demand for replacing forests with plantation crops such as oil palm, corn, sugar cane and others.

4-09 Other changes may result from natural processes rather than malign human intent. For example, as climate warming makes areas of the boreal zone more suitable for cultivation, the temptation to cultivate cash crops there will grow. It will be important to increase societal appreciation of the true value of forests so that deforestation can be discouraged where: (1) it is a threat to broader environmental stability at the landscape level; (2) it leads to social inequities and conflicts, (3) it leads to levels of biodiversity loss which unduly limit options for present and future generations, and (4) it is not efficient from an economic perspective in the longer term and the widest sense.

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<sup>15</sup> The term *global change* encompasses multiple environmental and ecological changes that affect the life support systems of all people on Earth. It addresses issues such as climate change, species extinction, land use change, energy consumption, food production as well as many other transformations that have impacts on a worldwide scale. It has grown from the recognition that the most basic natural resources needed for human life are now increasingly scarce, depleted or polluted.

<sup>16</sup> Original here means since the mid-Holocene, some 6000 years ago.

<sup>17</sup> Global human population is predicted to reach 10 billion by 2050. Most of the increase will be in urban centers of developing countries, including those cities in regions that will be greatly affected by climate change. This increasing population will need food and energy.

4-10 It is the belief of many of those interviewed for this Report that efforts to tackle such issues are being hampered by *inadequate common commitment* to immediate, adequate and sustained action, rather than simply by a lack of understanding of the critical role forests play in addressing these global challenges or by shortages of financial resources and technological capabilities. The proposals arising from the present Report should harness the many opportunities, at the local, national, regional and global levels, for forests and their sustainable management to be key elements in the equation for effectively addressing and solving priority problems that are adversely affecting the livelihoods and well-being of the many people on Earth who depend on forests for the products and services they provide; these problems include the degradation of ecosystem services, climate change, biodiversity loss, freshwater depletion and land degradation.

4-11 The Team believes that forests, with their protective and productive functions, will retain their crucial roles in the future for supporting life systems on Earth, including at the landscape level. Given that the pressure on natural forests will remain high and that many forests will be lost over the coming decades, SFM will be much more necessary in the future than today. **The post-2015 IAF offers a window of opportunity for addressing the causes and impacts of global change as they relate to forests; but that window of opportunity is rapidly closing.** With the current pace of population and consumption growth, with climate change and with the capacity of remaining forests to provide key ecosystem services having probably fallen below critical thresholds, there might only be a time span of perhaps half a century during which humankind can help steer change in a positive direction. Thus, rapid and coordinated global forest policy actions are needed so that forests and SFM effectively contribute to this endeavour. The possible actions have been identified over recent years include, *inter alia*:

- Accelerating actions to achieve SFM, forest conservation and to reduce incentives that lead to the “export of deforestation”;
- Addressing global trade and shifts in forest products outputs, including illegal forest activities;
- Advancing forest and forest products technologies and ensuring greater technology transfer;
- At both global and national/local levels, establishing or making more effective funding sources for managing global public goods, forest carbon stocks, biodiversity, etc.

All these issues have a direct relationship to the need for international/global actions; they need the true commitment to immediate action by UN Member countries and other stakeholders.

4-12 **Opportunities and challenges of the IAF.** Box 1 summarizes a number of opportunities and challenges that the IAF is facing as a dynamic process over the past years. These opportunities and challenges, which illustrate the complexity in addressing forest values holistically, constitute the rationale for the assessment undertaken in chapters 5.2 – 5.7 of this report.

**Box 1: Diversity in Opportunities and Challenges addressed through dynamic processes.**

The IAF has emphasised the need to address the opportunities and challenges of SFM for “all types of forests”. Given the need for a holistic approach to forest values, there is a large diversity of situations and there are many issues that the IAF needs to address, including *inter alia*:

- a. The encouraging trend suggesting that on a global scale forest cover loss is slowing down and that in some countries of the world there is net increase of forest cover.
- b. The still worrying rapid forest loss, especially in tropical countries challenged by high population growth, low productivity of agriculture, direct dependence on fuelwood, and the pursuit of economic opportunities to address poverty;
- c. Continuing commercial pressure on forest land for commercial crops and livestock, and timber, often due to demands from countries with high purchasing power exerting pressure on forests far removed from them. This situation, which carries elements of unfairness, is worsened when environmental legislation bans or limits forest clearance and harvesting in certain countries and this leads to acceleration of deforestation in other countries, including many that have weak sector institutions;
- d. Continuing importance of forests and woodlands as an economic asset offering employment and income and the basis for significant domestic and international trade;
- e. Perception of unevenness by some about environment-linked controls imposed on forest products trade, with tropical countries feeling targeted for severe imposition of onerous and cost-enhancing production and trade regimes requiring traceability, certification of environmental compliance and perfection in the practice of sustainable management;
- f. Continuing need to ensure that forest-dependent societies, especially indigenous people and forest dwellers, have access to forest resources necessary for their livelihoods;
- g. Globally, ensuring adequate engagement including timely preparedness of the forest sector, to deal with overarching threats to all ecosystems such as climate change, desertification, natural disasters, erosion of biodiversity including threats of species losses, and land seizure for agriculture, among others;
- h. In almost all countries, incoherence of systems of land and forest governance and poor communication among the many fora dealing, in relative isolation, with the different land-based resources that all depend on. .

## 5 Assessment of the International Arrangement on Forests

### 5.1 Introduction

51-01 Chapter 5 of this Report sets out the Team’s analysis of how far the IAF has met the global challenges outlined in Chapter 4. As stated earlier, after presenting background information about the IAF, it examines the key achievements, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the IAF since 2000. It also assesses the impact of UNFF’s work and the sustainability of actions. The starting point for the assessment is the main objective which ECOSOC gave to IAF when it was created in 2000, namely, “to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end”.

### 5.2 Overview on the International Arrangement on Forests

52-01 *The origin of the international arrangement on forests (IAF)*. Forests attracted high levels of excitement at the UNCED Rio Earth Summit in 1992: in Agenda 21 reference is made to forests 286 times, in nearly half of the 40 chapters<sup>18</sup>. Despite this, the controversy surrounding forest issues in the global environmental and development agenda meant that a separate multilateral agreement on forests could not be agreed upon at UNCED – partly because the issues were not purely environmental, as in the Conventions that were agreed. Forests were covered in the non-legally binding declaration of Agenda 21 under Chapter 11 “Combating Deforestation” as well as the “Non-Legally Binding Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all Types of Forests” (known as the “Forest Principles”). Subsequently, in 1995, the third meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) launched an international forest policy process by creating the Open-ended Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) which operated until 1997, when it morphed into the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), which operated from 1997 until 2000. The UNFF built upon the IPF and IFF processes and continued to provide an international policy-negotiation platform that “promotes the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, and which strengthens long-term political commitment to this end”<sup>19</sup>.

Both IPF and IFF were working under and reported through the CSD. When UNFF succeeded the IFF in 2000, the negotiated ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 reflected a recommendation of the CSD. Unlike IPP and IFF, the UNFF was established as an independent subsidiary body of ECOSOC and no longer placed under the CSD; thus, UNFF became a unique subsidiary body of ECOSOC with universal membership<sup>20</sup>. In the period from 2000 until 2005, raising awareness of SFM and facilitating the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action lay at the heart of the work of the UNFF, which forms a key part of the IAF. There was a review of the IAF in 2005, following which ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 strengthened the IAF, and the Forest Instrument containing the agreed GOFs was negotiated together with a multi-year programme of work 2007-2015 (MYPOW). Other developments since the 2005 review have included attention on forests and economic development and the work on financing SFM and its associated Facilitative Process.

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<sup>18</sup> These include references to afforestation, agroforestry, deforestation, forestry, forests, and reforestation. References in the table of contents and footnotes are excluded.

<sup>19</sup> UNGA 1992, Report of the UN Conference on Environment and Development Doc. 156/26 Vol. 3, Annex 3

<sup>20</sup> This in contrast to IPF/IFF which had the same limited membership of the CSD but was open-ended for participation of all countries.

The Forum has evolved as the only intergovernmental body that focuses on the ***inclusion of all forest values under one single umbrella***, represented by the concept of SFM. Until 2005 considerable time was spent discussing the possibility of a legally binding treaty for forests; however, ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49, stated that “the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests will be reviewed in 2015 and that on this basis a full range of options will be considered, including a legally binding instrument on all types of forests, strengthening the current arrangement, continuation of the current arrangement and other options”.

52-02 ***The major institutional instruments of the IAF.*** The UNFF, building upon the IPF and IFF processes continues to provide an international platform and is the only international body that focuses solely on “all types of forests” and trees outside forests. ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 sets out the objectives, purpose, functions, components and scope of the IAF as being a composite of five categories of constituencies/participants that can act collectively and/or individually, as follows:

- The UN Member States and countries (197 in mid-2014) that are members of the UNFF, acting individually and working together. The Forum is the main convening and governing mechanism of the IAF. The Forum is neither an organization nor a convention. It does not have the same resources that an organization or a convention has. The Forum is a unique subsidiary body of ECOSOC, operating under the rules and procedures of functional commissions of ECOSOC but with universal membership (namely, Member States of the UN, and State Members of the Specialized Agencies);
- The UNFF Secretariat provides substantive support to the UNFF and is located within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The UNFFS is also a member of the CPF and provides the Secretariat of the CPF. As part of DESA, the UNFFS is an integral part of the UN Secretariat and inter-departmental network of the UN system;
- The Collaborative Partnership on Forests<sup>21</sup>, currently with 14 member organizations, contributing to the work of the IAF collectively and individually, including voluntarily supporting the implementation of the resolutions of the Forum;
- Other relevant IGOs and regional organizations and processes; and
- Major Groups. Representatives from business and industry, children and youth, farmers and small land owners, indigenous peoples, NGOs, the scientific and technological community, women, workers and trade unions—that take part in the Forum’s deliberations and activities.

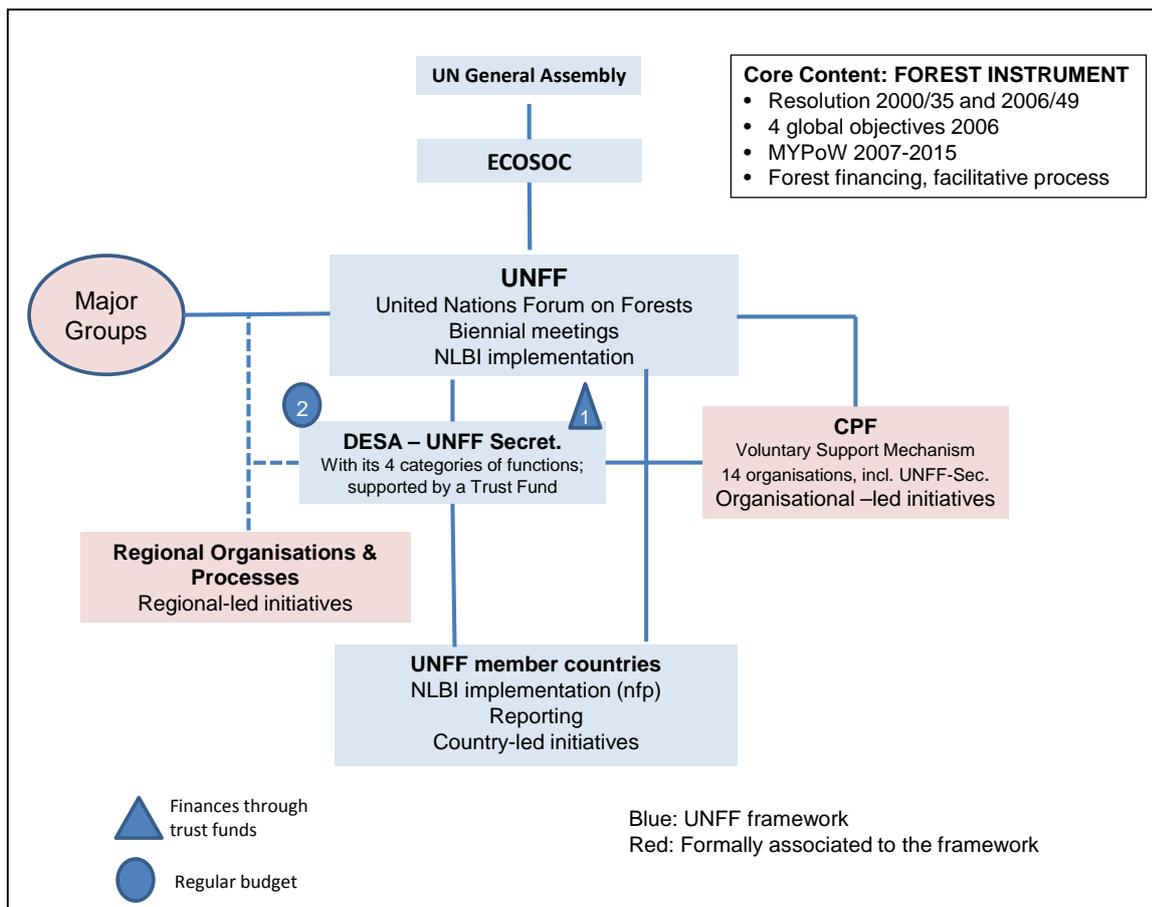
Implementation of the Resolutions and decisions of the Forum and - since 2007, the Forest Instrument with GOFs - is also part of the IAF. The unifying factor for the IAF is *the shared desire of the above stakeholders to achieve the objectives and implement the functions of the IAF*. An attempt to describe the current institutional arrangement of the IAF is presented in Figure 2, below.

The non-legally binding Forest Principles agreed at UNCED in 1992 convey the shared ambitions and collective commitment at that time but are still valid today - to achieve SFM for all types of forests, including the particular need to halt deforestation and forest degradation. Since then, the Forest Instrument and its GOFs have been adopted, also recognizing the need to enhance the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their successor SDGs.

An assessment of the main components of the IAF is presented in chapter 5.5.

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<sup>21</sup> In alphabetic order, for full name see acronyms: CIFOR; FAO; ITTO; IUFRO; Secretariats of CBD, GEF, UNCCD, UNFCCC and UNFF, UNDP, UNEP; World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), World Bank and World Conservation Union (IUCN).



**Figure 2: Graphic presentation of the current IAF**

52-03 **Purpose and principal functions of the International Arrangement on Forests.** The Forum has nine principal functions that support the implementation of the main objective of the IAF which is “to promote the sustainable management of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end”. In addition, ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 states that “the purpose of such an international arrangement is to promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels, to provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development, and to carry out principal functions”. Of the nine functions, six functions are defined in ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 and three additional functions (7-9 below) are defined in ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49. The purpose and principal functions may be summarized as follows<sup>22</sup>:

- (1) To promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests at the national, regional and global levels;
- (2) To provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development;

<sup>22</sup> The full text is contained in ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35, at [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/2000\\_35\\_E.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/2000_35_E.pdf) ; and ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49, at <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2006/resolution%202006-49.pdf>.

- (3) *To provide a forum for continued policy development among Governments, international organizations and other interested parties to foster a common understanding on sustainable forest management and to address forest-related issues and emerging areas of priority concern in a holistic, comprehensive and integrated manner;*
- (4) *To enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as to contribute to synergies among them, including coordination among donors;*
- (5) *To foster international cooperation, including North-South and public-private partnerships, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation at the national, regional and global levels;*
- (6) *To monitor and assess progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, and on this basis consider future actions needed;*
- (7) *To enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, in particular with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability; and to the fulfilment of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development;*
- (8) *To encourage and assist countries to maintain and improve their forest resources with a view to enhancing the benefits of forests to meet present and future needs, in particular the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities whose livelihoods depend on forests;*
- (9) *To strengthen interaction with relevant regional and sub-regional forest related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes, to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management.*

52-04 ***Effectiveness of the IAF as assessed in 2005*** . In 2005 a report<sup>23</sup> was prepared reviewing the effectiveness of the IAF after 5 years of work under the first 6 functions as listed above and based on voluntarily reports to UNFF Sessions and a questionnaire. However, as only 17 countries, along with a number of organisations, processes and Major Groups responded to the questionnaire, interpretation of the review report is to be taken with care. Generally, it was noted that the Forum had had limited impact on the implementation of proposed actions and that global forest policy had been hampered by the lack of participation and means of implementation, and, as noted by some parties, the lack of power to enforce what was agreed upon. It was also noted that advances were made at the level of national forest policy formulation (in particular through the creation and implementation of national forest programmes (NFPs), broad stakeholder engagement in the NFPs of a number of UN Member States and in the development of criteria and indicators (C&I) to measure progress towards SFM (though the latter cannot be attributed solely to the IAF as C&I approaches were developed even more under various earlier processes). Shortcomings listed in the 2005 assessment report related to (i) insufficiently addressing deforestation and illegal forestry practices; (ii) lack of institutional support at member country levels, including financing; (iii) lack of cross-sectoral links within countries; and (iv) slow progress in valuing forests, in particular ecosystem services provided by sustainably managed forests. At the time in 2005, many parties also remarked on the lack of a legally binding treaty on forests as a shortcoming.

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<sup>23</sup> Report of the Secretary-General to UNFF5 on Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangements on forests, E/CN.18/2005/6. There was also a background analytical paper by DESA/UNFFS (2005) on Implementation of Proposals for Action agreed by IPF and IFF: Action for Sustainable Forest Management.

As part of this Independent Assessment, these functions need to be assessed for performance, effectiveness/efficiency, impact and sustainability of results. There is also a need to examine whether the UNFF/IAF adequately fits into an inter-sectoral perspective (where this would add value), and the degree of inclusiveness in engaging all its stakeholders.

52-05 ***The functioning of the IAF.*** There are a number of forest-related intergovernmental agreements/resolutions developed over the past 25 years that are global in character. As outlined in this Report, they generally deal with broader issues in which forests are embedded. Only few mechanisms (whether hard or soft) have developed implementable instruments governing forest conservation and management<sup>24</sup>. Amongst them, only the IAF (with UNFF as its “centre piece”) deals with SFM in a comprehensive way. UNFF is principally of a “forum” nature and focuses on influencing action through exhortation, motivation and facilitation. Based on this principle, the functioning of the IAF can be assessed as follows:

The *key stakeholders* are the 197 UN member state governments that are expected to take decisions to “*promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels, and to provide a coherent transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development...through the UNFF process*” (ECOSOC, 2000). Since 2000 and up to 2013, the Forum met 10 times. However, there is no system of monitoring, accountability, and verification, nor are there sanctions for non-compliance of commitments in place.

In addition to Member States, all other stakeholders actively involved in the IAF, such as CPF member organisations, regional organizations and Major Groups, are expected to support the work of the Forum. The UNFFS carries the main weight of supporting and following up the implementation of the decisions of the Forum. The function of the CPF is to voluntarily support the work of the Forum and promote collaboration and cooperation on forests. The role of CPF is discussed further in chapter 5.5.

Through ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49, UN Member countries decided to strengthen collaboration with forest-related regional and sub-regional bodies and stakeholders in implementing the Forest Instrument. This is based on the assumption that compared with the wider global forest policy process, regional mechanisms tend to have better chances of success in achieving political buy-in and to create effective support mechanisms. There is no financing attached to regional work with exception of the cost of any regional-led initiatives (RLIs). Regional organisations<sup>25</sup> participate in the Forum on a voluntary basis.

Major Groups are supported to participate actively in all activities of the Forum, but with exception of some groups, particularly indigenous peoples, participation of major NGOs and private sector representatives was variable in the first years of UNFF, then dissipated further, and is today rather marginal (see also §53-19). Some Major Groups’ representatives have turned away from UNFF and found their interests better embedded in more specific initiatives, such as REDD+, CBD, GEF and FLEGT, where they may have found their forests interests better served, including through better resourcing.

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<sup>24</sup> Besides UNFF and the Forest Instrument, key institutions/instruments related to forests are: UNFCCC (LULUCF, REDD+ and forest-based NAMAs); World Bank (World Bank Forest Strategy 2002 and Safeguards on Forests that links forests to livelihood concerns); ITTO (International Tropical Timber Agreement 2006) focussing on SFM in tropical humid forests; FAO (COFO, FAO Ministerial Meetings on Forests); CBD (Work programme on forests, Aichi targets); UNCCD; and International Wetland Regime Ramsar (Wetland convention). With exception of Ramsar, all institutions listed here are CPF members.

<sup>25</sup> Examples include: the African Forest Forum; Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization; ASEAN; Central American Commission on Environment and Development; Congo Basin Partnership; FAO Regional Forestry Commissions; Forest Europe; and the collaboration of UNFF with thematic groups of countries (such as LDCs, LFCCs and SIDS).

### 5.3 UNFF and its processes since 2000

#### **Background**

53-01 **Creation of the UNFF.** As noted above, in February 2000, in order to ensure follow-up to its own mandate, the IFF recommended the establishment of the IAF, based on the Forest Principles, Chapter 11 of the UNCED Agenda 21, and the outcomes of IPF/IFF 6. Acting on this recommendation and on the decision of the CSD, in October 2000 ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 established the UNFF. ECOSOC also invited the heads of relevant international organizations to form the CPF as part of the new IAF.

53-02 **The evolution of the UNFF since 2000.** ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 mandated the IAF with its overall objective, purpose and six principal functions summarised in §52-03; subsequently, ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 assigned an additional three functions to the IAF also listed in §52-03. Moreover, through the latter resolution, Member States agreed upon the four GOFs, which served as the point of departure for the negotiation of the Forest Instrument (see chapter 5.4). The adoption of the Forest Instrument by the UNGA in December 2007 (Resolution 62/98) put in place the last major component of the current IAF.

53-03 **The work of the UNFF since 2000.** For the period 2000 to 2015, the work of the Forum was divided into seven key areas:

- a. Progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action (2002-2004);
- b. Further dialogue and discussion on means of implementation: finance, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and capacity building for SFM (2002-2013);
- c. Enhanced cooperation and cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination (2002-2015);
- d. Developing a legal/non-legal framework for all types of forests (2005-2007);
- e. Review of progress in the implementation of the FI and its GOFs (2009-2015);
- f. Review of the effectiveness of the IAF (2005-2006 and 2013-2015);
- g. Monitoring, assessment and reporting (2002-2015).

The second to fourth sessions of the Forum (2002-2004) focused on progress and lessons learned in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, within the context of NFPs, in the following thematic areas, each resulting in a corresponding policy resolution:

- Combating deforestation and forest degradation (UNFF 2);
- Forest conservation & protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems (UNFF 2);
- Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for low forest cover countries (UNFF 2);
- Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands (UNFF 2);
- Promotion of natural and planted forests (UNFF 2);
- Economic aspects of forests (UNFF 3);
- Forest health and productivity (UNFF 3);
- Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs (UNFF 3);
- Traditional forest-related knowledge (UNFF 4);
- Forest-related scientific knowledge (UNFF 4); and
- Social and cultural aspects of forests (UNFF 4).

For 2007-2015, the MYPOW shifted more to progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and towards the achievement of the GOFs, while still emphasizing the implementation of the IPF/IFF

proposals for action, as well as UNFF resolutions. The following special issues were addressed, resulting in corresponding policy resolutions:

- *Forests in a changing environment*: forests and climate change; reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation, combating desertification, including LFCCs; forests and biodiversity conservation, including protected areas (UNFF 8, 2009);
- *Means of implementation for SFM* (UNFF 8);
- *Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication*: community-based forest management; social development and indigenous and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure (UNFF 9, 2011); and
- *Forests and economic development*: forest products and services; national forest programmes and other sectoral policies and strategies; reducing risks and impacts of disasters; and benefits of forests and trees to urban communities (UNFF 10, 2013).

### **Key achievements**

53-04 **Setting a policy framework for global cooperation on SFM.** As stipulated by ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35, the UNFF has been charged with promoting a common understanding of, interest in and political engagement in prioritizing achievement of SFM at a global level. To this end, the Forum has generated a number of SFM policy resolutions that have directly fed into relevant international and national processes, including, *inter alia* the 2002 WSSD (Rio+10), 2012 UNCSD (Rio+20), the CBD, GEF and FAO (for further details, see chapter 5.4). The key achievements of the UNFF over the past 14 years need to be assessed on the basis of how these policy recommendations have fed into global and national policies, rather than on how SFM is implemented, as the UNFF is neither an implementing body nor a financial mechanism to support SFM implementation on the ground. Implementation of concrete actions is primarily the responsibility of countries; the countries have agreed to consider the IPF/IFF proposals for action and UNFF resolutions within their NFPs and equivalent policies and strategies. Nevertheless, if member countries continue adopting global policies without acting on them in practice, it would be relevant to question the efficacy of the global process to effect change.

An important function of the UNFF at the global level has been to enhance cooperation, policy and programme coordination, particularly through the CPF. The UNFFS has collaborated closely over all these years, to the extent possible, with relevant organisations of the UN system and other relevant international and regional organisations, institutions and instruments to improve information exchange and cooperation in areas of common concern relating to forests.

In the early stages, the UNFF looked to catalyse synergies, in particular with the CBD. In 2002, the CBD COP 6 adopted decision VI/22 on forest biological diversity calling for closer collaboration with the UNFF in accordance with the recommendations of the Accra Workshop on Forests and Biological Diversity (January 2002) leading to an agreed upon collaborative work programme between the CBD and UNFF Secretariats. Elements included the comparison of the concepts of the ecosystem approach and SFM and the link between the IPF/IFF proposals for actions and the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity under the CBD. Over a hundred references to UNFF products have been made in the outcomes of other international processes.

53-05 **Specific achievements according to UNFF functions.** Table 2 provides an overview of top achievements since 2000 according to the main objective, purpose and principal functions as listed in §52-03, including an identification of the principal challenges to be addressed if these functions are to be

performed satisfactorily in the future. An attempt was made to define the lead constituency and the lead body for each function<sup>26</sup>.

Overall, the wording of the functions is the outcome of cumbersome intergovernmental negotiations, resulting in text that for many is not strong enough for achieving the objective of the Forum and the IAF, particularly since they do not require accountability. The functions cannot be made accountable and it is difficult to bind them to the overall goal of the Forum. In the process of defining the post-2015 IAF, it should be noted that many of the listed functions link to fostering coordination, cooperation and interactions among international forest-oriented processes.

**Table 2: Overview on the overall objective, purpose and principal functions of the UNFF.**

| UNFF Function (paraphrased)   | Lead Constituency  | Lead Body <sup>27</sup> | Top achievements since 2000   | Key challenges: focus on policy/political issues  |
|---|--|-------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Objective:</b> To promote SFM for all types of forests / to strengthen political commitment  | UNFF Member States & country stakeholders                            | UNFF (Forum)            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Forest Instrument and its GOFs</li> <li>- Country reporting on SFM</li> <li>- Analysis of key SFM issues</li> <li>- UNFFS' role in organising the IYF (2011) and the IYD (21 March)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate and unpredictable financing of the Forest Instrument and of NFPs</li> <li>- Lack of compliance</li> </ul>   |
| <b>1.</b> To promote implementation of agreed actions on forests at all levels  | UNFF Member States & country stakeholders                            | Member States           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Four GOFs</li> <li>- Forest Instrument</li> <li>- NFPs: forest sector to contribute to develop to wider developmental objectives (?)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Translation of actions into concrete policies</li> <li>- Implementation arrangements in the countries</li> <li>- Lack of cross-sectoral collaboration</li> </ul>   |
| <b>2.</b> To provide coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development   | UNFF Member States   | UNFFS                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNFF Meetings</li> <li>- CLIs, RLIs, OLIs</li> <li>- UNFFS presence in UNFCCC, CBD, CCD</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exchange and coordination with other bodies dealing with global forest policies, e.g. REDD+ initiatives, FLEGT, COFO</li> </ul>  |
| <b>3.</b> To serve as forum for continued policy development among Governments & other interested parties for common understanding on SFM and to address issues & priority concerns ... | UNFF sessions, intersessional meetings; regional meetings; CLIs; CPF | UNFF (Forum)            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of intersessional meetings focusing on technical, social and economic issues to implement SFM</li> <li>- Adoption of SFM policy decisions</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of guidance documents and common statements on SFM and its implementation</li> <li>- Insufficient links to the SFM discussions in non-governmental fora, including civil society and private sector (e.g. validation of FLEG, certification)</li> </ul> |
| <b>4.</b> For synergy, to enhance cooperation and policy /program coordination on forest-related issues among international & regional organizations, donors, institutions &            | CPF, Major Groups, IGOs, Regional organisations                      | UNFFS                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existence and functioning of the CPF as a voluntary partnership</li> <li>- Increasing links with regional initiatives and bodies (e.g. AFF, Forest Europe, regional UN commissions)</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual CPF members have their own ambitions and goals</li> <li>- Unclear link between UNFF and regional policy processes</li> <li>- No evident donor coordination (4 global</li> </ul>   |

<sup>26</sup> Lead constituency identifies to whom a function is mainly addressed. Lead body identifies who takes the main responsibility to implement a particular function.

<sup>27</sup> It is understood that the UNFFS is performing all these functions as per its mandate, sometimes as a lead, sometimes in a supportive role.

| instruments  |   |                        | - Major Group coordination  | objectives)  |
|--|---|------------------------|---|--|
| 5. To foster inter-national cooperation, including North-South & public-private, as well as cross-sectoral at all levels   | UNFF Member States, CPF, Private sector, Major Groups                           | UNFFS                  | - Facilitative process<br>- GOF4<br>- CPF Sourcebook and other tools for means of implementation.<br>- Development of options to finance SFM  | - No clear evidence on how this goal can be monitored<br>- No evidence of major private sector involvement in global forest policy   |
| 6. Monitor and assess progress at all levels through reporting by governments, inter-national and regional organizations, institutions and instruments   | Member States, CPF members, Regional organisations, other intern. organizations | UNFFS (support by FRA) | - Joint declaration between FAO, ITTO, Forest Europe and Montreal Process to streamline global forest reporting & strengthening collaboration among international C&I processes.  | - Better linking UNFF reporting to existing forest reporting mechanisms<br>- Role of UNFFS (as a small coordination unit)<br>- FAO-FRA/ITTO and regional UN Commissions                      |
| 7. To enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs   | Member States   | UNFFS/ DESA            | - FI as part of the Rio+20 declaration<br>- Integration of UNFFS in DESA/HLPF<br>- Role of UNFFS and other CPF members in the formulation of SDGs in respect to forests   | - Divergence of interests among CPF members on the role of forests in the SDGs<br>- Weak leadership in the forest community to agree on a common approach in integrating forests in the SDGs |
| 8. To encourage and assist countries to maintain & improve forest resources & their benefits, especially for indigenous and local people whose livelihoods depend on them  | Member States, CPF members, Major groups  | UNFF (Forum)           | - Visibility of UNFF in the global arena (e.g. Forest Days in UNFCCC COPs)  | - No tangible results on SFM and global policies can be attributes thus far through the collaboration with Major Groups  |
| 9. Facilitate cooperation and effective implementation of SFM by strengthening interaction with relevant regional and sub-regional forest related mechanisms, institutions & instruments, organizations & processes. | UNFF member countries and their specific involvement in regional initiatives    | UNFF (Forum)           | - Africa: AFF as knowledge broker and preparation of negotiators in UNFF and other bodies<br>- UNECE/FAO, Forest Europe: knowledge broker and policy coordination<br>- ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting as coordination unit in 10 ASEAN states | - Lack of formal and functional links between UNFF and regional processes  |

**53-06 Country-led, Organisational-led, Major Groups-Led and Regional-led Initiatives as drivers of debates on forests.** The organisation of CLIs, OLI, MGIs and RLI has been generally assessed as a successful element of the IAF. They can basically be divided into two categories: (a) those initiatives that addressed issues in the UNFF MYPOW and (b) initiatives on issues indirectly addressed by the Forum's MYPOW. A total of 32 CLIs, OLI or RLI have been organized since 2000 (see Annex 4).

These initiatives have been important in driving discussions and negotiations both on key issues to be addressed by the Forum and emerging and other issues that stakeholders, including Member States, CPF member organizations and Major Groups wished to draw to the attention of the Forum. Of the 31 initiatives led by countries, CPF members, Major Groups and regional organizations, 19 were country-led, one was region-led, while another five were joint country-led and organization-led initiatives. Three were

OLIs and three were led by Major Groups; one was regionally led. The major organizations behind the OLIs were FAO, the UNFFS, ITTO, the CBD Secretariat and CIFOR. Given the limited budget at the disposal of the UNFFS, these initiatives provided welcome additional financial, human and logistical resources to the work of the UNFF from 2000 to 2014 (see chapter 5.6). When examined from a substantive point of view, they were particularly important in addressing “process” issues at the core of the work of the UNFF. Eight initiatives dealt with SFM financing; three focused on the review of the IAF, including the consideration of a legally or non-legally binding forest agreement. Other priority issues such as the multi-year programme of work; the transfer of environmentally sound technologies for SFM; and monitoring, assessment and reporting were each addressed by two initiatives.

**53-07 *AHEGs as a main process of support technical work for UNFF.*** AHEGSs are important intersessional activities of UNFF. They have addressed the following issues: approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting (December 2003), finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies (December 2003), consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests (September 2004), consideration of the content of the non-legally binding instrument (December 2006), proposals for the development of a voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework (November 2008), forest financing (September 2010 and January 2013) and the IAF (February 2014 and January 2015). The work of these AHEGs has been seen to provide a good platform for technical and open discussion of and deepening of common understanding on critical and emerging issues related to forests. They can thus provide substantive and effective contributions to the work of UNFF.

**53-08 *Adoption of the Forest Instrument and its Global Objectives on Forests.*** The Forest Instrument offers countries a framework for promoting SFM at the national and international levels by distilling key elements of the IPF/IFF proposals for action and operative paragraphs of UNFF and relevant ECOSOC resolutions, thus facilitating a strategic approach to achieving SFM at the national level. For some parties the FI was a key achievement of the UNFF as it successfully sustained the high profile of forests at the international level created by UNCED and the IPF/IFF processes. Due to its non-legally binding nature, others considered it rather a failure, as it turned the interest away from the pathway to develop a more compliance based instrument for SFM. In addition, the latter group argued that the FI as adopted in 2007 was weakly implemented due to the lack of authority conferred upon the Forum and the lack of means of implementation, in particular assured financing for SFM. Nonetheless in early 2014, taking the interventions at the AHEG 1 meeting in Nairobi as a barometer, there was a general perception that the FI and its four GOFs represent a major achievement (for more details see chapter 5.4).

**53-09 *Promoting common understanding on SFM financing and Facilitative Process.*** As part of its work to address forest financing, in 2009 the special session of the ninth session of the UNFF established the Facilitative Process (FP), which is intended to assist developing countries to identify obstacles and opportunities for accessing the required funding from all sources and thereby to help them mobilise funds for forests. For some countries, the adoption of the Facilitative Process has helped catalyse SFM funding: since its establishment, the FP has helped identify gaps, obstacles and opportunities in financing SFM in SIDS and LFCCs. The FPs work in this area was a follow-up to the report on forest financing commissioned by the Advisory Group on Finance (AGF) of the CPF which showed that SIDS and LFCCs have suffered most from the decline in donor forest financing in the past two decades. Eleven preliminary studies carried out on forest financing in SIDS and LFCCs, followed by four inter-regional workshops of national, regional and international experts and practitioners in 2011 to 2013 developed recommendations for a common forest financing strategy for SIDS and LFCCs. During the same period, German funding enabled the FP to

implement a parallel project on forest financing in Africa and LDCs as well as two projects on studying the implications of the price of carbon as well as REDD+ funding on forest financing.<sup>28</sup> Additional projects funded in 2014 are (i) the climate change financing for forests: reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation plus (REDD+) and its impacts on financing for other functions for forests worldwide; and (ii) strengthening national capacities to develop national action plans to implement the Forest Instrument.

**53-10 *Sharing of lessons learned in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.*** UNFF 2, UNFF 3 and UNFF 4 provided Member States with the opportunity to provide feedback on progress in the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action corresponding to a number of key issues listed in §53-03. Constructive exchange among Member States on key lessons learned influenced the corresponding resolutions. Many Member States felt that the exchange of lessons learned was one of the greatest benefits of Forum sessions and realisation from this dialogue of the shared learning and a certain commonality of interests may have influenced the post-UNFF 4 negotiations regarding whether to have a legally-binding/non-legally binding framework while recognising that with or without a decision, there was still need to achieve SFM.

**53-11 *A Common approach to the monitoring and assessment of SFM.*** UNFF Resolution 4/3 in 2004 led to a common understanding at the global level of the seven thematic elements of SFM, which were drawn from prior criteria and indicators processes, and which offered the following reference framework for SFM:

- Extent of forest resources.
- Biological diversity.
- Forest health and vitality.
- Productive functions of forest resources.
- Protective functions of forest resources.
- Socio-economic functions.
- Legal, policy and institutional framework.

This framework has guided many countries as they sought to adopt national level C&I for monitoring and assessing progress towards SFM.

**53-12 *National forest programmes have been relevant from national and global perspectives.*** One of the most significant outcomes of the IPF/IFF proposals for action was the establishment of national forest programmes (NFPs – see Box 2) as a common framework for action for achieving SFM at Member States level. With the creation of the UNFF in 2000, the adoption and adaptation of NFPs at the national level was significant; up to 2010, 138 countries had adopted and/or were implementing NFPs<sup>29</sup> and the adoption of new national forest policies was considerable<sup>30</sup>. The NFP Facility (NPPF) was initially established in 2002 through donor support with the specific purpose of supporting the implementation of NFPs, including stakeholder involvement in the national forest policy process. In the ten years of its existence, 16 donors provided US\$45 million for its operation, including six professional and three

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<sup>28</sup> AGF (2012), Study on Forest Financing, p. 69

<sup>29</sup> NFPs incorporate a wide range of approaches for formulating, planning and implementing national forests policies and can include national and sub-national policies, plans and strategies (FAO, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> See Member State reports to the UNFF5, UNFF9 and UNFF10.

administrative staff in Rome and three professional staff and two coaches in the field during the last phase of existence of the Facility (2008-2012)<sup>31</sup>.

NFPs emerged as important national forest governance instrument; at least in developing countries, they became the principal instrument for implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action and UNFF Resolutions. This has also been reinforced by paragraph 6 (a) of the Forest Instrument, which states that member countries should “develop, implement, publish and, as necessary, update national forest programmes or other strategies for SFM which identify actions needed and contain, measures, policies or specific goals, taking into account the relevant proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and the resolutions of the United Nations Forum on Forests”. At the global level NFPs have directly supported the UNFF’s specific objectives and Resolutions by supporting the development of plans and strategies and helping to integrate forests development into overall national planning in many Member States.

According to the FAO 2012 evaluation of the NFPF, the success of NFPs is not universally acclaimed:<sup>32</sup> nevertheless, based on support provided to more than 80 countries by the NFPF, the following successes have been achieved:

- Capacity of stakeholders to implement NFP related activities increased;
- National multi stakeholder committee (NMSC) solid platform established;
- Stronger stakeholders’ involvement in the policy process;
- Awareness raised and information shared through communication on best practices and forest policy issues;
- Forest policy revised or newly formulated;
- NFP coordination mechanism established and forestry sector profile raised.

Notwithstanding the above successes, the following are among the areas for improvement in implementation:

- The absolute need for a comprehensive governance framework for forest-related activities aimed at achieving SFM;
- More emphasis on implementation and monitoring to complement the effectiveness of NFPs in developing policies and action plans;
- The need for capacity and authority for NFPs to be country-owned and country-led;
- Adequate involvement of stakeholders, for legitimacy and effectiveness of NFPs;
- Centrality of an inter-sectoral approach for NFPs to be effective.

53-13 ***No continuous support mechanisms for NFP processes.*** From 2002 until 2012, the NFPF supported stakeholder involvement in the forest strategy development and planning process, linked to UNFF. The NFPF delivered grants to forest agencies for SFM policy development, and in particular to civil society for their participation in the formulation process through studies and in providing a solid local level input for policy decision makers at national level. Civil society and the forest agencies have also been involved in the implementation of the NFP.

Through NFPs, considerable improvements were accomplished with respect to country leadership and the partnership and participation of stakeholders in establishing platforms and fora. NFPs have also been important for maintaining a continued evolving process of SFM and strengthening country ownership to

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<sup>31</sup> [www.nfp-facility.org/35549-02077bd3a3b834ab](http://www.nfp-facility.org/35549-02077bd3a3b834ab) (consulted 9 July 2014).

<sup>32</sup> FAO (2012b) 2002-2012: 10 years of NFP Facility, pp. iv and vii.

better coordinate the numerous initiatives from donors. However, more needs to be done to improve the implementation of NFPs in terms of: consistency within and integration beyond the forest sector; coordination of, and cooperation with, new forest related initiatives; participation of remote stakeholders, smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples; and monitoring of the forest policy process.

In hosting the NFPF, FAO secured some symbiotic gains: it shared human and financial resources between itself and the NFPF which improved the efficiency of resource use and allowed FAO to use the Facility to deliver policy-related inputs (e.g. normative work, community-based forestry, market development, climate change, and forest tenure reform), especially in countries where FAO is not otherwise present in the forestry sector<sup>33</sup>. Based on the lessons learnt in more than 80 countries through the NFPF, the experience gained shows that two complementary fronts need to be further strengthened in the countries for achieving SFM: (1) facilitating strong and equitable partnerships amongst smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples; and (2) supporting national and sub-national governments to establish multi-sectoral platforms.

While NFPs have been highly relevant and may have given positive outcomes in many developing countries, their supporting mechanism (the NFPF managed by FAO) ceased to exist in September 2012, mainly because of lack of funding commitments. As decided communally by FAO and the NFPF Governing Body, the NFPF was converted into the new Forest and Farm Facility (FFF), a joint venture between FAO, IUCN and the International Institute for Environment and Development. Certain donor countries increasingly perceived that the NFPF was becoming more of an FAO operational programme and that the Facility was not as involved in supporting the UNFF objectives at national level as it had during its first five years. These donors gradually withdrew their financial support, leading eventually to the failure of the original objectives of the Facility<sup>34</sup>. Loss of support also came from some donors shifting interest to support the forest/farm intersection (forests in broader landscape) which FAO, despite having both agriculture and forestry, had failed to deliver in time, even if its Forest and Farm Facility now offers interesting prospects in this respect.

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<sup>33</sup> A detailed account on the relationship between FAO and the NFP-Facility is given in FAO (2012c) - Strategic Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Forestry.

<sup>34</sup> The NFP-facility governance members from donor countries were mixed in their answers. Some clearly referred to the original mandate of the NFP-Facility, while others clearly recognized the wider value of the NFP-Facility as a vehicle to support national forest policy and they did see a problem in the diversion of the original mandate.

## BOX 2: National Forest Programmes

The term “national forest programme” incorporates a wide range of approaches that can contribute to the formulation, planning and implementation of forest policy at national and subnational levels. As one of the most important outcomes of international forest policy dialogue of the IFF/UNFF, NFPs are applicable as a process to all countries and to all types of forests irrespective of level of development.

The NFP was conceived as a country-specific process to provide a framework and guidance for:

- country-driven implementation of sustainable forest management and forest-related contribution to sustainable development;
- national implementation of internationally agreed commitments, including the Forest Instrument, UNFCCC decisions on REDD+, and international initiatives such as those related to FLEGT;
- multilateral and bilateral collaboration, with NFPs used as a common frame of reference for forest-related international cooperation by the world’s major organizations and fora and most bilateral donors.

A specific mechanism, the NFP Facility, providing technical advice and funding, was entrusted to FAO in 2002.

**53.14 *Enhancing stakeholder participation in national forest programmes.*** Over the years, the spirit of the UNFF and its preceding processes has been conveyed through the promotion of NFPs in a manner that enhanced stakeholder participation in forest policy development, sector planning, implementation and monitoring processes. This has been strongly appreciated by national governments, multilateral and bilateral organisations, as well as national NGOs. National governments ranked the relevance of the NFPF highly, because it was charged with supporting local participation in national forest policy development and in the provision of technical support.

### ***Relevance and Effectiveness***

**53-15 *Perceived relevance and effectiveness of the current intergovernmental process on forests.*** Based solely on interviews carried out by the Team, there is a general perception that the global forest policy process is losing momentum in the course of the 10 UNFF sessions since 2000 and needs reenergising. Time has elapsed and the lack of major impact on the ground may account for some disillusionment, though it is understood that a policy forum by definition is not an implementing body. But it has also been underlined by some interviewed parties that the policy forum itself has lost appeal: some observers assert that Session agendas are recycled and carry too many things from too long ago, with no evident renewal, while others feels that critical issues, particularly under means of implementation, have not been satisfactorily concluded.

UNFF Session agendas have been determined by the current MYPOW (2007-2015), which was negotiated and adopted by Member States at UNFF 7 and which set the agenda long in advance. The agendas of the plenary sessions of the UNFF have been overloaded and not all Member States are interested in following all proposed items, many of which come up over and over again. Others face limitations due to the size of their delegations. Dealing with thematic focus groups in parallel sessions (as proposed by some parties to alleviate plenary sessions) is not necessarily a solution as many members, particularly developing Member States, cannot afford to send larger delegations to UNFF meetings to cover all topics of their interest. The dilemma for many of the interviewed parties is that plenary sessions, as they are organized now, cannot deliberate beyond the least common denominator, particularly considering the divergence of opinions on

key agenda item issues dividing countries, and thus they do not really help to progress new issues that are tabled.

In general, both the UNFF 10 national reports and the responses of governments to the questionnaire of the UNFF Secretariat on the future of the IAF provided positive responses on progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and towards the achievements of its four GOFs (see chapter 5.4).

The lack of national capacity to ensure implementation on the ground is, however, an area of general dissatisfaction, particularly in the national reports of developing countries. This dissatisfaction is expressed even where the concerned Member States recognise that the UNFF is not an implementing body and that implementation is primarily their own responsibility. Unresolved negotiations in the global forest forum have been going on for a very long time and the justification for continuing it becomes questionable when practical progress in the countries, and particularly means of implementation, have been below expectations.

**53-16 *Effectiveness of the UNFF to deliver is low due to agenda setting that seeks to suit all parties.*** A perceived weakness of the Forum is the inability to select, focus and prioritise the work to be undertaken in following-up its decisions. As indicated above, this is partly due to the agendas of Sessions carrying too many things and there being no selectiveness of deliverables. However, low effectiveness in follow-up is not a weakness of the UNFF Bureau and the Secretariat. A key driver of the Forum's and the UNFFS' workload is that country expectations are often unrealistically high and the resources are significantly low, especially as there are 197 Member States that need to be served by a relatively tiny secretariat (more information on budget and staffing is presented in Annex 6). The same driver also affects the CPF members which are expected to assist, but sometimes feel overwhelmed by demands of Member countries who do not realize that (a) CPF organizations already have a full workload imposed on them by their own Governing Bodies; (b) they have no additional funding and human capacities to take on the additional load of UNFF/IAF-related work; and (c) the timing of demands for UNFF deliverables may not suit their work calendars, given prior or statutory commitments<sup>35</sup>.

**53-17 *Unequal knowledge and implementation of UNFF Resolutions in Member States.*** In some Member States, UNFF Resolutions, including the adoption of the Forest Instrument and its GOFs, have been important in revising and updating their national forest policies and NFPs. They emphasize the broader values of forests and favour cross-sectoral communication. These countries also tend to have improving economies and are more proactive in mobilizing additional supportive financing for forestry both internally and externally (including through FCPF, UN-REDD, FLEGT voluntary partnerships and GEF grants, among others). They do not see fragmentation of forest-based initiatives as a handicap but as a chance for forests to contribute, in a more focused manner, to a wider range of developmental goals.

Other countries have not been as successful due to capacity-building limitations, constraints on acquiring financial resources and general constraints at the level of forest governance. In quite a number of Member States, there is limited knowledge of the Forest Instrument, of the NFPs and other means to support SFM. Many have a rapid turnover of representatives attending UNFF events and some lack arrangements for these UNFF representatives to brief all key stakeholders at national level. This is part of the internal communication deficiencies within public administrations and it reinforces lack of interest on the part of responsible ministries. In such Member States, under-staffed, over-worked and under-

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<sup>35</sup> As perceived by the majority of the active CPF members.

budgeted government agencies responsible for SFM have little incentive to reinforce and strengthen their NFPs. Thus there is a need to better coordinate across ministries and departments within ministries to deal with forests in a more coordinated, integrated and comprehensive manner.

**53-18 *Results of CLIs, OLI and RLI not adequately used in the Forum.*** Despite the important role played by these initiatives in furthering the work of the UNFF, a major criticism expressed by Member States, CPF and Major Groups has been that their outputs are not adequately taken into account during subsequent Sessions of the Forum. This is primarily due to the overloading of the agendas of the UNFF Sessions as structured in the MYPOW, with the agendas being set inflexibly years in advance. There is no routine provision for mainstreaming the outcomes of CLIs, OLI and RLI debates in formal decisions of UNFF or reflecting them in UNFF and ECOSOC Resolutions; nor is there a sense of selectivity on what matters most for follow-up in achieving SFM on the ground. As a consequence, mainstreaming the outcomes of the CLIs, OLI, MGI and RLI in Forum discussions and in subsequent UNFF and ECOSOC Resolutions has been unsatisfactory. This needs to be addressed in the future IAF. However, as expressed by some Member States from the G77, in addressing this need the balance between CLIs driven by developed and developing countries has to be considered in order to not skew the discussion in favour of issues prioritized by donor over those by developing countries.

The very success of the initiatives in permitting issues to be considered in more depth than they would be during UNFF plenary sessions has raised a new problem: the large number of analytical pieces and policy declarations generated (in particular by CLIs) has overwhelmed the capacity of the UNFF system for selectiveness in follow-up and for prioritisation in its work.

**53-19 *Unequal engagement of Major Groups.*** While some Major Groups representatives, including indigenous peoples, farmers, youth and the scientific and technical community have at least for some of the time since 2000 been active in fully contributing to the Forum, other Major Groups, including main environmental NGOs, business and Industry, as well as opinion makers and globally active policy makers from major economic sectors are absent or have turned away from it since the Forest Instrument was put in place. There is a perception in the NGO community that the UNFF's structural design and methods of work prevent it from being proactive, creative or responsive to current challenges<sup>36</sup>. They also claim that UNFF, compared with other multi-lateral fora (e.g., CBD, ITTO) is seen to be "out-of-step" with the trend towards more inclusive policy processes.

For some major environmental NGOs, the inertia of the Forum to define and implement a practical way to regulate global forest conservation and SFM is the main reason for having turned away from the UNFF. They claim that many of the challenges for sustaining forests lie outside the forest sector and that the functioning of the current UNFF does not give room for a positive dialogue that contributes to altering the perceived value of forests in respect to other land uses. They also claim that such cross-sectoral communication has not yet taken place in the UNFF process because some major UN Member States do not want to bring this to the agenda of UNFF Sessions.

Commercial private sector forestry representatives argue that they are not engaged with the UNFF since it is too preoccupied with abstract policy discussions and does not effectively address their interests in timber harvesting; product production, processing and trade; certification; stable investment conditions and enabling environments, etc. However this might only be part of the reason: UNFF discussions have no economic consequences that would compel private sector representatives to actively participate in the Forum. Of the many MEAs currently being implemented, some have successfully secured the undivided

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<sup>36</sup> Mankin (2007)

attention of the private sector<sup>37</sup>. The private sector is active where the parties to these conventions take decisions that have economic consequences, some bad and some good, that will affect their businesses. This is far from the case with forest industries and the UNFF. There are no consequences of economic importance to the forest industry that result from participation or non-participation in the current UNFF process.

### ***Impacts and Sustainability***

53-20 ***The UNFF has contributed to shaping the global and national forestry agendas since 2000, but the impact is difficult to measure.*** The principal outcome document from the 2012 UNCSD Rio+20 Conference and the subsequent UN General Assembly Resolution on *The future we want* both called for urgent implementation of the Forest Instrument and the UNFF 9 Ministerial Declaration. The UNFF has provided a forum and framework for promoting SFM worldwide, which in some countries is progressing well and in others needs to be reinforced and strengthened. The adoption of the Forest Instrument and its GOFs has been acknowledged and linked to the work of the CBD and the GEF, and COFO is regularly addressing the implementation of the Forest Instrument and UNFF resolutions in its agenda. The IPF/IFF proposals for action and UNFF resolutions on a wide range of critical issues, including on the Forest Instrument and its GOFs, are fundamental building blocks for NFPs in several countries.

However, it is difficult to judge the impacts and sustainability of the UNFF process since 2000 as “the global forest policy forum” in black and white terms. From the policy forum roles of the forests process, some interviewed parties observe with confidence that it had positive impacts and others (with the same confidence) that it has been a failure. The issue of time lags in international progress should be recognised: a dialogue process such as UNFF may initially influence attitudes and mind-sets. The importance of such attitudinal changes may take time to manifest itself in national policies, programmes and legislation and thereafter in field action.

53-21 ***Impact of the implementation of the Forest Instrument has been hampered by unresolved issues regarding SFM financing.*** Despite the fact that UNFF 8, UNFF 9 and UNFF 10 (held in 2009, 2011 and 2013) as well as three AHEGs (held in 2008, 2010 and 2013) and one country-led initiative (held in 2008 in Suriname, see §53-06) gave priority attention to discussions on a voluntary global financial mechanism to support the implementation of the Forest Instrument, the result has been a complete stalemate on funding, and this has effectively hindered the implementation of the Forest Instrument. The Facilitative Process has leveraged some SFM financing in developing countries, but there is no financial mechanism in existence charged with supporting the expeditious and strategic implementation of the Forest Instrument on the ground at the national level. As outlined above, the NFPF was conceived to support processes of developing and implementing NFPs, but ceased to exist in 2012.

### ***Summary of findings and conclusions***

53-22 ***IAF as an evolving process with changing functions.*** There are UNFF Member States and stakeholders that keep a middle ground in relation to the functioning of the IAF as expressed in the

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<sup>37</sup> Examples include the chemicals industry engaged in supporting the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; the oil industry closely following and influencing the negotiations of the UNFCCC; the oil tanker shipping industry providing substantial support to the IMO ship borne oil pollution conventions and the UNEP regional seas protocols on oil spills; and the pet and aquarium industries closely following and influencing the negotiations of CITES.

country reports on the future IAF. However, there are also groups holding more extreme positions. One group does not see that there is an efficient arrangement, institution, process, or initiative in place that has the necessary convening power to effectively regulate the full range of issues associated with forests at the global level and with SFM at the national level to the extent needed. The other group views the current IAF (including the Forest Instrument) as a significant step towards good forest governance, underlining that it is comprehensive, holistic and integrated in its approach to global forests, which balances environmental, social and economic functions of forests and has sufficient convening power to bring all players to the same table, thus having potential to play a major role at the global level. What needs to be achieved in the post-2015 framework is to find a compromise that goes beyond what is generally the lowest common denominator.

The six principal functions initially attributed to the IAF in ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 were directed primarily at global consensus building on SFM policies and supportive actions built on international cooperation and coordination, and cross-sectoral collaboration. Subsequently, ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 assigned an additional three functions to the IAF, including enhancing the role of forests in contributing to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, translating global SFM policies to actions at the national level and further engaging regional and sub-regional organizations in facilitating SFM implementation on the ground. Clearly, there are two functions that need to be emphasized, one relates to the positioning of forests and of all forest values in a wider development agenda, and the other relates to the promotion of integrated actions aimed at the implementation of SFM in all types of forests in particular the forest instrument, and in this context the function of the IAF in providing a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy development, coordination and implementation.

53-23 ***Setting a policy framework for global cooperation on SFM.*** The Sessions and inter-sessional meetings of the UNFF have contributed to promoting a common understanding of SFM at the global level and remain successful in this task, engaging a wide range of government representatives, international organizations and stakeholders. Moreover, the UNFF at the global level has played a catalytic role in promoting enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination on SFM, particularly through the CPF. The UNFFS has collaborated closely with relevant organisations of the UN system and other relevant international and regional organisations, institutions and instruments to improve information exchange and cooperation in areas of common concern relating to forests. However, various aspects can be improved, including

- ***Improve agenda setting of future Forum Sessions.*** The current agenda setting for Forum Sessions is based on the MYPOW that the Forum adopted several years before and which is generally overloaded with items that are permanently listed, limiting the opportunity to address emerging and critical issues in a timely and effective manner. Moreover, mainstreaming the outcomes of the CLIs, OLI, MGIs and RLI in Forum discussions and in subsequent UNFF and ECOSOC resolutions has been unsatisfactory and needs to be improved.
- ***Replacing the MYPOW a “strategic plan” implemented through shorter-term (rolling) work plans or programmes.*** In order to improve the effectiveness of the work of the UNFF, Member States could consider replacing the MYPOW by a long-term strategic plan to guide and focus the work of the IAF, which would then be implemented on a “rolling” basis by a four or five year strategic work plan (2016-2020, 2021-2025, 2026-2030) that helps to implement the (re)newed role of the post-2015 IAF. Based on the proposed arrangements, such a strategic plan (that should be adaptable to changing conditions) can take various forms. For example, it could (i) strengthen

the coordinating role of a future IAF for global, intergovernmental and international programmes on forests and/or (ii) create a specific programme of work of the new IAF that includes commitments and measurable targets. Another proposal is that such plan could constitute (iii) a UN system-wide medium-term plan on SFM, in which the UNFF through its secretariat would work with UN partners and CPF members in the preparation of the plan.<sup>38</sup>

- **Strengthen the impacts of CLIs, OLI, MGIs and RLI.** Country-, Organizational-, Major Group- and Region-led initiatives should remain an important cornerstone in a post-2015 IAF. The focus should be on development at the regional level and implementation of global policy instruments defined for post-2015. Work needs to be done to revise the current guidelines to improve planning, preparation, participation and organization of the work of CLIs, OLI, MGIs and RLI. There is also a need to clearly focus such initiatives on topics that relate to the proposed rolling four-year work (strategic) plan.
- **Focus on actions that have clear value-added.** Since draft UNFF Resolutions build largely on recommendations contained in Secretary General Reports, these recommendations should not duplicate or repeat actions previously taken by the Forum or already agreed in the Forest Instrument, or duplicate requests and invitations already made to the CPF and its member organizations or others (including requests to continue already ongoing work). Vague and open-ended recommendations should also be avoided.

53-24 **Need to provide targeted funding in support of the post-2015 IAF.** UNFF negotiations have failed to provide adequate funding to support implementation of the Forest Instrument and the realization of the GOFs and the overall IAF processes. The Facilitative Process has leveraged some SFM financing in developing countries, but there is no financial mechanism in existence charged with supporting the expeditious and strategic implementation of the Forest Instrument on the ground at the national level. While many have high expectations for REDD+, the scope of the Forest Instrument is much wider than the role of forests in relation to climate change. Also, reviving the NFPs and a support mechanism for them might be worth to reflect upon. Member States should carefully consider if for a future IAF, there is need for the (re)establishment of a strategic trust fund for supporting the implementation of the (reviewed) Forest Instrument through NFPs that *inter alia* would address the further mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Forest Instrument and SFM in the countries, based on NFPs (see §53-21).

53-25 **Need to strengthen implementation at the national and regional levels.** Implementation of concrete actions based on the policy decisions of the UNFF is primarily the responsibility of Member States, using public resources as well as mobilising private investments as necessary through suitable policy incentives. While several countries have integrated the IPF/IFF proposals for action and UNFF resolutions into their NFPs and equivalent policies and strategies and others have established national forest funds, many have not. Many developing countries expressed dissatisfaction over the lack of capacity to ensure implementation of SFM at the national level. This has been compounded by the collapse of the NFPF. Regional and sub-regional organizations have to be engaged more actively in supporting the work of the future IAF, particularly in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and its GOFs, through NFPs, at the regional and national levels.

Implementation of SFM is often hampered by the lack of coordination amongst states and international organisations, but also at the national level among ministries and institutions. Many forest policy issues,

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<sup>38</sup> A precedent for such a plan was the UN System-wide Medium-term Programme on the Environment (SWMTEP) that was prepared by UNEP in close consultation with UN partners prior to the 1992 Rio Conference.

including major financial instruments that influence SFM, have been developed outside the UNFF. Reducing such fragmentation and making the Forest Instrument more effective would need behaviour change on different fronts. First and foremost there is a need to better coordinate in the capitals of the Member States, across ministries and between departments within ministries to deal with forests in a more coordinated, integrated and comprehensive manner.

53-26 ***Increasing the engagement of stakeholders in the UNFF process.*** Engagement of Major Groups, in particular private sector federations, companies and investors, mainstream environmental NGOs, foundations, opinion makers and globally active policy makers from major economic sectors needs to be improved in the UNFF process. Unless these institutions perceive that the IAF can deal with their specific interests, it is unlikely that they will consistently attend the Sessions of the Forum. One possibility to improve the situation is for Member States to (a) make a conscious effort to include representatives of the forest-related private sector in their delegations to UNFF sessions and involve them actively in the Major Groups dialogue and/or (b) promote and support their participation in UNFF Sessions, particularly the Major Groups dialogue. An additional possibility is to establish a “stakeholder advisory group”, with strong participation from the private sector, to advise on how to better integrate and involve stakeholders in the sessions and work of the IAF and generate interest in the IAF, especially from business.<sup>39</sup> The successful implementation of the Forest Instrument at the national and regional levels will depend greatly on stakeholder engagement, including by the private sector.

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<sup>39</sup> ITTO, for example, has set up a Trade Advisory Group (TAG) and a Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) which have been effective in engaging stakeholders in the work of the Organisation and helped shape in the biennial work programme

## 5.4 The Forest Instrument and Global Objectives on Forests

### Background

54-01 **Genesis of the Forest Instrument and the Global Objectives on Forests.** The adoption of the Forest Instrument<sup>40</sup> by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2007 was the result of fifteen years of difficult and complex negotiations that commenced after the 1992 UNCED. ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 required UNFF, during its first five year period (2000 to 2005) to consider “with a view to recommending to the Council<sup>41</sup>, and through it to the General Assembly, the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests”.<sup>42</sup>

Decisive in this process were an AHEG meeting in September 2004<sup>43</sup> and a country led initiative (CLI) on the Future of the IAF in Guadalajara, Mexico in January 2005.

At UNFF 5 in 2005, delegations agreed that it was first necessary to decide on the objectives of a possible instrument before entering into a discussion of the elements to be included. Consequently, the four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) negotiated were adopted *ad ref.*

#### BOX 3: The four Global Objectives on Forests

1. Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through SFM, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.
2. Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.
3. Increase significantly the area of sustainably managed forests, including protected forests, and increase the proportion of forest products derived from sustainably managed forests.
4. Reverse the decline in official development assistance for SFM and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM.

However, the discussions to produce a Ministerial Declaration on the parameters for developing a legal framework on all types of forests broke down for a variety of reasons, including the intransigence of some key negotiating countries and weak leadership by the UNFF 5 Bureau and the UNFFS. As a result, UNFF Decision 5/2 pushed the completion of the work of UNFF 5 to UNFF 6, with a bracketed annex text, labelled “Chairman’s draft text”, on the possible development of a voluntary instrument. The annex was added because it became increasingly clear during UNFF 5 deliberations that a legally binding instrument on all types of forests was not a feasible option to a minority of countries with significant forest cover. Many countries that were in favour of a legally-binding agreement finally felt that a compromise in the form of a voluntary, non-legally binding agreement was needed in order to maintain the global momentum for global forest policy and SFM.

In February 2006 UNFF 6 formally adopted the four GOFs and identified elements and proposals provided by Member States for a non-legally binding instrument on forests, building upon the ideas emanating from a CLI held in Berlin in 2006. ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 requested UNFFS to prepare a report on

<sup>40</sup> The full title is the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests

<sup>41</sup> The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

<sup>42</sup> ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35.

<sup>43</sup> on Consideration with a View to Recommending the Parameters of a Mandate for Developing a Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests

“Developing a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests” that summarized the many proposals provided and identified common elements in the proposals and comments by Member States of the UNFF, representing the views of countries, as well as other elements for possible inclusion. The report also provided further elaboration of substantive, working and institutional elements for developing a non-legally binding instrument. This Note was presented to an AHEG held in December 2006 which agreed that the composite text should become the framework for the negotiation of the instrument at UNFF 7, culminating finally in the adoption of the Forest Instrument by the UN General Assembly in December 2007.

54-02 ***Incomplete forest policy discussion in the UNFF.*** In spite of having the Forest Instrument, many issues that are directly or indirectly related to forests are dealt with in a variety of other forums that do not have forests as their main focus. UNFF as a firmly committed forest-focused mechanism has so far failed to become as inclusive and participatory as is required to create broad enough learning platforms and science policy interfaces for all players, in spite of the support of the CPF. The result is that many forest policy issues, including major financial instruments that influence SFM have been developed outside the UNFF. Reducing such fragmentation and making a future forest-related instrument more effective would need changing behaviour on different fronts. As noted in §53-25 and elsewhere in this Report, there is first a need for better coordination on forest-related matters within governments at national level. This also includes a more formal information exchange on forests so that there are consistent messages on forests and their role in the global development agenda within the Governing Bodies of major international organizations, including among CPF members. It also needs recognition by major NGOs, private sector and philanthropic organizations that participation in a global forest policy dialogue is worth their time and energy. Obviously, to date, country representatives following the UNFF have found it difficult to make known and implement the Forest Instrument, the GOFs and UNFF Resolutions in their countries beyond the more narrow forestry community.

54-03 ***Legally versus Non-legally binding instrument.*** During the December 2006 AHEG meeting, a Panel Discussion with International Experts on International Law and Finance was held address the differences between a convention and a non-legally binding instrument. Experts noted that in the field of international law there is little distinguishing a *legally binding* (today known as “hard law”) from a *non-legally binding* (“soft law”) MEA.<sup>44</sup> Soft law agreements had most often been used in the fields of economics and the environment, where it is difficult to assess and determine rights and obligations, such as in dealing with “third generation human rights”. Soft law agreements generally have the support of the international community and public opinion; there is not necessarily a difference in the effectiveness of legally and non-legally binding instruments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be given as an example of a non-legally binding instrument that contains widely recognized actions. What counts in practice is the effectiveness of various types of instruments and this is “dependent on the degree of political commitment to their implementation rather than their legal nature or the strength of the language contained therein.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> It needs stressing that any legal agreement on forests would not be just “environmental”; forests have a combination of economic, social and environmental roles.

<sup>45</sup> UN Economic and Social Council, Report of the open-ended ad hoc expert group on the consideration of the content of a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (E/CN.18/AC.1/2006/4) (28 December 2006), p. 5.

The great majority of legally binding MEAs contain no provisions for repercussions, such as sanctions, against parties for not complying with their contracted obligations. In a 2001 UNEP report on international environmental governance, it was stated that “The earliest multilateral treaty related to the environment dates back to 1868: “Revised convention for Rhine navigation”. By 2001, the number has risen to at least 502 international treaties and other agreements related to the environment, of which 323 are regional. Nearly 60%, or 302, date from 1972, the year of the Stockholm Conference, to the present.”<sup>46</sup> By 2008 there were 45 MEAs of global geographical scope with at least 72 signatory countries. Yet despite this impressive number of MEAs, only few are considered “hard law”. Two of the very few MEAs with repercussions for parties in non-compliance, which also happen to be two of the most successfully implemented MEAs, are the *Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer* (entered in force in 1989) and the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna* (CITES, entered in force in 1975), both of which provide for trade sanctions against parties that fail to meet their contracted obligations.

Regardless of being legally or non-legally binding, the successful implementation of an instrument depends on two critically important factors: (1) the degree of political commitment by Parties or Member States and (2) the prerequisite financial support for its implementation, both being inextricably linked.

One advantage that conventions have is that they often contain provisions for financial mechanisms. These can consist of one or more mechanisms, with the first being a trust fund based on obligatory contributions to cover the operational costs of the convention’s secretariat and servicing the regular and intersessional meetings of the Parties, and the second being a trust fund with voluntary contributions for the participation of representatives of Parties from developing countries. Although non-legally binding agreements do not often include provisions for financial mechanisms, some have subsequently set up financial mechanisms, including voluntary trust funds, for supporting secretariats as well as implementation. In either case, the successful implementation of an agreement, whether legally or non-legally binding, is dependent on the establishment of adequate and predictable financing mechanisms.

### **Key achievements**

54-04 **Providing a Policy Framework for SFM.** The Forest Instrument of 2007 represents a global consensus on issues surrounding the conservation, use and management of all types of forests. It is comprised of the 4 shared GOFs agreed at UNFF 6, as well as 24 national policies and measures and 19 actions on international cooperation and means of implementation which were negotiated and agreed at UNFF 7. It was not conceived in a vacuum, but constructed on a foundation of years-long deliberations that weighed the merits or otherwise of agreeing on a forest convention. It thus contains a number of strategically important building blocks as stated in its preamble section. These include the Rio Forest Principles<sup>47</sup>; Chapter 11 of Agenda 21: Combating Deforestation (1992); the IPF/IFF proposals for action (1995-2000); UNFF-relevant ECOSOC Resolutions (2001-2004); the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the WSSD (2002); and the international development goals, particularly the MDGs (2000). The adherence to the Rio Forest Principles and the significance of Agenda 21 are further articulated in Section II on Principles of the Forest Instrument as are

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<sup>46</sup> UNEP (2001), p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> Formally referred to as the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests.

the complimentary and interlinked principles of “increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources” (paragraphs 2.d) and “good governance at all levels” (paragraph 2.e) as the essential foundation for achieving sustainable forest management.

54-05 ***Significance of the Forest Instrument for SFM Policy at the International Level.*** At the time of the adoption of the Forest Instrument, the IPF/IFF-UNFF continuum (1995-2006) had adopted approximately 500 IPF/IFF proposals for action and operative paragraphs of UNFF and relevant ECOSOC Resolutions<sup>48</sup>, many of which cut across a wide range of distinct but linked issues. A major, if not daunting, challenge facing Member States, particularly developing countries, was how to organize and implement this very wide body of SFM policies at the national level. Despite earlier attempts to cluster the IPF/IFF proposals for action, it was not until 2007 that the UNFFS finalized the systematization of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. Nevertheless, the vastness and breadth of the IPF/IFF/UNFF proposals for action were far too cumbersome to be implemented efficiently and effectively by most countries, particularly since they were not adopted in order of priority or importance. The GOFs are a step towards summarizing the essence of agreed ambitions.

54-06 ***Significance of the Forest Instrument for SFM Policy at the National Level.*** The Forest Instrument, in spite of the complicated language which resulted from a word-by-word negotiation process, provides a comprehensive over-arching policy framework on SFM while crystalizing the IPF/IFF proposals for action into strategic actions at the national and international levels. The Forest Instrument is “an integrated framework to implement sustainable forest management, achieve the global objectives on forests and enhance the contribution of forests to internationally agreed development goals” (UNFF9). A major achievement of the Forest Instrument is providing countries with a framework for promoting SFM at the national and international levels by distilling key elements of the IPF/IFF proposals for action and operative paragraphs of UNFF and relevant ECOSOC Resolutions, thus facilitating a much more manageable and strategic approach to achieving SFM at the national level. What is lacking, however, is a comprehensive link of forests to broader landscape issues dealt with in other fora, such as the role of forests in climate change and food security, among others.

54-07 ***Implementation of the Forest Instrument.*** A key question for assessing the achievement of the Forest Instrument is how amenable it is to implementation at the national level, given the inadequate and unpredictable financial resources at the disposal of countries and the short period of time since its adoption. This is not easy to answer since, although 57 countries (out of potentially 197 countries) provided national reports to UNFF 10, no reports or responses to that question have been provided by the large majority of Member States. Nonetheless, while many countries have little to demonstrate in the form of progress, others have been more successful.

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<sup>48</sup> The international policy dialogue through the IPF/IFF/UNFF continuum from 1995 to 1996 generated approximately 270 IPF/IFF proposals for action, 120 operative paragraphs of UNFF resolutions and decisions and 110 operative paragraphs of relevant ECOSOC resolutions, for a total of 500 - see Illueca (2007), p.1.)

#### BOX 4: Reporting elements based on the Forest Instrument

There are 24 national and 19 international actions contained in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Forest Instrument to be implemented by Member States. For national reporting to UNFF 9 and UNFF 10 they have been divided into two sets of clusters—cross-cutting and thematic. The cross-cutting clusters are:

- 1A: Strengthening political commitment for sustainable forest management
- 1B: Financing sustainable forest management
- 1C: Capacity building and technology transfer
- 1D: Stakeholder participation
- 1E: Enhanced international cooperation

The thematic clusters are:

- 2A: Forest law enforcement and governance
- 2B: International Trade in forest products
- 2C: Protection of forests
- 2D: Science and research
- 2E: Public awareness and education
- 2F: Private sector and industry
- 2G: Indigenous and local communities.

Annex 5 presents a summary of the status of implementation of the Forest Instrument, which is based on an analysis of country reports to UNFF 10. In addition, Box 5 summarizes progress towards the achievement of the GOFs based on the 57 national reports submitted by governments to UNFF 10, the 44 responses provided by governments to the UNFFS questionnaires on the effectiveness of the IAF, FRA 2010 and other international sources.

54-08 ***The Forest Instrument as a basis for broader policy dialogue.*** As nearly all interviewed persons observed, the Forest Instrument has gone beyond the IPF/IFF/UNFF proposals for action and operative paragraphs, raising the profile of forests at the international level. While several interviewed persons have reservations about the way the FI and the GOFs are formulated, they all recognized that the four GOFs of the Forest Instrument were a major achievement. Unlike many MEAs, the Members States of the UNFF had the boldness to adopt detailed GOFs to be achieved by 2015 within the instrument itself. However, due to the fact that none of the 4 GOFs has clear targets assigned, it remains difficult to clearly assess progress made under any of the global objectives.

#### ***Relevance and Effectiveness***

54-09 ***Relevance of the Forest Instrument at the global level.*** The Forest Instrument provides a comprehensive over-arching policy framework on SFM while crystallizing the IPF/IFF proposals for action into strategic actions at the national and international levels. A major achievement of the Forest Instrument is providing countries a comprehensive framework for promoting SFM at the national and international levels by distilling key elements of the IPF/IFF proposals for action and operative paragraphs of UNFF and relevant ECOSOC Resolutions, thus facilitating a more manageable and strategic approach to achieving SFM at the national level. While some representatives of countries, international organisations and Major Groups perceive that the Forest Instrument has received only scant attention at the global level, generally referring to its non-legally binding nature, others have recognized its importance; thus perception varies. The adoption of the Forest Instrument was recognized by the CBD COP 9 in May 2008 through paragraph 1(i) of Decision IX/5, which urged Parties to “Increase cross-sectoral cooperation and

initiatives at all levels, to help carry out a coordinated implementation of both the programme of work on forest biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the decisions set by the UNFF, including the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, for the achievement of the 2010 target and the four Global Objectives on Forests, with the involvement of indigenous and local communities and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector for coordinated implementation of the CBD and the forest instrument". Furthermore, paragraph 3(d) requested the Executive Secretary of the CBD to "Explore, together with the Director of the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, possibilities for developing a work plan with targeted joint activities between the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Forum on Forests by identifying commonalities and complementarities of the respective work programmes and submit the results for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice" .

#### BOX 5: Implementation of the GOFs 2007-2014\*

Regarding the **GOF 1**, both FRA 2010 and Global Forest Watch data and information indicate that there has been some progress in the form of a reduced rate of global deforestation, but that global efforts still fall far short of the goal.

The results for **GOF 2** are mixed. Forests designated for protective functions and for the conservation of biological diversity have increased in surface area, and payment for ecosystem services is on the rise. Social services provided by national parks in the form of recreation and tourism are also on the rise. On the down side, the area of productive forests has declined from 1990 to 2010, although plantation forests in 2010 accounted for 7% of total global forest cover.

UNFF 10 national reports, FRA 2010 and data from global and national certification processes indicate progress towards the achievement of **GOF 3**, although the goal is far from being achieved. While a number of countries are participating in SFM certification processes, many have yet to move in this direction.

Based solely on the UNFF 10 national reports, the results on progress towards the achievement of **GOF 4** are mixed. The trend in ODA flows for forest financing cannot be determined with the information provided by only 11 donor and 17 recipient countries. Nearly 60% of developing countries reported significant increases in forest financing, but from the information and data provided it would appear that this was the result of increases in public sector forest financing, innovative country financial mechanisms such as payment for ecosystem services, national forest funds and ODA (although the information on ODA was sparse). A few donor countries reported significant increases in forest-related ODA, with most of it related to REDD+.

\* The 57 voluntary national reports provided to UNFF 10 and the 44 responses provided by countries to the questionnaires regarding the effectiveness of the IAF are the main source of this box. Other sources produced by international organizations have also been consulted.

54-10 **Forest Instrument and REDD+**. While CBD has prominently recognized the Forest Instrument, the UNFCCC – while fully endorsing the first GOF (without referring to it in any of the negotiated documents) – did not officially endorse the FI as a relevant process to its purposes. However, the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation has been clearly recognized in the UNFCCC framework since the convention was developed in 1992. Increasingly over the years, forests became a main topic in international climate change negotiations, mainly in the mitigation agenda, through LULUCF and more recently, REDD+. Forests present a significant global carbon stock accumulated through growth of trees and an increase in soil carbon. Estimates<sup>49</sup> show that the world's forests store more than 650 gigatonnes

<sup>49</sup> FAO (2010), Global Forest Resources Assessment

(Gt) of carbon out of which 289 Gt are in the biomass (44%) and 292 Gt are in soil (45%). While sustainable management, planting and rehabilitation of forests can conserve or increase forest carbon stocks, deforestation, degradation and poor forest management do reduce carbon stocks. For the world as a whole, carbon stocks in forest biomass decreased by an estimated 0.5 Gt annually during the period 2005–2010. This was mainly because of a reduction in the global forest area<sup>50</sup>.

In developing its incentive programme on Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+ GEF 5 and on Sustainable Forest Management in GEF 6, the GEF fully supports the definition of SFM contained in the fifth *chapeau* paragraph of the Forest Instrument<sup>51</sup>. According to the *GEF Incentive Mechanism on Forests: A New REDD+ Multilateral Finance Program* (2010), the creation by the GEF Council of the SFM/REDD+ programme was in part a response to the adoption of the FI<sup>52</sup>. The GEF 5 strategy is “working with and supporting the NLBI framework on all types of forests of the UNFF, which calls for international cooperation and national action to reduce deforestation, prevent forest degradation, promote sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty for all forest-dependent peoples”,<sup>53</sup> although the GEF is not a financial mechanism of the Forest Instrument.

**54-11 *Relevance of the Forest Instrument at national levels.*** For the Forest Instrument to be effective there is a need for national implementation of its non-legally binding commitments. Implementing international commitments at national level is – for virtually all international agreements – a bottleneck, and not only for the FI. While the relevance of the FI and its GOFs has been more visibly acknowledged at the international level, this has not been the case at the national level. It could be argued that the review of the effectiveness of the Forest Instrument, called for by ECOSOC Resolution 2006/49 as part of the overall review of the effectiveness of the IAF, is premature and even prejudicial. This only allows for a period of implementation of six years, during which time no decision has been reached on a financial mechanism dedicated to supporting its implementation. Even if, in May 2009, UNFF 8 had adopted a financial mechanism dedicated to supporting the implementation of the FI and assuming that it would take up to eight months to establish such a trust fund, the period of evaluation of the effectiveness of the FI and the achievement of its GOFs would be reduced to four years. In contrast, the first CBD national reports used for assessing progress in the implementation of the convention covered a five year period in which countries received substantial financial support from the GEF in the preparation of their National Biodiversity Data Management Projects and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

An analysis, based on a series of workshops funded by the UNFFS and FAO that aimed to strengthen the capacity of UNFF focal points in reporting to UNFF on progress made in the implementation of the Forest Instrument<sup>54</sup> revealed a number of interesting lessons learned, for example:

- At the commencement of all the workshops, the majority of country experts acknowledged that they had very little or no knowledge of the Forest Instrument.
- The workshops played an important role in instructing country experts on the scope of the Forest Instrument and on how to go about implementing it.

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<sup>50</sup> UNFCCC, Land-Use, Land-use Change and Forestry Website, Background chapter, consulted 25 May 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Sustainable forest management as a dynamic and evolving concept aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental value of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations

<sup>52</sup> Further information on GEF funding is given in §56-14.

<sup>53</sup> GEF (2009), p. 61.

<sup>54</sup> UNFF Secretariat, 5 workshop reports (2011-2012) available at the following website: [www.un.org/esa/forests/forest-instrument-workshop.html](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/forest-instrument-workshop.html).

- Capacity building for preparing national reports helped countries to assess actions underway or that needed to be developed in support of the implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of its GOFs.
- Country experts favoured a set reporting format constructed on a serialized baseline that would in the future allow for a more effective assessment of progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of its GOFs.
- The majority of country experts preferred a reporting format that would be more useful to them in assessing the state of management of their forests and for identifying critical areas requiring priority attention.
- Country experts strongly supported the need for technical assistance in the preparation of national reports.

### ***Impacts and Sustainability***

54-12 ***Diversity of opinions about the implementation of the Forest Instrument and progress towards the achievement of its Global Objectives on Forests.*** UNFF Resolution 10/2 invited Member States to provide views and proposals on the IAF. With the exception of GOF 4, no consensus on progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of its Global Objectives on Forests emerges from 44 countries that responded to a UNFFS questionnaire (out of potentially 197 Member States). Eighteen responded that the implementation of the FI was inadequate; 15, that it was adequate; and 8 were uncertain. Three did not respond. For GOF 1, 21 felt that progress towards its achievement was inadequate; 15, that it was adequate; and 3 were unsure. Some 23 countries felt that progress towards the achievement of GOF 2 was inadequate, with 13 responding that it was adequate and three that they were not certain. For GOF 3, 17 felt that progress was adequate; 14, that it was inadequate; and 8 were unsure. It is primarily for GOF4 that a clear trend emerges. Twenty-four responded that it was inadequate, while 7 felt it was adequate and 8 were uncertain. Five Member States did not provide responses for any of the four GOFs.

54-13 ***Perception that lack of impact is due to lack of financing.*** The perception is that the Forest Instrument has not received adequate practical attention because it lacks a financial mechanism to directly catalyse SFM actions in developing countries where they are most needed. Through ECOSOC Resolution 2007/40, Member States agreed “to develop and consider, with a view to its adoption at the eighth session of the Forum, a voluntary global financial mechanism/portfolio approach/forest financing framework for all types of forests, aiming at mobilizing significantly increased, new and additional resources from all sources” to support the implementation of SFM, the achievement of the GOFs and the implementation of the FI. To date, UNFF has been unable to negotiate a viable financial instrument for financing SFM.

In contrast to this obvious failure of UNFF/IAF to make available adequate and predictable financing for SFM, REDD+ has been developed through the UNFCCC as a financial instrument within the past 7 years and is considered today by many as the most promising instrument to finance conservation and sustainable management of forests in developing countries. However, it is predominantly carbon-based (on the performance of \$ per ton of CO<sub>2</sub>). While the carbon focus of REDD+ remains, the mechanism as it has evolved so far (up to the UNFCCC COP 19 in December 2013) clearly recognizes the “co-benefits” of REDD+ which reflect the wider definition of SFM. REDD+ funding can thus be considered as the currently most promising SFM funding mechanism and it has attracted considerable interest (see chapter 5.6).

Besides REDD+, the GEF SFM/REDD+ program has also emerged since 2012 as an important source of funding for SFM and an indirect source of funding for forests, viewed mainly as carbon sinks.

The major criticism that some stakeholders have about the REDD+ type of financial mechanisms is that they are overly bureaucratic, with heavy implementation guidelines that comprise a detailed accounting system, a complex monitoring, assessment and reporting procedure and complex social and environmental safeguards; all these processes mean that, with the exception of project-based funding on the voluntary carbon market, disbursement of funds and implementation on the ground is slow. Nonetheless, REDD+ has attracted considerable donor attention. The lessons for the Forest Instrument in its renewed form for post-2015 are that a dedicated financial mechanism for promoting the holistic, cross-sectoral management of all types of forests might need to learn from REDD+ processes and reflect on how SFM funding and REDD+ funding can be better coordinated and brought into a more synergistic arrangement.

### ***Summary of findings and conclusions***

54-14 ***Forest Instrument as a major achievement and base to build upon a post-2015 IAF.*** The adoption of the Forest Instrument (the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests) at the High Level Special Event of the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2007 was the culmination of fifteen years of difficult and complex negotiations that commenced after the 1992 UNCED. The Forest Instrument is still valid and should continue to be implemented in a post-2015 forest arrangement. Some of its text needs to be amended, such as the time frame for the GOFs and the future replacement of the MDGs by the SDGs, among others. The Forest Instrument (including its GOFs) could also be reviewed in light of the SDGs and targets (including but not limited to SDG15) and possibly enhanced with a global objective on enhancing the contribution of forests/SFM to the SDGs. The Forest Instrument could be complemented by an Addendum that addresses the changing role of forests, including on climate change, the CBD Aichi targets, the SDGs, new trade rules and forest governance issues, as appropriate (see chapter 6.2), which also explains that such an Addendum can take different forms). If Member States agree to proceed with the negotiation of a convention on all types of forests, the Forest Instrument could serve as a foundation for negotiations.

54-15 ***Forest instrument and funding mechanism.*** Greater support is needed to improve the implementation of the Forest Instrument at national level. To this end, the establishment of a strategic trust fund (see options proposed under chapter 6.2) for supporting the implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of its GOF would catalyze SFM efforts at the national level, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The trust fund would be strategic in the sense that it would provide priority support to (1) the development of national action plans/national forest programmes for the implementation of the FI, (2) the preparation of national reports on progress in the implementation of the FI and towards the achievement of its GOFs and (3) the further mobilization of resources for the implementation of SFM in the countries in the context of the SDGs.

54-16 ***Towards a “Forest Instrument plus”.*** There are non-legally binding agreements that are being implemented successfully and legally binding agreements that have fallen far short of expectations. Regardless of being legally or non-legally binding, the successful implementation of an instrument depends on two critically important factors: (1) the degree of political commitment by Parties or Member States and (2) the prerequisite financial support for its implementation, both being inextricably linked. Although some perceive that the Forest Instrument has received only scant attention possibly due to its

non-legally binding nature, many, including key international organizations, have recognized its importance, such as the CBD and the GEF, among others.

54-17 ***Monitoring, Assessing and Reporting on progress towards SFM.*** Progress in the implementation of the cross-sectoral and thematic clusters of policies and measures contained in the Forest Instrument to achieve SFM have been substantial according to the UNFF 10 national reports and other reference sources, although the causal relationship between the FI and the national actions in support of SFM are not always clearly stated or perceived. Nevertheless, the FI and its GOFs served as both a framework and roadmap for achieving SFM that for some countries directly led to implementation and for other countries indirectly contributes to a national dialogue leading to complementary actions. For this purpose, the GOFs could be complemented by a set of clear targets (see also Table 7 in chapter 5.7).

The national reports to UNFF 10 are a starting point for the establishment of indicators and a baseline for assessing the implementation of the FI and progress towards the achievement of its GOFs. The harmonization with the C&I reporting and the seven thematic elements would add additional value to such reporting. To be efficient and effective, such reporting should be undertaken only every 5 years, in close relationship with FRA and the ITTO process of assessing the Status of Tropical Forest Management. Such combined work would increase efficiency, accuracy of reporting and also greatly reduce the reporting burden of Member States. Although a record number of 57 countries provided reports to UNFF-10 (29%), more needs to be done to increase the response rate and quality of reports of member countries. It is still a minority of member countries that take such reporting seriously.

## 5.5 Institutional arrangements with particular focus on UNFFS and CPF

### **Background**

55-01 ***Institutional structures in global forestry over time.*** As with all institutional set-ups, the structures related to the global dialogue on forests and associated policy implementation have evolved over time. In the pre-Rio (1992) era, perceptions were that challenges and opportunities in forestry could largely be dealt with by forestry professionals, with the result that international fora were largely sectoral. They were dominated by the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), related regional statutory bodies (the Regional Forestry Commissions) and a long list of specialized FAO technical committees with a specific focus (such as tropical forestry development, poplars, forest diseases, genetic resources, research and education); taken together, these committees dealt with “all types of forests”.

In addition, several other international forest-related institutions were established before 1992. The ITTA is a commodity agreement for tropical timber which came into force in 1985 and is serviced by the ITTO. International networking on research through IUFRO was later complemented by CIFOR and ICRAF. The work of CITES and the IUCN has strong forestry and wildlife conservation elements related to threatened species. There is also a proliferation of conservation-focused NGOs at national, regional and global levels, as well as professional forestry associations (many of which offer corporate membership or associate status to commercial forest resource and industry enterprises).

The Rio Summit in 1992 and the overall UNCED process revealed that international concern about the fate of forests and their proper stewardship was so great that a political dimension had to be added to these structures. With full awareness of existing institutions under FAO and other UN organizations as well as those in the non-governmental domain, the international community decided, at the third session of the CSD in 1995, to create a new policy forum to take on the semi-political dimensions of forestry debate: it thus established the IPF/IFF processes succeeded in 2000 by the IAF, including UNFF.

Inter-agency arrangements for supporting international forest-based cooperation have existed in some form for many years, whether under FAO or the UN headquarters based structure for policy dialogue. UNDP launched PROFOR in 1997 which was managed from 2002 onwards by the World Bank. The IPF/IFF processes were supported by an informal, high-level ITTF (1995-2001), the precursor of the CPF<sup>55</sup>. The purpose of all these arrangements was to secure harmony and cooperation in the servicing work of the specialized institutions ranging (for the CPF) from technical agencies such as FAO and ITTO; research ones such as CIFOR, IUFRO and ICRAF; convention secretariats such as the CBD; offices of the UN such as UNDP and UNEP; conservation organisations, such as the IUCN; and funding institutions, such as GEF and the World Bank.

This chapter of the Independent Assessment focuses in particular on the CPF and UNFFS, which have been two important components of institutional arrangements since 2000.

55-02 ***International Arrangement on Forests (IAF).*** The composition, structure and function of the IAF have been outlined in chapter 5.2. This chapter contains a short account of the specific role of each of the various components of the IAF from an institutional angle.

55-03 ***UNFF Member countries.*** The UNFF has universal membership, which means that all Member States of the UN and of its specialized agencies are members of the UNFF – a total of 197 countries. These countries are very different in the extent and use of their forests and forest resources: there are for

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<sup>55</sup> ITTF comprised 8 members, including Secretariat of CBD; DESA, CIFOR; FAO; ITTO; UNDP; UNEP and the World Bank

example forest-rich and forest-poor countries; countries in which forest goods play a major role in national economies; countries which manage their natural forests exclusively for forest services; and countries that almost entirely depend on planted forests for providing goods and services. It is important to note that the forests of the world are distributed unevenly among the countries. Five countries (Russia, Brazil, Canada, USA and China) possess over half of the entire forest resources of the world, 10 countries two-thirds and 15 countries nearly three-quarters of all forests. The other 182 countries share the remaining 25% of forest area. To some extent, active participation in the UNFF process reflects the distribution of forests. On average, over 100 countries participate in each UNFF session<sup>56</sup>, with the highest being 134 at UNFF 10 and the lowest being 85 at UNFF 3. Members have been invited to submit voluntary national reports to seven sessions of the Forum: in total, 104 countries have submitted a report to at least one session and 35 countries have submitted reports to at least three of these sessions.

55-04 **UNFF Secretariat (UNFFS)**. In Resolution 2000/35, Member States requested the Secretary General “to establish a compact secretariat of highly qualified staff. . . under established rules and procedures of the UN and strengthened through staff from secretariats of international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments . . . to service the Forum and support the CPF...”. After consideration of all proposals and taking into account paragraph 11 of the Resolution 2000/35, the February 2001 organizational session of the Forum decided to locate the UNFF secretariat at the United Nations Headquarters under DESA in New York<sup>57</sup>. The mandates and responsibilities of the UNFFS have grown over the years, although the corresponding human and financial resources have not kept pace. The permanent and primary mandate of the UNFFS is to service and provide operational and logistical support to UNFF. As part of DESA, UNFFS has three types of activities: normative, analytical and technical. However, as the resources for providing technical assistance are very limited, UNFFS is mainly associated with normative and analytical work besides servicing the UNFF.

The UNFFS has to orchestrate the preparations for the UNFF Sessions and expert meetings; prepare parliamentary documentation; support and service the UNFF Bureau; carry out the intersessional activities; contribute to CLI, RLI, MGI and OLIs, as requested; encourage continuing dialogue with a view to global convergence, providing information and issues-analysis in support of such dialogue; and track progress in the implementation of the Resolutions of the Forum, important policy issues relevant to forests, as well as other developments related to SFM. These activities assist in building consensus to support the Forum’s negotiation processes. UNFFS also provides professional inputs to UNFF and other intergovernmental meetings and catalyses action in priority areas that need global, regional, national and local attention. Another major responsibility of the UNFFS is to contribute to the inter-departmental work within the UN system, including input to the UN system’s reports, publications, and expert consultations on a range of issues, with the objective of enhancing and elevating the role of forests in all relevant areas.

55-05 The **Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)**<sup>58</sup> was established in April 2001 as successor to the ITTF<sup>59</sup>. The CPF’s role is to support the work of the Forum and to enhance cooperation and coordination among its participants. The CPF has been chaired by FAO since its creation. CPF organizations are

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<sup>56</sup> According to delegate lists, numbers are 96 (UNFF1), 115 (UNFF2), 85 (UNFF3), 90 (UNFF4), 109 (UNFF5), 129 (UNFF6), 126 (UNFF7), 109 (UNFF8), 111 (UNFF9) and 134 (UNFF10)

<sup>57</sup> See Documents E/2001/42/Rev.1 and E/CN.18/2001/3/Rev.1

<sup>58</sup> The 14 members of the CPF are listed in the footnote to §52-02. For more information see <http://www.cpfweb.org/en/>.

sovereign with their own membership and mandates; in particular, they comply with the strategic directions given by their respective Governing Bodies. The operations of the CPF and the UNFFS are closely intertwined as the UNFFS is both a member of and the secretariat to the CPF. The close association and interaction of UNFFS and the CPF has meant that in presenting the performance, challenges and future options of the two in this Report, there is inevitable cross-referencing between them.

CPF has been functioning as a voluntary partnership based on its members' commitment to collaboration and joint activities. CPF has its own meeting structure which comprises the position of the chair (FAO), the rotating vice-chair (ICRAF in 2014), and the permanent secretariat (UNFF Secretariat). There are no terms of reference for the CPF that establish FAO as the permanent chair. CPF does not have its own human and financial resources, its activities being financed through its members' (mostly in-kind) contributions as well as through limited financial contributions in specific cases. The extent to which CPF can respond to the invitations of UNFF is largely determined by the availability of resources.

**55-06 *The special role of FAO in the CPF and IAF.*** FAO is recognised for its continuing work in informing the international forest-policy related negotiations associated with the Rio UNCED in 1992. FAO has collaborated with the three forest policy fora (IPF, IFF and UNFF) that ensued from the negotiation of the non-legally binding statement of the UNCED Forest Principles and *Agenda 21* Chapter 11 on forests. More formally, FAO has been instrumental as the chair of the CPF, which together with the UNFF, forms the core of the international arrangement on forests.

FAO also provides acknowledged inputs on forests and forestry to the three Conventions that emanated from Rio: the UNFCCC, the CBD and the (1994) UNCCD. FAO has become, along with UNDP and UNEP, one of the main agencies in the development of REDD+ under the UNFCCC, through its involvement in the UN-REDD Programme since 2008. Also, FAO chairs the Mountain Partnership, which is charged with overseeing the implementation of Chapter 13 (Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development) in Agenda 21 of the UNCED.

FAO maintains visibility as a leader in the global forest arena as publisher of a number of globally recognised normative products, such as the FRA, State of the World's Forests, forest products statistics and UNASYLA, and as organizer or co-organizer of mega-events such as the World Forestry Congresses, the World and Regional Forest Weeks, the IYF 2011 and UNFCCC Forest Days. These publications and fora contribute to global policy discussion directly or provide information to inform policy discussion. Also, a number of special initiatives, including the work of the NFP Facility (now Forest and Farm Facility), have helped FAO to globally raise its profile. FAO's profile in the private sector has been recognized through its responsibility for the Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products (ACPWP). Since 2013 ACPWP was re-named in Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFII).

**55-07 *Inputs by Major Groups.*** "Major Groups" is a societal categorization invented during the UNCED process. Major Groups take part in the Forum's deliberations and activities. Ideally, discussion of any topic which has significant impact on human welfare would call for presence at all discussion opportunities of all sub-elements of the "major groups" category. Forests affect much of society and would tend to require such participatory compliance. However, the reality is that the IPF/IFF/UNFF processes have made efforts but have not fully succeeded in their mandates, largely due to the non-participation of business and industry and local authorities.

Instead, the forest policy processes has been attended mainly by Major Groups representing Youth, Farmers, Indigenous Peoples, and NGOs. Cases have arisen where governments have also sponsored civil

society actors within their delegations. CIFOR and IUFRO have in some way frequently served as proxy for the “Scientific and Technological Community”, and delegates from other international organizations may also have used their academic backgrounds to assist in this. It is the absence from UNFF fora of the commercial private sector that is a worry: this category is a major investor in forestry and has the power to destroy or damage forests on a large scale. Its absence is a source of imbalance in views influencing decision-making about forests.

55-08 ***Participation of regional organisations***<sup>60</sup>. In the international institutional architecture, the conventional wisdom is that globally agreed goals and targets cannot easily be implemented at local or country level without the conduit of regional institutions: these are a vehicle for stepwise domestication of international community desires and agreements. In the post-UNCED global forest policy dialogue process, however, there has been no systematic engagement in it by regional organizations created by the regions themselves. An exception is Forest Europe (see § 57.06). Some believe that it is this deficiency that may partly explain lack of translation of the global policy decisions into practical implementation on the ground.

A “proxy” set of regional institutions have been involved, although in future their work will need to be complemented. These include the UN’s own Regional Economic Commissions for all regions (including the combined Europe and North American Region UNECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ESCWA and ECA) which collaborate with the UNFF processes. The UNECE region in particular maintains a joint UNECE/FAO Forest and Timber Committee, which frequently has UNFF topics on its meetings’ agenda. The FAO statutory Regional Forestry Commissions which convey decisions of COFO (after adding their uniquely regional flavour) to the countries and also convey regional priorities upwards. It is noteworthy that existing regional bodies such as ASEAN/ASOF (ASEAN Senior Officials on Forests), the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation (OCTA), COMIFAC and the African Forestry Forum (AFF) can attend sessions of the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions.

A more structured and purposive engagement of regional institutions belonging to each region is needed for the future, especially if implementation of global decisions is to be effectively prioritised: regional organisations assist in securing ownership by each region of the global forests agenda. The majority of the 29 regional reports provided to UNFF 8 explained how work at the regional level was addressing priority issues, as well as linkages and interaction with the Forum, the UNFF Secretariat and CPF member organizations. Subsequently, there was a drop off in engagement: only 17 regional organizations submitted reports to UNFF 9 and 14 reported to the UNFF 10. The reports to UNFF 10 were especially valuable since they reported on actions undertaken that were contributing to the implementation of the Forest Instrument, the GOFs and the role of forests in achieving the MDGs. A total of 36 regional organizations have submitted reports to the last three sessions of the Forum. Of these, seven—ACTO, AFF, AFPNet, ASEAN, Forest Europe, the Montreal Process and SPC— have provided reports to all three sessions since the call by UNFF 6 in 2006 for stronger participation of regional organizations in the IAF and in supporting the work of the Forum.

With a view to collectively exploring how best the UNFF and the regions/sub-regions could mutually support each other and the regions/sub-regions could give their inputs, the governments of Australia and Switzerland co-organised a Region-led Initiative<sup>61</sup> in 2008 in Geneva. The RLI allowed exchanges on the

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<sup>60</sup> See also discussions (in a different context) in chapter 5.7, §57-07

<sup>61</sup> Report of the Australian – Swiss Region Led Initiative on Regional Input in Support of UNFF. Geneva, Switzerland. 28 – 30 January 2008: see [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/cli/AUS\\_CH\\_RLI\\_report.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/cli/AUS_CH_RLI_report.pdf).

priorities and challenges related to cooperating with the UNFF process. It promoted stimulated and enhanced appreciation by participating governments and other organizations on how regional and sub-regional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organisations and processes could in different and circumstance-specific ways engage with the UNFF's work so as to contribute to enhanced implementation of SFM. The future IAF could usefully draw upon the outcome of the RLI as it seeks best ways to connect regional capacities with the global Forum ambitions for SFM.

55-09 ***Inclusiveness of the IAF.*** At its establishment, the UNFF was acclaimed for its uniquely global openness which comprises universal membership; this was established despite the fact that parent council, ECOSOC, has more limited membership. As a result of its origins in the UNCED process, precedents were set for encouraging participation of Major Groups. These strengths remain applicable to the whole process and might need to be strengthened further.

#### ***Modalities of Work with Focus on UNFFS and CPF***

55-10 ***Complex working modalities between UNFFS and the CPF.*** Close coordination between the UNFFS and the CPF as well as coordination among members of the CPF itself is essential for smooth support delivery. The teaming up between the UNFFS and the CPF is also crucial for delivery of the global forest policy process on SFM. Since 2000, the CPF and CPF members have provided information and technical support and mobilized financial resources to support the Resolutions of the Forum. Substantial outputs have been produced, including *inter alia*, the development of the *CPF Sourcebook on Funding sustainable forest management* (2004, updated in 2011), besides a number of published analytical papers and 8 progress reports to UNFF. CPF has received high level recognition for its modalities of work which include being informal and voluntary (and so unbureaucratic); cost effective; and, through its collective expertise, able to assemble an important package of convening power for promoting SFM. As a result, over the years CPF has had a high level of recognition by UNFF Member States and other stakeholders.

Meanwhile, however, each CPF member contributes to the fragmentation of delivery of the forest/SFM agenda when focussing on their particular working agenda in relation to international forest development rather than the overall SFM agenda. The role of certain CPF members in promoting REDD+ is especially notable in this regard. Besides this overall policy issue, at the operational level a number of shortfalls in the modalities of work need to be addressed with some urgency. At the level of the CPF as a group, the following problems have been reported to the Team:

- Weak sense of ownership of programmes by CPF members;
- Problems of team work within CPF meetings and when embarking on joint activities;
- Inconsistent participation by some members (for example where they are not participating at senior level in key meetings] and unequal engagement;
- Competition for financial resources and attention among CPF members;
- Resentments at inadequate sharing of the limelight;
- Conflicts between the heavy work demands of the UN policy process and obligations of the CPF organizations to their own Governing Bodies;
- Lack of clear modalities for the functioning of the CPF;
- Lack of strategic orientation;
- Limited resources to support CPF activities.

There is need for dedicated staff positions within the secretariat to support CPF and to assure a smooth functioning of the CPF as a group. Regarding CPF/UNFFS coordination, mention has been made of the dual

role of the UNFFS: it is secretariat to both, the UNFF and the CPF, and it is also a member of the CPF. This runs the risk of some conflicts of interest as some may feel that the UNFFS is in the position of being in part decision-maker, as well as executor of follow-up actions requested in UNFF Resolutions and the judge of performance by the CPF. In some situations where members of the CPF are relatively disengaged, the UNFFS has attempted to fill the gap by taking on technical work directly, despite its challenges in terms of staffing and resources. Much of this technical work has been directly related to servicing the Member States of the Forum on issues such as policy development, means of implementation and national reporting. The Independent Assessment Team understands, however, that it is quite common within the UN for the UN Secretariat to serve dual roles in implementation of UN mandates and processes; for example, the UNEP Secretariat serves as the secretariat of both the UN Environment Assembly as well as the UN interagency Environment Management Group (EMG), which is also chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP.

55-11 **Supporting policy processes in other UN Forums.** In other UN bodies, there are arrangements with similar intent to CPF in supporting policy processes. They include, *inter alia*, UN-Water, the EMG, and the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), which is an advisory body established in 1969 to advise the UN system on the scientific aspects of marine environmental protection.

There is, however, there are some limitations in making direct comparisons between a support system for forests and support systems for other resources such as water or biodiversity. Forests are extremely diverse and the extent to which they serve social, economic and environmental roles is very broad. Their need is not only for a focus on science but also for more pragmatic inputs from economists, politicians, administrators: thus a highly science-focused mechanism would not be sufficient for forests.

### **Key achievements**

55-12 **Joint Achievements of the IAF.** As stated elsewhere in this Report, there are some remarkable achievements of the IAF which can be attributed to the joint engagement of CPF members, including the UNFFS. Key achievements relate *inter alia* to the elaboration of a joint Forest Sector Questionnaire based on the 7 thematic elements; the streamlining reporting format on forests and on production, consumption and trade in forests products for country reporting; the harmonization C&I processes for SFM; the communication packages in respect to the IYF and the IDF; the CPF brief on promoting SFM for all types of forests; the IUFRO led outcomes of the Global Forest Expert Panels with a number of major publications, the CPF paper on forests and climate change, etc. In addition, the importance of support from UNFFS and CPF members to CLIs and the organisation of OLI need to be highlighted as a further achievement.

55-13 **Policy achievements of the UNFFS.** The location of the UNFF Secretariat in UN Headquarters and the buy-in of DESA, where countries, organizations and Major Groups have the most representation presents a major benefit as it that helps UNFFS to coordinate and interact closely with member states representatives and key stakeholders, for example by integrating forests into the UN development agenda and raising the profile of forests within the UN.

Major achievements that can be attributed to the work of the UNFFS (partly in association with other CPF member organisations) include:

- raising the profile of forests in the global agenda, with probable consequent enhancement of political commitment to the sector. Examples include its contributions to securing the forest chapters in the outcome documents from both WSSD (2002) and UNCSD (2012); adoption of the Forest Instrument and its GOFs; awareness raising through reactivating the International Year of Forests (IYF), first organised for the UN by FAO in the mid-1980s and the International Day of Forests (IDF); promoting a comprehensive approach to multiple benefits of all types of forests; and providing substantive contributions to other interdepartmental and interagency work, for example through promoting the role of forests in the current SDG process (see chapter 5.7);
- promoting cooperation among forest related organizations using the CPF mechanism, in particular, through carrying out analytical work on policy issues of forest financing;
- contributing to the promotion of a universal definition and best practice approaches to sustainable management of all types of forests (SFM);
- the enhancement of understanding and collaboration on critical dimensions and issues of SFM such as streamlined reporting and valuation, as well as definitions;
- through its Facilitative Process carrying out capacity-building work on the issue of forest financing and increased awareness on the need to mobilize all sources of forest finance.

55-14 **Work achievements of the UNFFS over the past 7 years.** In logistical and thematic terms, the UNFFS, in spite of the small number of staff (and a relatively high turnover and fluctuation in size), has had a considerable output. Its work achievements include, in particular, carrying out preparations for UNFF Sessions in a professional manner (including timely production of the necessary documentation, logistical arrangements, and support for delegates); raising funds to facilitate participation by eligible Member States and Major Groups (this has been an ongoing achievement); helping to build capacity for national reporting and securing funding from the UNDA and other donors to implement capacity development workshops in an unprecedented manner (see also §54-11); successful facilitation and coordination, forging good collaborative partnerships at the regional level (for example with AFF) and with civil society; catalysing complementary action by CPF members and the Major Groups; contributions and briefings to New York-based permanent missions and regional groups on forest issues; and co-organization of about twenty regional and global workshops/expert group meetings on issues of critical concern for countries during the last 7 years.

55-15 **Small UNFFS facing high expectations.** Compared to other Divisions of DESA (that support different functional commissions of ECOSOC) and to the Secretariats of the three Rio Conventions, the UNFFS is small and equipped with inadequate human and budgetary resources. Its performance is highly constrained by its limited size and resources. In spite of its efforts to remedy this, the human and budgetary limitation of the UNFFS has often prevented the UNFFS from addressing and meeting the expectation of all stakeholders, in particular Major Groups, developing countries, including SIDS, and LFCCs. This is particularly affecting the work in capacity building, support for reporting and the translation of global decisions, including the Forest Instrument into functional NFPs. Historically, CPF members have seconded staff to the UNFFS but this input has declined over the years both in terms of numbers and the grade of seconded staff. Starting in 2002 with 3 seconded staff at grades P-4 to D-1, the CPF secondment has now been reduced to one P-3 officer (from FAO).

55-16 **Considerable support by the CPF.** CPF members represent a critical mass of key international organizations that provide information and technical support to the UNFF to help implement UNFF recommendations. They have complementary mandates, including development, research, advocacy, political support, financing and data collection. CPF members have provided considerable support to CLIs

and some members have led or co-led OLI. CPF has the most reliable and comprehensive source of forest information, with the Global Forest Information System (GFIS, a CPF initiative led by IUFRO); the Global Forest Expert Panels (GFEP) initiative led and coordinated by IUFRO; and the initiative on streamlined forest-related reporting.

There are some remarkable achievements of the IAF which can be attributed to the joint engagement of CPF members, which include the UNFFS. Recent achievements are outlined in the CPF brochure on *Promoting the sustainable management of all types of forests* (2013)<sup>62</sup>. Joint CPF achievements include the elaboration of the seven thematic elements of SFM; the streamlined country reporting formats, with the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (on forest resources) and the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire on removals, production and trade of wood and wood products; the harmonization of C&I processes for SFM<sup>63</sup>; the communication packages associated with the IYF and the IDF; the GFEP outcomes, which include major publications on Biodiversity, SFM and REDD+, and on the adaptation of forests to climate change; other analytical and policy documents; the CPF Sourcebook on Funding for SFM; and other work on forest finance described elsewhere in this Report. In addition, a further joint achievement is the support extended by CPF members to CLIs and OLI.

### ***Relevance and Effectiveness***

55-17 ***High demands on the UNFFS affecting its role and effectiveness.*** It seems that the initial expectation of countries was to have the Forum as a venue for policy dialogue, policy-setting and policy coordination on all issues related to all types of forests. The Forum was not established to be an implementing body or organization, and the UNFFS was intended to service and support the Forum. However, since UNFF's establishment, Member States have called for advancing and strengthening implementation of SFM; moreover, since 2007, the Forum has monitored implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of the GOFs. Therefore, while the Forum is not an implementing body, in practical terms it has been quite challenging (if not impossible) to hold policy discussions without discussing implementation<sup>64</sup>. The UNFFS has been expected to follow up and monitor implementation of the decisions of the Forum, and is expected to be accountable for this.

The Forum has also requested the UNFFS directly or indirectly (i.e. with support from the CPF) to implement specific tasks. Those tasks requested of the UNFFS by the Forum that relate to policy matters, advice and reporting are within the remit of a secretariat. However, implementation at the country level is the responsibility of countries, often with the support of international and national implementing organizations. CPF member organizations are expected to assist countries in actual implementation of SFM policies on the ground; but the ability of the CPF member organizations to respond to numerous Forum requests in assisting countries in implementation of SFM policies on the ground has been constrained significantly by the lack of clarity in those requests, the lack of resources, the heavy workload of the CPF organizations in their "regular programmes", and most importantly the fact that the Forum (and the UNFFS) is not their superior body. Thus the pace of events and the experiences of the last few years clearly demand more clarity about the responsibility and tasks of UNFFS, as well as other key players within the IAF, with regard to supporting actual implementation in the field.

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<sup>62</sup> See [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/session\\_documents/unff10/CPF-Brochure.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/session_documents/unff10/CPF-Brochure.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> There is a harmonization process on C&I under way with FAO, ITTO, CIFOR, Montreal Process and others contributing, but there are not yet globally agreed C&I for SFM.

<sup>64</sup> This is true for most global MEAs: COPS of CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD also discuss implementation

55-18 ***Unrealistic expectations by member states on what the UNFFS can do.*** A real challenge in all this is the unrealistic expectations by Member States about what the UNFFS can and should do. If Member States were delivering on their follow-up roles; if they were sending participants to policy dialogue meetings who were fully briefed and not continuously changing; if they had stable and active focal points for the UNFF process; and if they were systematically domesticating decisions from the process for national application, then one could more easily isolate the extent to which unfulfilled expectations were due to the UNFFS.

55-19 ***Constraints impeding effectiveness.*** The UNFFS faces considerable constraints that need to be addressed when designing a post-2015 IAF. These constraints include:

- Inadequate overall funding and human resources, including regular budget posts and secondments. The inadequate regular budget funding of the UNFFS and the unpredictable trust fund situation directly affect the length of contracts for UNFFS staff, the work flow and the work satisfaction of staff. Much of the work carried out by UNFFS requires a greater number of qualified policy, research and technical experts.
- There is also a near complete absence of funding for CPF related activities that is entrusted to the UNFFS.
- Insufficient financial and human resources means that the Director of the UNFFS, unlike directors in other DESA offices, has the added responsibility of dedicating a significant amount of time to fund-raising to cover the costs of badly needed extra-budgetary staff.
- A number of interviewees drew attention to the rivalry between the international forest-related agencies (including CPF members) that has resulted in low interest in fulfilling common mandates; this rivalry has also drawn political attention and financial resources away from UNFFS, and common CPF work, further hampering effectiveness.
- Due to the high staff turn-over in UNFFS (and requirements for mandatory breaks between contracts for temporary staff and those on consultant contracts), there is loss of institutional memory and job insecurity which has further limited the capacity to deliver.
- Neither the UNFFS nor the CPF (as a whole, or CPF members individually) have received concrete responsibilities against which they can measure their achievements<sup>65</sup>.

55-20 ***CPF work is relevant for global forest policy development.*** The CPF's mission is to support the work of the UNFF. While CPF members have jointly sponsored assessments and strategies on international forest policy, particularly in relation to climate change, many observers feel that on key issues CPF is not showing enough leadership. Nonetheless, the CPF has a relevant role to play under the current IAF. If the future mandate gives more attention to national-level implementation of IAF decisions, the CPF – consisting as it does of several organisations with large networks of country offices – would still be potentially relevant. At present, this is “potential” rather than necessarily “actual” relevance because, so far, the CPF organisations have not systematically worked collaboratively in their country programmes; in fact they have tended to compete for resources (e.g. REDD+ funds, FLEG funding) and have then operated separate projects and programmes. As this occurs with the consent of both beneficiary and donor governments, responsibility cannot lie only with the CPF organisations.

Overall, however, considering the policy-dialogue focused mandate of the IAF process, CPF and CPF members have performed well, given the voluntary nature of the partnership and the lack of dedicated

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<sup>65</sup> There are, however, specific mandates defined in relevant Sub-Programme of the UN Programme and Budget

finances for joint activities. Nevertheless, a key challenge in relation to improving effectiveness in fulfilling the science/policy interface within the IAF is at the level of governance:

- each CPF organization has its Governing Body and an approved (and generally full) programme of work and budget: taking on UNFF requests is marginal to institutional priorities/incentives;
- UNFF has chosen not to prioritize its decisions and therefore the CPF member organisations are faced with long menus of potential tasks, leaving them to decide what to act upon;
- for any given task, not all organisations within CPF that have the capacity to act may be available to do so: the CPF “coalition” has both willing and unwilling partners.

55-21 ***Lack in effectiveness of the CPF in its current form.*** One of the strengths of the CPF that is often cited is the continuing voluntary nature of operations, which gives it flexibility and informality. There is also a claim that this loose arrangement places little burden on its members. However, while there is a lot of demand for CPF member services, the voluntary nature of the commitment means that CPF members cannot be held to account with respect to UNFF-related action. They do not have any formal obligations to report to the UNFF Sessions. Furthermore the CPF has no strategic plan that sets out deliverables based on collective or individual CPF member mandates; they have no budget for joint action; and CPF does not have an agreed working modality or rules of procedures (including in relation to decision-making criteria, burden-sharing, or definition of what constitutes a “CPF product”). The respective Governing Bodies of CPF members do not always recognise the implications of CPF membership; and there are no sanctions if they do not take action that may be requested. Under these circumstances, it is often observed that the degree of contribution is not evenly spread among the 14 member organisations, which means that CPF as a partnership is as effective as individual CPF members want it to be. Any one member can boost the collective image by volunteering for more or can hold the system back by not taking the extra step. Members can choose to be accommodating in their views or (as recently observed for some important issues - in particular, defining the role of forests in the SDGs) they can openly disagree. The CPF has been further criticized for being less effective due to several member organisations (e.g. UNDP, UNEP, CBD, UNFCCC, CIFOR and GEF) not sending senior staff to joint CPF events or meetings.

The CPF also faces the major challenge of UNFF calling upon it to implement an extraordinarily large number of Resolutions or action agenda points: these demands would overwhelm any consortium of organisations, no matter how formalised. If the Forum became more selective and focused in its demands, the CPF could demonstrate better performance. The high expectations on CPF are illustrated by examining UNFF Session Reports. For example, in the UNFF 5 Report, the CPF was mentioned in almost every paragraph - both to recognise what it had done and (more often) to invite it to do something more. At UNFF 10, CPF was called upon for practically everything that needed follow-up. It seems that the perception of UNFF Members is that the CPF has limitless capacities and possibilities: CPF is invited to assist in everything, but the workload and its spread-out nature represent a significant challenge. The perception of CPF organisations is that they are available to assist in UNFF tasks on request but only if (a) the tasks are compatible with their own mandates and priorities and (b) if funds beyond (or complementary to) the requirements of their own programme needs can be raised. There is therefore a mismatch between reality and expectations.

As things stand, at various times, CPF (both collectively, and individual organizations) has chosen not to implement all requests from UNFF, claiming that their first obligation is to implement the mandates decreed by their own organizational Governing Bodies. The representatives of member countries to the

Governing Bodies of CPF organisations have failed to communicate in such fora consistent messages on the need to set aside resources and time to meet the needs of the UNFF forests process. In fact, in many ways it is remarkable how much CPF has achieved despite the voluntary nature of the partnership, which does not oblige CPF members to do anything.

55-22 **Challenges to be addressed for a future CPF.** It is generally acknowledged that the CPF represents a major positive achievement, but that it needs to be adjusted to function in a more effective and coherent manner. With such modification, it can potentially be a critical part of the IAF in the future. In its role of CPF Chair, FAO has tried to summarise the challenges and what can be done to address them. As outlined earlier, an overwhelming challenge is the unrealistic demands of Member States, who appear to expect the CPF (just like the UNFFS) to have limitless capacity to follow up on everything that they discuss and agree upon, which means that everything is a priority. A second challenge is that each CPF member works mainly in accordance with its mandate and budget. In principle, the CPF does not take instructions from the Forum to support the work of the UNFF; instead, the Forum extends an invitation to the CPF member organizations for their voluntary engagement. Experience to date suggests a need for governments to assist CPF organisations to secure more easily the backing (and funding) of their respective Governing Bodies to act on the recommendations of the Forum. Furthermore, CPF organizations often compete for funding from the same donors. Financial resources are limited and UNFF makes an increasing number of calls on CPF without considering their feasibility. CPF as a partnership does not have its own funding source and has to mobilize either voluntary funding from members or from donors to carry out UNFF activities.

Over time, it has emerged that not all members of the CPF are active or are equally interested and committed. Indeed, there are some silent members, and only a few members of the CPF carry the main burden of the joint work by the CPF. There is a need for the Forum to establish how best to improve the sense of ownership and involvement by all CPF member organizations.

### **Impacts and Sustainability**

55-23 **Sustainability of the institutional arrangement of the IAF.** The IPF/IFF/IAF process has lasted 19 years and has been driven by demand from countries and other stakeholders. The durability and nature of this demand will determine the “sustainability” of future arrangements. It is significant that attendance at Forum meetings remains strong, although arguably because (as is the norm in UN) UNFFS pays for travel and daily subsistence for many government representatives and Major Groups. It is also significant that CPF members have to invest their own resources to engage in its common work and that the resources for such undertakings generally remain meagre (as activities do not necessarily follow the institutional priorities of individual CPF members). However, many of the achieved outcomes are likely to be durable contributions with a high sustainability value: the concept of SFM; the harmonization process to develop a set of C&I for SFM; the inter-institutional collaboration mechanism among members of the CPF; the bridges built between governments and Major Groups through the dialogue; the elevation of forests in broader development agendas. Nevertheless, it is difficult to measure the importance of these contributions with any precision.

### **Summary of findings and conclusions**

55-24 **A UNFFS serving global forest policy.** The UNFFS is well placed in DESA at the UN headquarters and should remain there in a post-2015 IAF. Its mandate should be reviewed and strengthened so that it can continue to fulfil the operational and logistical tasks of serving the main international forest policy process for all types of forests. Although Member States have observed that “*Implementation of decisions on the ground is severely lagging behind*”<sup>66</sup>, this cannot be attributed to the UNFFS or CPF members but to the actions of Member States themselves.

55-25 **Improving operational and logistical work of the institutions serving the UNFF.** A number of concrete measures need to be considered in order to improve the work of UNFFS and CPF. These include:

- A better strategic direction and vision for the UNFFS and the CPF or its successor arrangement in the post-2015 arrangement, including consideration of terms of reference for the CPF to provide greater transparency and direction to its work;
- Increase the number of RB and XB posts and profiles (including adequate expertise in forests disciplines) to make the UNFFS a full functional division within DESA and to match the future mandate. This can also include a well-designed arrangement for secondments from a variety of sources;
- Greater and more predictable financial contributions from Member States (according to their ability) for the UNFF trust fund and for the future IAF “strategic trust fund”(see chapters 5.6 and 6.2);
- More regional focus and stronger partnerships with Major Groups, with dedicated human and financial resources within UNFFS to fulfil such tasks;
- A better communication strategy targeting the most important constituencies and better promotion of the SFM, in collaboration of FAO, UNFCCC, CBD and other CPF member organizations.

55-26 **Rethink the support structures for the post 2015 arrangements.** It is now clear, following years of ad-hoc requests for CPF inputs that this is not a good way to operate. It puts a strain on the UNFFS-CPF relationship and makes it impossible for these organisations to plan their work. There must be clearer rules on load sharing and agreement on priorities to enable CPF organisations to apportion effort correctly among science, policy and developmental intervention. Selectiveness, focus, and planned engagement appear to be essential for the future. To this end, it is necessary to have substantive guidance by the Forum, and consistent efforts by countries (through the Governing Bodies of the CPF member organizations) to decide on how to promote such collaboration and allocate specific funds; there also need to be sufficient resources allocated to fund the joint activities of the CPF.

55-27 **A more formal platform for CPF?** As already discussed, the informal nature of the CPF brings both benefits (such as flexibility) and disadvantages (such as unpredictability, funding and timing challenges). While this situation has been accommodated to date, if CPF were to play a more leading role in supporting a global forest policy agenda post-2015, some formalisation of the successor mechanism would be essential. Developing countries in particular cannot afford to have their progress on SFM based on casual operational modalities. Examples of more formal interagency coordination mechanisms exist, e.g., UN-Water, UN-Energy UN-Oceans and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and

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<sup>66</sup> Well-informed interviewee; name withheld for confidentiality.

Ecosystem Services (IPBES – see §57-08), among others. Such processes and mechanisms should be studied and lessons learnt from them can then be adapted for application to the forests process.

55-28 **Increased participation of Major Groups.** Participation of Major Groups in UN meetings is subject to certain rules and there is a view that, in relation to both policy dialogue and implementation, interactions with Major Groups and other stakeholders are inadequate because they are not sufficiently inclusive. Major Group representation at UNFF is unbalanced as the commercial private sector is very seldom present, while certain socially-oriented civil society and environmental categories are regularly present. Some Member States have included Major Groups (youth, business and industry, NGOs) in their delegations to UNFF – and this practice might be encouraged in the future IAF. Given the belief that the commercial private sector currently invests more than governments in forestry, there is a need to engage more with this Major Group in the future, although commercial private sector entities are not allowed to participate in UN meetings unless they are members of accredited organizations. Regional mechanisms may prove more effective than approaches from New York in stimulating greater private sector engagement in discussions about SFM. The CPF network could also be strengthened through a more regular engagement of Major Groups.

## 5.6 Financing, the facilitative process and resource mobilization

### **Background**

56-01 **IAF and financing SFM.** There are two aspects of forest financing in the context of the IAF, namely (i) resourcing the activities of UNFF itself (including Forum Sessions and UNFFS) and resourcing the activities of CPF; and (ii) resourcing the implementation of SFM on the ground. The first aspect relates to matters addressed in chapter 5.5. This chapter deals with the second aspect – the resourcing of SFM and the role of IAF in promoting and facilitating this process.

56-02 **Work of the IAF in resourcing SFM.** To date, significant activities carried out within the framework of the IAF on resourcing SFM have included the work of the relevant AHEGs and the Facilitative Process (FP). There was an AHEG on Finance for SFM in 2008, and the UNFF Resolution on means of implementation for SFM, adopted at the special session of UNFF 9, established a further AHEG on Forest Financing (which met in 2010 and 2013); the Resolution also established the FP to assist Member States in mobilizing funds for SFM. This Resolution anticipated the AHEG process and the FP working together in synergy and complementarity, with the AHEG providing strategic guidance and the FP developing a bottom-up approach.

56-03 **Catalyzing role in respect of forest financing.** The prerequisites for the successful implementation of SFM include financing, incentives, valuation of forest goods and services, capacity building, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, research, information exchange, technical cooperation, and public awareness and education. However, financing is of overriding importance and is critical for many of these themes. ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 established UNFF as a high level political forum to provide a framework for action for SFM, but not as an implementing body or as a financing mechanism to support implementation of SFM on the ground. Nevertheless, UNFF has had a catalyzing role in respect of forest financing and related SFM implementation. Further strengthening of the IAF will require, first and

foremost, improvements in this catalyzing role in order to promote more effective and secure financing of SFM.

**Box 6: The problem of securing financial flows that reflect the full economic value of forests**

The full economic value of forest goods and services is often significantly greater than the value of the forest calculated on the basis of financial flows. This is because the full economic value also includes the value of goods and services that do not have a market value in cash terms. Various techniques attempt to assign monetary values to these non-market (or intangible) values. However, in practice, it may be difficult to attract financial flows that reflect this full economic value, for example where individuals or corporate bodies are unwilling to pay for “public” benefits, such as environmental values. For instance, a forest with outstanding cultural and biodiversity qualities may have a full economic value of US\$1 million, but may only have a cash value of US\$100,000, which might be too low to save the forest from being replaced by an alternative land use. Thus, an important challenge for the IAF process is to catalyze action that converts a larger share of intangible values into tangible financial flows. If this does not happen, forests will continue to be undervalued and consequently lost.

56-04 **Financing SFM – what is meant?** It can be difficult to define precisely what is meant by financing SFM, particularly since SFM itself is a dynamic and evolving concept. At its simplest, financing SFM requires that income is secured to meet the direct costs of such activities as forest management and administration, conservation and community forestry, training and education, sustainable wood logging, transportation and processing. Using the C&I as a basis for estimating the costs of SFM is another way to estimate financial needs to achieve SFM. However, while there are well established market values for timber, fibre, and fuelwood/energy wood, other forest values are often not recognized in monetary terms. These services and amenities need to be better assessed and valued when considering forest public and private financing. In some cases payments for ecosystem services (such as water conservation, or forest carbon on voluntary carbon markets) may reflect such values in hard-cash terms, but this is not always possible to achieve (see Box 6). Furthermore, cross-sectoral activities, such as agro-forestry and eco-tourism, may provide additional indirect sources of finance for SFM. However, there are also situations where there is a need for SFM financing to counter non-sustainable forest practices, including illegal and excessive logging, and forest land transformation.

56-05 **Sources of SFM funding.** In general forest financing can be categorized as national and international, public and private. Private forest finance greatly exceeds public financing, and national financing far exceeds international. Thus the major part of forest financing is national and private, but this is also the most difficult part to assess (Tables 3 and 4).

56-06 **Overview on international financing flows to forests.** Official Development Assistance (ODA) forms the core of international public sector finance. Bilateral funds depend heavily on donor policies. Multilateral funding is more demand-driven and is smaller compared to bilateral funding. Both private and public sector external forest financing shows an upward trend and recently significant support for SFM has come from the international REDD+ process. The figures confirm some progress towards meeting GOF 4 of the Forest Instrument in relation to ODA (Table 4), but as noted elsewhere in this Report (see §54.12) overall progress towards GOF 4 is considered inadequate.

Two reports<sup>67</sup> that focus on the issues of international finance for the implementation of the Forest Instrument both stress the fact that increased investment in SFM depends upon two main prerequisites: land and tree tenure, and good governance. The new, performance-based REDD+ process, discussed below, demands even more of such security for investments.

**Table 3: Sources of Forest financing**

| Categories     | National   | International   |
|----------------|--|---|
| <b>Public</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General government revenue</li> <li>• Revenue from state-owned forests</li> <li>• Forest sector fiscal revenue</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bilateral aid agencies</li> <li>• Multilateral/intergovernmental financing institutions</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Private</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest owners</li> <li>• Communities</li> <li>• Forest industry etc., paying for forest goods</li> <li>• Institutional and individual investors</li> <li>• Philanthropic funds and donors</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Payments for Environmental Services</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional and individual investors</li> <li>• Forest industry, paying forest goods</li> <li>• Philanthropic funds and donors</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Payments for Environmental Services</li> </ul> |

Source: AGF (2012), Simula (2008) (adapted)

**Table 4: External Financial flows to Forestry: ODA Disbursements** (US\$ million 3 year averages at 2010 rates)

| Source              | 2002-04 | 2005-07 | 2008-10 | %change<br>2002/04-<br>2008/10 | Trend      |
|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Bilateral</b>    | 324.4   | 397.1   | 704.8   | +117%                          | Increasing |
| <b>Multilateral</b> | 233.9   | 337.0   | 555.9   | +138%                          | Increasing |
| <b>Total</b>        | 558.3   | 734.1   | 1260.7  | +126%                          | Increasing |

Source: Table 1.4 in AGF (2012)

Notes:

1. More recent data on bilateral ODA are as follows (US\$ million at current prices): 633.7 (2008), 515.8 (2009), 827.6 (2010), 1458.8 (2011) and 1243.8 (2012) (Source: OECD stats accessed 25 August 2014.)
2. AGF (2012) highlighted the significance of REDD+ in recent years; for example in 2010 funding for REDD+ related activities accounted for 40.6% of the total funds to forests.
3. The figures in Annex D of AGF (2012) highlight the uneven distribution of ODA among recipient countries.
4. AGF (2012) stated that "The private sector including forest communities, smallholders, industry and other investors is a key source of finance for forests, mostly through investments in forests managed for wood production". However it provided no concrete figures, stating that "There is still a need for extensive coordinated efforts to collect and extract national data on the private sector's investments, as such data are not easily identified in a comprehensive manner." There is also a lack of comprehensive data on funding from NGOs and other philanthropic sources.
5. Funders have reported bilateral and institutional financial contributions to REDD+ countries of US\$ 5470 million (<http://reddplusdatabase.org/>, accessed 27 August 2014).

<sup>67</sup> Simula, M. (2008) and El Lakany et al (2007)

56-07 **A three prong approach to sustaining forest financing.** This proposed approach was introduced at the AHEG on Finance for SFM held in 2008<sup>68</sup>. The approach assumes that there are different funding sources used in different stages of advancement of reaching SFM. Developing countries might still be in need for grant financing to prepare for implementation of SFM, while other countries, e.g. those in transitional stages, might need up-scaled financing to prepare for a sustained long term implementation of SFM. The aim of the approach is for all countries eventually to reach a level, although for some only in the longer term, when SFM can be sustainably self-financed through the goods and services produced by forests. Substantial initial catalytic upfront investments are needed to mainstream forest investments and achieve sustainable self-financing from forest services and products. Thus, the three prongs are (i) initial upfront investment for example for information systems and gap analysis, generally through dedicated ODA funding; (ii) mainstreamed upfront investment to adapt policies and measures, and to build national capacities, institutions and infrastructure, generally through multilateral support; and (iii) sustained self-financing through full valuation of forest goods and services, and realising these values. Thus, there is a need to distinguish between upfront investment needed to achieve SFM and longer-term financing needed to secure the sustainable use of forests. This distinction between upfront investment (supported for example by international sources of finance and technology transfer) and sustained financing (achieved through instruments that recognize the full economic value of forest goods and services) is fundamental and should constitute the overall rationale for an international forest financing approach. Consequently, the Table beneath introduces a working approach in respect to financing SFM and the achievements of the GOFs. Such a three prong approach could help to advance a portfolio approach to financing SFM. In particular, it could help to define more clearly the catalytic role of ODA/international transfer financing for thematic support and capacity building and for leveraging a portfolio approach. The themes provided under each the two categories of upfront investment In Table 5 are indicative and could be further refined.

**Table 5: Financing SFM – three prong approach (adapted by the Team)**

| Initial upfront investment  | Mainstreamed upfront investment   | Realization of full value   |
|---|---|---|
| Dedicated ODA funding, e.g. REDD+ readiness, a possible SFM Facilitation Fund, nourished by ODA and other grant funding and supported by existing instruments such as PROFOR, Forest & Farm Facility, thematic programs of ITTO, FCPF Readiness, UN-REDD, Bonn Challenge, etc.) | Coordinated work through a competent international organization including multilateral support World Bank and Regional Banks grant and lending, GEF, Forest Investment Programme, REDD+ Funding for policy and measures; FCPF-Carbon Fund; forest-related adaptation funds, Green Climate Fund. | <u>International and Country-based funding</u> Main financing secured by Market regulation and global externality payments.<br>Voluntary carbon market.<br>Timber, NTFP, global externality payment system and trade (WTO, UNFCCC, CBD, others) |
| Short term<br>2015 – 2025   | Mid-term<br>2015 – 2035   | Long-term<br>2015 and beyond  |
| TECHNICAL COOPERATION<br>(reconfirmed and increased tailor-made funding to eligible countries,  | STRATEGIC COOPERATION<br>(Coordinated by a competent organisation: to be further developed,   | POLICY COOPERATION<br>(develop negotiation strategy for PES-schemes (market, fund based)  |

<sup>68</sup> Held in Vienna on 14-18 November 2008. Presentations relating to three-pronged approach available at [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/notes/vienna\\_101108\\_ms.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/notes/vienna_101108_ms.pdf) and [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/aheg/finance/AGF\\_Financing\\_Study.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/aheg/finance/AGF_Financing_Study.pdf).

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| taking into account the global role of SFM (FI, REDD+, and MEAs)  | need strategic decision for mainstream involvement in those countries that commit themselves to the SFM pathways)   | and forest products and service trade)   |
| <p>LEVEL OF FUNDING</p> <p>In the order of several millions US\$ in those countries where it is required (LDCs in particular; developing countries; transitional countries)</p>   | <p>LEVEL OF FUNDING</p> <p>In the order of several tens or hundreds of millions of US\$ by countries where it is required (high forest cover countries)</p>   | <p>LEVEL OF FUNDING</p> <p>Significant – to be secured from investment and financial flows resulting from instruments, reflecting appropriate valuation of forest goods and services</p>   |
| <p><u>Possible themes to be addressed<sup>69</sup>:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analytical work (DD drivers, barriers to SFM, PES market potential, REDD+ readiness)</li> <li>2. Stakeholder participation and engagement</li> <li>3. Planning (NFP, specific national strategies, e.g. REDD+, bio-energy, forest biodiversity)</li> <li>4. Information base (resource assessment, baselines, reference scenarios)</li> <li>5. Monitoring and verification system design (including C&amp;I, REDD+, FLEGT)</li> <li>6. Safeguards and SFM guidelines development</li> <li>7. Initial capacity building and evaluation of training and education needs</li> <li>8. Programme and project design</li> </ol> | <p><u>Possible themes to be addressed:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Governance: Policy reform (incl. cross-sectoral impacts on forests)</li> <li>2. Strengthening of institutions</li> <li>3. Land use zoning and planning</li> <li>4. Strengthening of land tenure (demarcation, titling)</li> <li>5. Law enforcement</li> <li>6. Restoration of degraded forests</li> <li>7. Strengthening of stakeholder constituencies (smallholders, communities, civil society)</li> <li>8. Infrastructure development</li> <li>9. Scaled-up capacity building</li> <li>10. Education, training, extension</li> <li>11. Research and innovation (silviculture, harvesting, use)</li> <li>12. Market-based and other voluntary instruments (certification, C&amp;I)</li> <li>13. Company-smallholder partnerships</li> <li>14. MRV systems</li> </ol> | <p><u>Possible themes to be addressed:</u></p> <p><u>Forest products and services</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timber</li> <li>2. Non-timber forest products</li> <li>3. Carbon, Water, Biodiversity</li> <li>4. Ecotourism, landscape values</li> <li>5. Other services</li> </ol> <p><u>PES schemes</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. REDD+ payments (sinks, permanence), NAMA schemes</li> <li>2. Sink enhancement (afforestation, reforestation, guided natural regeneration, agroforestry)</li> <li>3. Biodiversity offsets</li> <li>4. Landscape offsets</li> <li>5. Watershed conservation offsets</li> <li>6. Bundled services</li> </ol> |

Reference: Table modified from Simula (2008) p. 69 Box 6.1<sup>70</sup>

56-08 **AHEG on Forest Financing.** The subsequent AHEG on Forest Financing was established with a view to making proposals on strategies to mobilize resources from all sources to support the advancement of SFM, implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of its GOFs, improved access for the Member States to available funding sources and the establishment of a voluntary Global Forest Fund<sup>71</sup>. It held two meetings and at its second meeting in January 2013 it considered the 2012 study of the Advisory Group on Finance on forest financing, which reviewed the flow of financing to forests from all sources;

<sup>69</sup> The list implies possible themes, if such themes would be included in a post-2015 IAF they would need to be redefined. The proposed themes here are meant to be simply illustrations.

<sup>70</sup> See [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/aheg/finance/AGF\\_Financing\\_Study.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/aheg/finance/AGF_Financing_Study.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> This AHEG held two meetings: in Nairobi on 13-17 September 2010 and in Vienna on 14-18 January 2013.

analysed opportunities for forest-related financing; mapped changes in thematic areas, geographic regions or country groups with respect to forest financing, identify gaps and needs; identified barriers to accessing resources for forests, presenting a comprehensive analysis of the main obstacles that countries and other stakeholders face; highlighted a number of success stories in forest financing; and proposed actions and measures to mobilize financing from all sources and for all types of forests at all levels; it also provided suggestions on strengthening existing forest-related mechanisms and instruments at the global level, and reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a voluntary global forest fund.

56-09 **Facilitative Process.** The Facilitative Process was implemented through a series of projects focusing on small island developing states (SIDS), low forest cover countries (LFCC), least developed countries (LDC) and African countries. The process also contributed to filling a number of key gaps in data collection relating to SFM financing needs in the Member States. Although SIDS and LFCCs have a relatively small share of the world's forest, they employ advanced methods of forest financing. The FP was launched in 2009 with the aim of assisting developing countries mobilize existing and new financial resources for SFM. It was initiated with the project outlined in §56-15 on forest financing in SIDS and LFCCs, followed by a German-funded project with the same objective, focusing on Africa and LDCs. In 2013, the FP launched its third project aimed at better harnessing climate change finance for forests with funding from the UN. These projects have *inter alia* resulted in a number of substantive recommendations on increasing forest financing in SIDS, LFCCs, Africa and LDCs; and a common forest financing strategy that will act as a blueprint for national forest financing strategies. The main challenge faced by the FP is the bottleneck caused by staff shortages within the UNFFS which strongly limits its capacity to deliver.

56-10 **National Forest Programmes and their funding.** As noted in chapter 5.5, between 2002 and 2012, the FAO NFP Facility helped support the formulation of NFPs; total expenditure under this programme amounted to US\$ 45 Million, with 16 different donors contributing funds<sup>72</sup>. The Forest & Farm Facility was then launched by FAO in 2012 to address challenges in NFP implementation and to support new initiatives to help countries improve their governance structures to achieve sustainable forest landscape management, whilst boosting food security and promoting climate-smart agriculture. Notwithstanding the importance of the NFPs for launching planning in many countries, it seems clear that a total budget of only US\$45 million for so many countries over many years could only play a catalytic role and even that was inadequate to launch actual implementation. Successor arrangements will need to go well beyond these orders of magnitude if implementation programme take-off is to be induced in the post-2015 international forestry agenda.

56-11 **Strengthening capacity.** Earlier in this Report (see §54-11), it was noted that five regional workshops, on implementing the Forest Instrument and national reporting to UNFF, had helped to strengthen the capacity of a number of developing countries in relation to implementing the FI and making progress towards the GOFs. Moreover, for many, the national reporting format that had been developed helped them to visualize, conceptualize and initiate the implementation of the FI at the country level. This was accomplished with modest but strategically focused funding. Thus, a strategic trust fund for strengthening capacity to support the implementation of the FI would go a long way to strengthen SFM efforts at the national level, particularly in developing countries, including SIDS and LFCCs, and countries with economies in transition.

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<sup>72</sup> See <http://www.nfp-facility.org/35549-02077bd3a3b834aba644f5f3e0da01b42.pdf>.

56-12 **Member led initiatives.** Table 6 estimates the funding provided through voluntary donor contributions for CLIs, OLI and the Major Group-led initiatives in support of the UNFF mission. As detailed financial information is not available for initiatives that were convened and managed by countries, a standardized cost has been used to calculate the funding costs as follows: US\$150,000 per CLI, US\$250,000 per OLI, and US\$50,000 per Major Group-led initiative. On this basis, over US\$5 million has been made available to finance different initiatives to support the UNFF mission.

**Table 6: Evolution of funding resources allocated to Country-Led Initiatives (CLIs), Organization-Led Initiatives (OLIs) and Major Group-Led Initiatives (MLIs) in US\$ - as at July 2014**

| Year         | CLI | OLI | MLI | Total number of events | Estimated cost |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|------------------------|----------------|
| 2000-2003    | 7   |     |     | 7                      | 1,050,000      |
| 2004-2007    | 9   | 4   |     | 13                     | 2,350,000      |
| 2008-2011    | 8   |     | 1   | 9                      | 1,250,000      |
| Since 2012   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 4                      | 600,000        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | 26  | 5   | 2   | 33                     | 5,250,000      |

56-13 **Green Climate Fund.** The Green Climate Fund (GCF), which was launched in 2011 and is based in Songdo, Republic of Korea, is accountable to and functions under the guidance of the UNFCCC COP. The GCF is expected to make a major contribution to channelling financial resources to developing countries, although it is not yet clear how much funding will become available. These financial resources are to include resources for REDD+. The GCF will have thematic funding windows that are likely to include REDD+ (initially for adaptation and mitigation). A results-based approach will be an important general criterion for allocating resources from the GCF, but resources provided by the GCF may also include readiness and preparatory support. The Business Model Framework, including options for priority result areas, which may include REDD-plus, is under discussion.

56-14 **The Global Environmental Facility (GEF)** was founded in 1991 with US\$ 1 billion in WB funding for protecting the global environment and promoting a sustainable environment. GEF projects upscale national projects to ensure their global benefits. Since 1991, GEF has established over 300 projects and programmes on SFM in developing countries. These totalled US\$ 1.6 billion and leveraged over US\$ 5 billion. GEF is a financial mechanism of the three Rio conventions (UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD). As the UNFCCC financial mechanism, GEF also manages adaptation funds – the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). Their mandates include development of national adaptation programmes of actions (NAPAs). The GEF focuses on seven main focal areas, including SFM/REDD+. In the fifth replenishment (2010-2014) the GEF SFM-REDD+ Program provided more than US\$ 650 million to forest projects and leveraged an additional US\$ 4.35 billion in co-financing. This compares with US\$470 million in GEF-4<sup>73</sup>. The GEF SFM/REDD+ Strategy refers to the Forest Instrument and its GOF; it could be further developed to implement the FI and reporting.

Under the GEF-6 replenishment covering the four- year period 2014-2018, the SFM strategy is based on a resource envelope of \$250 million, including maintained forest resources (US\$70 million), enhanced forest management (US\$80 million), restored forest ecosystems (US\$50 million), increased regional and global cooperation (US\$30 million) and contributing to integrated approach pilots (US\$420 million)<sup>74</sup>. The

<sup>73</sup> GEF (2014), p. 161.

<sup>74</sup> GEF (2014) p. 173-174.

envelope will be used as an incentive mechanism to encourage countries to invest portions of their GEF allocations from biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation in fully integrated multi-focal area SFM projects and programs. Through this approach, synergies will be created, especially in landscape-scale projects where the incentive will make sure that the project has a clear forestry focus by applying SFM impact indicators to the entire project.

56-15 **Low forest cover countries (LFCCs) and Small island developing states (SIDS)** constituted an essential gap in ODA. Recognizing this gap, UNFF launched its first Facilitative Process project, funded by UK DFID and GEF, and led by UNEP as implementing agency, to assess this issue in more depth. This project confirmed that forestry ODA in SIDS and LFCCs have been disproportionately shrinking, both in absolute terms and relative to overall ODA. Between 2002 and 2010, the share of forestry ODA fell from 6.8% to 4.4% in LFCCs and from 4% to 1% in SIDS<sup>75</sup>. SIDS and LFCCs make up 40% of countries by number (78 out of 193) and 4% of the global forest area. Despite low cover, forests are critically important in these states and provide clean water, fisheries, agriculture, ecotourism, and prevent soil erosion, land degradation and land sliding. Mangroves and coastal forests are vital for the survival of SIDS. The UNFF project has helped to identify a wide range of innovative opportunities for the SFM financing in SIDS and LFCCs that can also be applied in many other countries and increase forest funding.

56-16 **REDD+ Financial Database.** The Voluntary REDD+ Database (VRD) provides information on REDD+ financing, actions and results that have been reported to the REDD+ Partnership. It aims to improve effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and coordination of REDD+ initiatives; and to support efforts to identify and analyze gaps and overlaps in REDD+ financing. The Database relies solely on data voluntarily submitted by countries and institutions. The statistics, maps, graphs and lists of arrangements on this site may be viewed as "reported by funders" or "reported by recipients", through the drop down in the upper right hand side of this page. (Data may also be viewed for individual countries and institutions.)<sup>76</sup>

56-17 **In summary: Main building blocks for the post-2015 IAF financial mechanism.** Thus the main building blocks for the post-2015 IAF financial mechanism could include the following instruments and elements: AHEGs and Member-led initiatives (to discuss in-depth analytical work); continued development of the Facilitative Process; creating a small and strategic voluntary or/and obligatory Trust Fund for strengthening capacity to support the implementation of the FI; making use of other forest-related funds and processes (such as: GEF, REDD+, GCF, and the FAO Forest and Farm Facility); and consideration of a Global Forest Fund (the pros and cons of which are outlined in Box 7). These main building blocks are valid in the envisaged IAF structure and can be re-arranged according to its terms of reference and structure.

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<sup>75</sup> See [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/facilitative-process/FP\\_Findings.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/facilitative-process/FP_Findings.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> See <http://reddplusdatabase.org/> and [http://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/pages/dynamic/article.page.php?page\\_id=9789](http://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/pages/dynamic/article.page.php?page_id=9789)

### Box 7: Pros and cons of the voluntary Global Forest Fund

| Pros  | Cons  |
|---|---|
| <p>Arguments that have been suggested <i>in favour</i> of a voluntary global forest fund include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it could help to compensate for insufficiencies in national resources for forests and address thematic and geographic financing gaps;</li> <li>- provide a reliable and global resource mobilization framework specifically for SFM with a clear and simple set of procedures;</li> <li>- help developing countries with targeted incentives to achieve SFM and attract new, additional and predictable financial resources.</li> </ul> <p>Additional arguments in favour are that it could: leverage national public funding and other public and private financing; strengthen the NFPs and their financing strategies; improve focus on and transparency of SFM financing; contribute to bridging governance reforms and equity issues; and provide a bridge to long-term and more sustainable financing internalized at the local, national, regional and international levels</p> | <p>Arguments that have been suggested <i>against</i> a voluntary global forest fund include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- such a fund could aggravate problems of fragmentation and lack of coordination as well as identification of targeted areas for funding among related instruments;</li> <li>- that launching the scheme will require a major political effort upfront by all participating countries;</li> <li>- that the modest support for the ITTO Bali Partnership Fund and Thematic Programmes, in their intense attempt to raise funds for SFM through these new Funds, has not so far resulted in significant new financing.</li> </ul> <p>Additional arguments against are that it does not have clear added value in relation to existing financing mechanisms; that few countries have the absorptive capacity for effective fund utilization; that it would mean carving out ODA from other donor priorities; and that new bureaucracy and high transaction costs would be created.</p> |

Source: AGF (2012)

#### **Key achievements**

56-18 **Key achievements of the IAF financing since 2000.** In terms of financing, the Resolutions of the UNFF 9 Special Session (2009), UNFF 9 (2011), UNFF 10 (2013), numerous other reports, studies and open discussions have all helped towards the mobilization of funding for forests. Key achievements of the IAF since 2000 include:

- Adoption, in 2006, of GOF4 (“reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources”).
- Progress towards GOF4: Table 4 shows the increases in forestry ODA, mainly through the REDD+ mechanism; bilateral ODA reached US\$ 1.459 billion in 2011 and was US\$ 1.244 in 2012; thematic and geographic gaps remain.
- The CPF Sourcebook on Funding SFM to assist countries in sourcing funds for SFM.
- The Facilitative Process. This was especially useful for LFCCs and SIDS. The Facilitative Process generated external funding of US\$ 2.4 million.
- Establishment and work of the AHEGs on Finance for SFM (Vienna, 2008), and on Forest Financing (AHEG1, Nairobi, 2010 and AHEG2, Vienna, 2013). Supporting analytical work included the two comprehensive Studies on Forest Financing for the Advisory Group on Finance of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (Simula, 2008 and AGF, 2012)

- The UNFF study on *Understanding the potential impacts of REDD+ on the financing and achievement of SFM*, published in 2013.

### **Relevance and Effectiveness**

56-19 **International funding for forestry exists and relevant for SFM.** As noted in §56-05, forest financing can be international or national, public or private and mixed. This means that the financing options available for forests and forestry are fragmented, partly because the benefits from funding are aimed at achieving a range of different objectives (such as carbon sequestration and water conservation). Moreover, ODA is skewed. Analysis shows that current distributions of forestry ODA across territories, time and SFM elements is far from optimal. In some cases potential recipient countries do not apply for the ODA because of lack of information or capacity. Bilateral, historic and economic relations play essential roles in ODA allocation. Although ODA seems low compared to private investments, it is found to play an essential role in triggering private and national public funding. Clearly there is a role for the UNFF to play in improving the effectiveness of forestry ODA, especially for helping to improve its distribution – to geographical areas and themes where it is most needed - and increasing its sustainability and efficiency over time. What needs to be established, however, is trust amongst the ODA donor agencies that financial means invested in the forest sector are used efficiently and effectively, and that they contribute to larger development goals, including poverty alleviation, sustainable use of natural resources and climate change.

According to the World Bank<sup>77</sup>, in 2008 private financing in the forestry sector – in the developing countries and countries in transition - was close to US\$ 15 billion per year. This is about 24 times greater than ODA in the same countries in the same year (which was US\$ 633 million)<sup>78</sup>. However, the bulk of private sector institutional investment in forests (valued at some US\$ 50 billion) has been made in the developed world, and 80% of this is in the USA<sup>79</sup>.

56-20 **How much finance is needed for SFM?** In the forest sector it is especially challenging to quantify financing needs for the SFM. Firstly, there is no common definition of SFM. Secondly, countries are at different stages of forestry development and thus use different forest strategies. At present, credible estimates lie between US\$ 70 and 160 billion a year<sup>80</sup>. Considering that the global forest area (without including trees outside forests) is about 4 billion hectares, this represents about US\$ 17-40 per hectare of the world's forest area. Current funding is many times less than the amount required to stop deforestation, forest degradation and secure SFM, especially as this figures relating to forestry investment also include wood plantations, production and processing. There are reasons for careful optimism: the growth of political support and the increase of private investments is quite steady and encouraging; however, there is a need to monitor the type of forest-based activities supported by the private sector, especially where this raises issues or concerns (such as the impact of monocultural plantations/tree crops on natural forest management/forest restoration/conservation).

56-21 **Expectations of member states remain unsatisfied.** While it is an achievement to get an increase in forest financing for SFM, the progress made by the UNFF falls far short behind the expectations of

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<sup>77</sup> World Bank (2008)

<sup>78</sup> OECD (2014)

<sup>79</sup> Asen et al. (2012) vii

<sup>80</sup> AGF (2012)

member states and many stakeholders. Some representatives, including Major Groups, have become disengaged in the course of the tedious IAF process, which seems to have lost interest to UNFF financing activities, and so have stopped attending UNFF regular meetings<sup>81</sup>.

## Impacts and Sustainability

56-22 ***IAF has had a catalytic impact on forest financing.*** IAF is expected to have an impact on forest financing and in particular public funding. This impact is mostly indirect and is difficult to assess in quantitative terms. It can be roughly assessed in a qualitative way by collecting opinions of the main stakeholders of the Forum, including country officials and Major Groups, which include private sector representatives. As explained in Annex 5, UNFF 10 national reports are perhaps the major source of information on progress towards the achievement of GOF4, although only 57 out of 197 countries provided national reports. Given that this was a first attempt by countries to report on overall budgetary figures for forest financing, figures were presented inconsistently from one country to another. Moreover, many countries reported that forest financing was spread across a number of sectors and that data from these sectors was not easily available.

Of the 38 developing and recipient countries that responded, 22 reported that there had been a significant increase in forest funding in their countries from 2007 to 2011; and 12 reported no significant increase in forest funding. Twenty of the 38 reported that they had established national forest funds to mobilize additional resources for SFM. Seventeen of these countries provided information for 2011 about ODA: they received a total of US\$168.7 million in forest-related ODA, of which nearly two-thirds was for five countries. Eight of the 14 donor countries that responded said that there had not been a significant increase in the mobilization of forest financing in their countries from 2007 to 2011, while four responded affirmatively. Nine of these 14 donor countries supplied information on forest-related ODA provided in 2007 and 2011: six reported increases and three reported decreases over this period. Collectively, 10 of the 11 donor countries contributed nearly US\$1.5 billion in 2011; however, much of this was destined for REDD+ and climate change initiatives. Based solely on the UNFF 10 national reports, the results on progress towards the achievement of GOF 4 are mixed, and the trend in ODA flows for forest financing cannot be determined with the information provided from the country reports.

56-23 ***Limited and unsustainable financing for SFM.*** Impact and sustainability of the current IAF in terms of SFM financing is generally limited, insufficient and fragile. The Facilitative Process' three projects attracted US \$2.4 million of external funding and assisted several Member States to increase their own forest financing. The NFP Facility in its 10 years of existence provided around US \$45 million, and the UNFF Trust Fund overall received an added amount of US\$ 20 million between 2000 and 2014. GEF investment for SFM is summarised in §56-14. The World Bank Group provided close to US\$ 490 million in financing for forests in 2012<sup>82</sup>. The GOF4 objective to reverse decline of ODA for SFM and significantly increase financial resources for SFM was partly achieved - mostly due to the REDD+ process without any clear direct impact from IAF. However, classical funding for SFM implementation, e.g. through supporting FAO, ITTO and CIFOR<sup>83</sup> has been declining over the past 10 years. New forest financial funding has essentially come through donor support for REDD+ and through private investments for plantations of fast-growing species (which has limited impact on SFM overall). A REDD+ market scheme has not yet

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<sup>81</sup> See also Mankin (2007)

<sup>82</sup> See [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44690#.U\\_3dKzJdU88](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44690#.U_3dKzJdU88), accessed 27 August 2014

<sup>83</sup> See FAO (2012c); ITTO annual reports; CIFOR annual reports

been developed, and may or may not be developed in the near future. There has, however, been some success in raising awareness, collecting data and monitoring the current financial situation in the world forestry sector.

56-24 **Gap between effective financing and financial needs for SFM.** There is a large gap between forest financing needs and current financing flows for SFM at all levels. This is mostly because of the lack of interest of international donors in specific forest-related activities, especially where they do not show clear results. Another factor is the lack of recipient countries' capacity to raise international funds. This suggests that there is an opportunity for the future IAF to be more proactive in raising the capacity and awareness on both sides.

There is also a lack of political attention or strong political will for public forest funding at the national and international levels. There is a perception among many interviewed parties that funding for SFM remains inadequate, that targeted ODA for SFM issues remains low and that too little consideration is given to broader forest issues, including the integration of forests into wider landscape planning, forest inventory and forest governance. Because of the severe shortage of public budgets in many developing countries, first priority is generally given to more "urgent" medical, educational and other social pressures. Another concern is that environmental and climate change financing may be limited (in time and space) and - unlike private investment - does not provide long-term economic sustainability.

56-25 **Focus of private sector funding is not necessarily compatible with the broader development goals relating to forests.** The private sector's resources are mostly invested in fibre plantations, rather than in silvicultural management of natural forests that also provide co-benefits, such as biodiversity conservation and watershed protection. Private timber investors do not normally finance the delivery of "public goods", such as forest social and ecological functions (including biodiversity, water and environmental amenities); and their contribution to people's livelihoods is based on business needs. Forest management certification has helped to a certain extent towards a wider recognition of forest values, but most of the certified forest area is in temperate and boreal forests, and not in the tropics where the greatest needs arise for sustainably managing natural forests<sup>84</sup>. In the future, the IAF should work to develop new mechanisms and policies to bring together private and public interests in implementing SFM in all types of forests. While the private forest sector will need to do more to comply with the growing public pressure for forest sustainability, certified forest management, investments in voluntary forest carbon and activities that mainly relate to meeting legal requirements or improving corporate identity of private firms are not sufficient to raise the amount of funding needed to sustain SFM over longer period of time.

56-26 **Cross-sectoral and landscape approach to forest finance.** A landscape approach to forest financing was mentioned mainly by WEOG country representatives as being crucially important at the AHEG 1 meeting on the IAF in Nairobi in February 2014. This involves recognition of the role of, for example, climate change funds (REDD+, NAMA, adaptation funds), soil, land, water, energy, agriculture, agroforestry and the green economy. In many countries with low forest cover and only marginal investments in forest industries, these sources may provide major funding for SFM. As another example this approach, in coastal forests of many SIDS, there is a landscape-based holistic "ridge-to-reef" approach, which links terrestrial ecosystems with adjacent marine ecosystems. Thus broader, landscape-based funding has potential and needs to be further explored.

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<sup>84</sup> As an example, out of the 184 million hectares of forest certified by FSC, less than 6 million hectares are in developing countries of tropics ([www.fsc-int.com](http://www.fsc-int.com), consulted August 2014)

## Summary of findings and conclusions

56-27 ***The forest financing scene has dynamically changed.*** Clearly, much has happened since the inception of the IAF in 2000 and the formulation of the GOFs in 2006. A post 2015 IAF is facing new social, economic and environmental realities. This has important implications for redesigning the financial approach to SFM to open it up to a wider range of financing schemes, such as REDD+ and performance-based payments. A specific SDG target relating to SFM financing has now been proposed (see §57-03), and this should help strengthen efforts to achieve GOF4, including in relation to mobilising significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM.

56-28 ***Funding is specific and not tailored to a holistic SFM context.*** The establishment of the IAF in 2000 was a historic event in the world forest sector and brought about positive dynamics in forest financing issues. The adoption of a work programme that established AHEGs on forest financing and led to the creation of the Facilitative Process in 2009 theoretically moved the financing agenda to a new quality level, with improved data collection and awareness of forest financing issues. These processes and information have directly and indirectly affected the world forestry agenda and promoted SFM worldwide. Meantime the role of forests in climate change dominates the international agenda to a greater extent than the broader SFM approaches; in addition, more specific overarching issues such as governance/FLEGT have attracted the interest of donors and consequently secured funding. Thus, financial flows in forestry have increased and opened new opportunities, but are hampered in the absence of a more holistic and systematic approach to SFM.

56-29 ***Inclusion of SFM/REDD+ in the Green Climate Fund.*** The most recent decisions in UNFCCC COP 19 in Warsaw in November 2013 included the financing of SFM and REDD+ as a window in the Green Climate Fund (see § 56-13). Over the coming months, the modalities for the GCF will be developed, and this will present important opportunities for financing SFM.

56-30 ***Accounting system for global forest values.*** There is a need for an accounting system for global values of forests, in particular carbon sequestration, water management, biodiversity conservation, soil erosion control and other ecosystem services. IAF should be working on the failure of markets to capture more of the true value of forest ecosystem services and amenities and consider how to achieve this to secure sustainable forest financing. Working models and calculations for accounting external forest values should be utilized and replicated e.g. from countries like Costa Rica, Indonesia, Mexico and Philippines that have worked intensively on such issues.

56-31 ***A Post-2015 IAF financial mechanism.*** A post-2015 IAF should better express the need for more holistic, stable, and tailor-made funding for SFM that includes all sources of funding that affect forests and forestry. The Team recommends adopting the three-prong approach, as outlined in § 56.07 as a method to conceptualize forest financing, so as to distinguish between catalytic initial upfront investment for developing countries, that can trigger mainstreamed upfront investment; and sustainable financing resulting from a proper valuation of forest goods and services (and capturing a higher proportion of these values). This could be done *inter alia* through a strengthening of regional-based funding and through approaching current major funding mechanisms (UNFCCC-REDD+/Forest NAMA; FLEGT; PROFOR and others) for a more thoroughly thought out approach to forest funding.

The main building blocks for the post-2015 IAF financial mechanism could therefore include the following instruments and elements:

- AHEGs to consider all major potential and newly emerging forest-related mechanisms and funding sources;
- continued development of the Facilitative Process: this has proved useful, but needs fine-tuning to be more goal and practice oriented;
- further conceptualization, development and practical application of the three-prong approach
- creating a strategic Trust Fund for strengthening institutional and financial capacity to support the implementation of the Forest instrument and progress towards achieving its GOFs;
- improving linkages between all forest related funds and processes that support upfront investments (including GCF, REDD+, FLEGT, PROFOR, GEF, the FAO Forest and Farm Facility, and other multilateral development donors and agencies).

## 5.7 UNFF in the context of MDGs/SDGs, the Rio Conventions<sup>85</sup> and other processes

### **Background**

57-01 **Forests and the Millennium Development Goals.** The eight MDGs were adopted in the framework of the Millennium Summit in September 2000. Participating UN member countries committed themselves to help achieve the MDGs by 2015. The eight goals form a shared vision agreed to by all countries and all the world's leading development institutions<sup>86</sup>. The goals, which are generally oriented towards improving human wellbeing rather than fulfilling specific sector progress goals, are all important in respect to forests. The MDGs most relevant to forests are Goal 7 on ensuring environmental stability - specifically target 7A ("Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse loss of environmental resources") and Target 7B ("reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss") - and Goal 1 on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Both feature prominently in the purpose of the Forest Instrument (paragraph 1.b: "to enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability"). The MDGs were also prominent in the agenda of the WSSD in 2002. There are important linkages as success in forestry development requires good progress in achieving Goal 1 (halving poverty). Without this, livelihood concerns could threaten remaining forest ecosystems. At the same time, forests often generate wealth and in turn contribute to combating poverty.

57-02 **Principal outcome of the UNCSO 2012 Rio Conference.** The Rio+20 outcome document (*The future we want*) provides a common vision, reaffirmation of political commitment and a framework for action with building blocks to achieve sustainable development for integration into the post-2015 UN development agenda: it recognizes forests as one of the 26 thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues of the framework for action and follow-up. Recognizing the social, economic and environmental benefits of forests to people worldwide, the UN General Assembly in its Resolution *The future we want* "called for urgent implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the ministerial

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<sup>85</sup> In respect to MEAs, this Report only refers to the so-called Rio-Cluster Conventions: UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD. The other important biodiversity related MEAs are: the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Convention on Migratory Species (CMS); Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; and World Heritage Convention.

<sup>86</sup> [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals) consulted 19 March 2014

declaration of the high-level segment of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests on the occasion of the launch of the International Year of Forests” (2011).<sup>87</sup>

In the period following UNCSD, the Report of The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda was published<sup>88</sup>. Observing that the 1.2 billion poorest people account for only 1% of world consumption while the billion richest consume 72%, the authors stressed that, in order to fulfil the new vision of promoting inclusive sustainable development, the world must go beyond the MDGs. In the sections most relevant to forests, the Report of the Eminent Persons highlighted climate change as something “which will determine whether or not we can deliver on our ambitions” and on which “we must act now to halt the alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation...”. It gave indicative targets of performance, including as an example of potential impact the establishment of an additional 190 to 240 million hectares of forest cover. Among illustrative goals and targets it included a desire to specify ambitions to “Reduce deforestation by x% and increase reforestation by y%” as well as to “Improve soil quality, reduce soil erosion by x tons and combat desertification”.

In order to provide effective political leadership for sustainable development, UNCSD created the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development. The decision on the HLPF was taken in June 2012 and the inaugural meeting took place in September 2013 in New York (HLPF 2012). It replaces the CSD established by the UN General Assembly in 1992 to follow up UNECD. The HLPF will meet every four years at the level of Heads of State, and every year at a more operational level under the auspices of ECOSOC. UNFF will be able to interact with the HLPF, providing a clearinghouse for forest-related issues to ensure that, after proper contextualization, information on forests reaches the HLPF and others dealing with sustainable development issues.

Looking into the future, it appears best to facilitate access to the HLPF by developing post-2015 IAF arrangements that include having a high-level Special Envoy on Forests designated by the Secretary-General; this personality would be the visible face of forests at the highest levels and could also facilitate top level connections with other organizations and their Governing Bodies, including the parent bodies of the Rio Conventions and others relevant to forests or to cross-cutting issues affecting forests.

**57-03 Forests in the SDGs (as at August 2014).** One of the main outcomes of UNCSD was the agreement by Member States to launch a process to define a set of “new” SDGs, which will build upon the MDGs and converge with the post-2015 UN development agenda. At the time of writing of this Report, the process of developing this agenda is still underway. On 19 July 2014, the Open Working Group (OWG) on the SDGs adopted 17 “proposed sustainable development goals” that could help the international community to define a new global development agenda beyond 2015 (OWG 2014). There are interlinkages between forests/SFM and several of these proposed goals, and there is explicit reference to forests/SFM in Proposed Goal 15 (“protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”)<sup>89</sup>. Proposed Goal 15 is accompanied by 12 targets, including *inter alia* on the promotion of SFM of all types of forests (see also Table 7 in §57-32).

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<sup>87</sup> UN General Assembly, Res. 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012 (A/RES/66/288), p. 38.

<sup>88</sup> “A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development” authored by Presidents Yudhoyono of Indonesia and Sirleaf of Liberia with Prime Minister Cameron of the UK.

<sup>89</sup> Working Document on the SDGs, outcome report 19 July 2014, available at <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>

The list of proposed SDGs and associated targets will be considered by the General Assembly later in 2014 are likely to be adopted in their final form during 2015. At present, forests feature prominently in this list, with 11 explicit references:

- Target under Goal 6. “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”:
  - 6.6 by 2020 protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, **forests**, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes;
  
- Targets under Goal 15: “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, **sustainably manage forests**, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”:
  - 15.1 by 2020 ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular **forests**, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements
  - 15.2 by 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of **forests**, halt **deforestation**, **restore degraded forests**, and increase **afforestation** and **reforestation** by x% globally
  - 15.b mobilize significantly resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable **forest** management, and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance **sustainable forest management**, including for conservation and **reforestation**.

UNFFS and CPF have made submissions about how forests should be integrated into the SDGs and, at an earlier stage in the process, proposed that there should be a specific focus area on forests<sup>90</sup>. The UNFFS and CPF members were thus fully involved in promoting forests in the SDGs and will no doubt take an active part in their implementation once formally adopted.

At the time of finalization of the report, the IAF Team noted that during the upcoming UN Climate Summit<sup>91</sup>, to be held on 23 September 2014 during the GA, "forests" will be one of the "Action Areas" to be discussed in plenary session. The deliverables of this session will include a “New York Declaration on Forests” and "Implementation Commitments". This plenary session on forests is being organized by the Secretary-General’s office and the UNDP. The Team noted that the draft Declaration appears to present too narrow an interpretation of global agreements and targets related to forests: it focuses on the climate change mitigation objective without recognizing other important environmental and socio-economic functions of forests, and it appears that the proposed targets are not fully consistent with the Forest Instrument, GOFs or the proposed SDGs. The UNFF has not been invited or requested to be involved in this process. This is inconsistent with the message emphasized by Member States at the Forum, where they have repeatedly called for greater coherence among the global forest policy-setting processes so as to reflect the full benefits of forests to the broader development agenda rather than focusing on any specific, albeit, important function of forests. While the future IAF should promote and enhance coherence with the Rio Conventions in its work, the global climate change process also needs to take into account corresponding global agreements on forests, particularly the SDGs, Forest Instrument and its GOFs.

57-04. **Many work streams in the Post-2015 Development Process**. There are several processes working on the post-2015 UN development agenda. The UN System Task Team is providing analytical inputs and

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<sup>90</sup> with the exception of CIFOR

<sup>91</sup> See <http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/>

has prepared two major reports and 18 thematic think-pieces; its Technical Support Team (TST) has published an Issues Brief on Forests, which CPF members helped prepare.<sup>92</sup> In addition to the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons and HLPF there is also an Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, several high level dialogues on the future role of development cooperation, a regional and national consultation process, UNDG multi-stakeholder consultations, the UN Global Compact (involving business and private sector), the Sustainable Development Solutions Network of the scientific and academic community, and the global expert panels on forests, oceans, biodiversity and ecosystems. While all these processes have their rationale and justification, it has become extremely challenging for stakeholders to digest all the documents that they generate.

**57-05 Forest values in the three Rio Conventions.** As discussed in chapter 5.4, legally-binding arrangements are not necessarily superior to “softer” mechanisms for effective action by the international community on shared concerns. Food aid, which is one of the best supported areas of international community collaborative support for the needy, is an example where “soft” agreements can work consistently, over the long term, and to good effect, despite the fact that Member States are not obliged to intervene; indeed, when FAO attempted to introduce an element of “legally binding” obligation to provide food (under the umbrella of “The Right to Food”) the very countries which dominate charitable food donations fought it and successfully rejected the initiative.

Thus, although the negotiations on forests, and those on mountains, were the two major policy areas that did not conclude with a legally-binding agreement at the 1992 UNCED Rio Summit, this need not mean that they were necessarily also the worst-served in terms of potential for effective international cooperation. The three existing Rio-based MEAs, which are legally-binding, all closely relate to forests, as follows:

- **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** explicitly recognizes forest ecosystem services that “are beneficial to human existence. CBD recognizes the broader goods and services values of forests including timber, fuelwood, non-timber forest products, genetic resources, recreation and tourism, watershed, climate, biodiversity, amenity, and cultural or non-use values”<sup>93</sup>. At COP 6 in 2002, the CBD adopted an expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity (decision VI/22, paragraph 10, annex) that was mainly for countries to implement. Following a review of implementation, parties were asked to increase their implementation efforts at COP 9, when (as noted in §54-09) CBD also recognised the adoption of the Forest Instrument.

In 2002, COP 6 also formulated the 2010 biodiversity target “to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth”. As this target was not reached in due time, the CBD now directs its current work through a Strategic Plan (2011-2020). This includes the “Aichi Biodiversity Targets”<sup>94</sup>, a set of 20 measurable time-bound targets agreed by the parties to the CBD in October 2010 – the decision to adopt measurable targets gives important lessons for the future IAF, which should also consider adopting equivalent targets for the forests agenda. The Aichi Targets are now being integrated into national strategies and action plans by the 193 Convention parties. The achievement of these targets should contribute to reducing, and eventually halting, the loss of biodiversity at a global level by 2050. In 2006, a *2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership* was established as a global initiative to further develop and promote

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<sup>92</sup> See <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2291Forest%20Issues%20BriefFINAL.pdf>

<sup>93</sup> CBD-UNEP (2001). The value of forest ecosystems. Technical Series No. 4 (2001).

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/> consulted 19 March 2014

indicators for the consistent monitoring and assessment of biodiversity. Alongside the other two Rio-based Conventions, the CBD uses the GEF as its funding mechanism for implementation.

- UNFCCC COPs have integrated forests into both its main approaches to tackling climate change, namely mitigation and adaptation. In 1992, the UNFCCC mainly saw the role of forests as carbon sinks. While Annex 1 countries to the Convention<sup>95</sup> could count the carbon stock and mitigation potential of their forests in national GHG-inventories, it is only since the topic “avoiding deforestation” appeared on the agenda of COP 11 in 2005 that a policy window opened for a more holistic inclusion of forests into the UNFCCC agenda, including Non-Annex 1 parties (comprising LDCs). In 2007, COP13 broadened the initial focus on avoiding deforestation to REDD+, which includes forest degradation, forest conservation, sustainably managing forests and the enhancement of sinks through planting new forests. Increasingly Non-Annex 1 countries also integrate forests into their NAMAs<sup>96</sup>.

REDD+ has captured the collective donor imagination and led to the creation of a **REDD+ Partnership**<sup>97</sup> which serves as an interim platform for its partner countries to scale up actions and finances for initiatives in REDD+ developing countries. A considerable number of bilateral and multilateral initiatives have developed since 2009 (including FCPF, UN-REDD, FIP) aimed at piloting REDD+ in over 60 tropical countries by 2014. More than US\$ 5 billion has been invested so far in the development of REDD+. Through the Green Climate Fund it is expected that the REDD+ will influence the way in which tropical forests are conserved and managed in the near future (see also chapter 5.6). Therefore, from an external perspective, this programme seems to generate large benefits for forested developing countries.

- The UNCCD recognizes the role of forests in preventing desertification and drought, but also in attenuating their effects. Forests do not figure as prominently in the UNCCD regime as they do in the CBD or UNFCCC processes, but deforestation and forest degradation are linked to land degradation and aridification. The treaty has the benefit of fostering an understanding of the role of forests in controlling desertification and droughts. UNCCD has also established a Strategic Programme on Forest Finance under its Global Mechanism. The UNFCCC/UNFF link is particularly important for addressing issues relating to LFCCs.

All three Rio-based Conventions use the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as their financial mechanism. Forests figure prominently as various GEF activities relate to forests<sup>98</sup> (see also chapter 5.6). Nonetheless, a number of developing countries have criticized the GEF for being overly bureaucratic, cumbersome and sluggish, reducing its strategic value and impact. Its insistence on funding only interventions that have global gain is a hindrance to supporting many national actions which collectively would have high international significance.

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<sup>95</sup> Annex-1 Parties include the industrialized countries that were members of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in 1992, plus countries with economies in transition (the EIT Parties), including the Russian Federation, the Baltic States, and several Central and Eastern European States.

<sup>96</sup> Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) refers to a set of policies and actions that developing countries undertake as part of a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Forest is an important sector for NAMA development in Non-Annex 1 countries.

<sup>97</sup> <http://reddpluspartnership.org/en/> consulted on 19 March 2014.

<sup>98</sup> Council Document GEF/C.27/14 of 2005: <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/542> and various follow-up documents

57-06 **Committee on Forestry (COFO)**<sup>99</sup>. COFO is one of the main inter-governmental fora for discussion of forests. It is the highest FAO statutory body for forestry and is thus the main advisory body for FAO's own forestry work (see chapter 5.5). COFO, established in 1971, was the first intergovernmental body specifically formed for the purpose of discussing international forestry issues. COFO preceded the creation of the IPF and subsequent UN-based policy fora; it was not selected as the forum for post-Rio high level debate because the international community identified a strong need for a non-sectoral forum (COFO is within an agricultural organisation) so that the political dimensions of dialogue could more easily be taken up. This need for a non-sectoral forum is reinforced by the COFO website which refers to its role as being "to identify emerging *policy* and technical issues, to seek solutions and to advise FAO and others on appropriate action"<sup>100</sup> and so combines specific roles in advising a UN Specialised Agency with broader policy mandates. UNFF Member States decided at that time (1995) to place the IPF Secretariat not at FAO, but within DESA at UN headquarters in New York, where it was more strategically positioned to engage in the broader discussions on the sustainable development agenda. This decision was reemphasised in 2000 when Member States established the Forum, elevated to the status of an independent subsidiary body of ECOSOC. Since the launch of the UN-DESA based global forest policy process, COFO has continued its role as a forum for technical dialogue, including what helps to advise FAO; it has over time increasingly taken into account UNFF and relevant ECOSOC resolutions.

The biennial sessions of COFO, which since 2008 have been branded as "The World Forest Week", bring together heads of forest services and other senior government officials to identify emerging policy and technical issues, to seek solutions, and to advise FAO and others on appropriate actions. Other international organizations and, increasingly, non-governmental groups attend COFO/The World Forest Week.

57-07 **Regional forest initiatives and agreements.** A number of specific regional initiatives and policy processes which are translating global policies and ideas into a more regional setting are indirectly linked to UNFF, although there is no formal association with UNFF. However several regional organisations are coordinating closely with the UNFF, see §55-08. These should be explored further in order to develop possible future links with the post-2015 UN IAF (see chapter 6). Such initiatives and processes include:

- Forest Europe (previously known as the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe), which is the pan-European forest policy-making process created in 1990. It aims at promoting SFM throughout the region. Among its most important policy outcomes are the definition of SFM and a large set of C&I; the Forest Europe report on the *State of Forests and SFM in Europe* relies on these C&I as a core tool for monitoring change. As it is without founding documents, Forest Europe's objectives have been defined by declarations and resolutions signed by the forest ministers at six ministerial conferences between 1990 and 2011. It currently comprises 46 member countries and the European Union, as well as observer organizations. Its objectives comprise consolidating tools for SFM; improving monitoring of and reporting on forests; combating illegal logging; developing a common approach to the valuation of forests ecosystem services; emphasizing the social aspects of forestry; and the role of forests in the transition to a green economy.

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<sup>99</sup> Reference on duplication and overlap between UNFF sessions and COFO had been raised by several interviewed parties. An analysis of COFO can be consulted in FAO (2012c) Strategic Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Forestry.

<sup>100</sup> <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cofo/en/>

During 2012 and 2013, the signatory countries worked through an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to try to develop a legally binding agreement on forests in the pan-European region as mandated by the ministers at the Oslo Ministerial Conference in 2011<sup>101</sup>.

In conclusion it can be said that since 2000 this process has aimed to systematically translate global forest-related ideas and policy objectives (particularly IPF-IFF-UNFF outcomes) at the regional level and in some cases this has led to the formulation of regional approaches (for example in relation to NFPs).

- The Montreal Process was formed in 1994 as an intergovernmental initiative to promote the development and application of criteria and indicators for SFM in temperate and boreal forests. Currently, its 12 member countries are Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Russian Federation, USA and Uruguay; together they comprise 83% of the world's temperate and boreal forests, 49% of the total global forest area and 40% of the world's wood production. Through the Montreal Process, member countries make a voluntary commitment to further improve the monitoring, assessment and reporting on trends in their forest conditions and progress towards the sustainable management of their forests and to create a pathway for collaboration and capacity building.
- The Tehran Process was created out of a CLI in 1999 through an initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It addresses the special needs and requirements of developing countries with low forest cover and unique types of forest in the framework of the IAF. According to FAO, LFCCs are those with less than 10% of their surface area in forest cover. The process does not imply a formal membership; there are more than 70 developing countries affected by low forest cover, involving about 400 million people. The common denominator of these countries was the lack of a forum to address common issues and needs. Despite the importance of forests, woodlands and trees outside of forests to the environment and economies of these countries, particularly the rural economies, little data and information exist on the extent and condition of the forest and tree resources and on processes and factors affecting them.

**57-08 Other international processes with links to the IAF.** Other processes, that are not strictly forest policy processes but that can influence a post-2015 IAF arrangement include the IPBES and the Global Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative with its so-called "Bonn Challenge".

- IPBES<sup>102</sup> (a potential model for a science-policy interface, considered in §56-03) was created in 2012 as an independent intergovernmental body *to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development*. In March 2014 it had 118 member countries. UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP support the work of IPBES and its secretariat through a collaborative partnership arrangement. IPBES provides a mechanism to synthesize, review, assess and critically evaluate relevant information and knowledge generated worldwide by governments; academia, scientific organizations, non-governmental organizations as well as indigenous peoples and local communities<sup>103</sup>. To date, it has no formal links with UNFF or CPF.

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<sup>101</sup> The process of negotiation was conducted intensively in 2013 and early 2014 between the parties. However, no final draft has been adopted so far and parties have decided to report back to the Ministerial Conference and ask for further guidance.

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.ipbes.net/> consulted 19 March 2014

<sup>103</sup> It is too early to assess functioning and achievement of the IPBES at this stage, but it should be definitely be looked at when reflecting about a strengthened science/policy platform in respect to SFM and forests.

- The “Bonn Challenge” is an international initiative of governments and civil society to restore 150 million hectares of the world's degraded and deforested lands by 2020. It is hosted in Bonn and was launched by the German government and IUCN in September 2011, in collaboration with the Global Partnership on Forest/Landscape Restoration. It also targets delivery on the Rio Conventions and other outcomes of the 1992 Earth Summit. The Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration is a network of governments, organizations, communities and individuals that recognize the importance of forest landscape restoration and want to be part of a concerted global action.

There are many more forest-related initiatives throughout the world that aim to improve people’s livelihoods, foster the implementation of sustainable practices in forest management and to halt deforestation and degradation. Many bring innovation, for example in relation to fair traded products including non-wood forest goods. At present, there is no one platform or organization summarizes and collates all those ideas and innovative practices in order to help translate them for other contexts. It would be valuable to share both negative and positive experiences, especially where there is local implementation, as new ideas – as well as technical developments and ODA – can help generate good policy outcomes, fruitful business partnerships and increased income.

### **Key achievements**

57-09 ***Inclusion of forests as thematic area in the UNCSD outcome.*** The principal outcome document from UNCSD (*The Future We Want, 2012*) and the subsequent General Assembly Resolution on *The future we want*<sup>104</sup> both called for urgent implementation of the Forest Instrument and the UNFF 9 Ministerial Declaration (the text of which was incorporated into the UNCSD outcome document).

57-10 ***Important policy documents prepared for UNCSD and the current SDG process.*** UNFFS and a number of other CPF members have produced a considerable number of papers on the role of forests in broader development policy for conferences and summits, including WSSD and UNCSD. In addition, the Submission of the CPF to the Preparatory Process for UNCSD and the joint proposal made by CPF members (with exception of CIFOR) to the SDG OWG about forests and biodiversity should be highlighted, as they were considered to be major achievements by interviewed parties. Recent work by the CPF in relation to the formulation of the SDGs has included proposals for targets on SFM, with an emphasis on the socio-economic benefits for forest-dependent communities as well as a target on halting and reversing deforestation. Part of the policy message was that forests should not only be viewed through the separate lenses of biodiversity conservation, climate change or timber production, but that it is also important to balance forest conversion and forest products use with forest ecosystem services. In addition, Forest Europe suggested ensuring visibility of the services provided by forests and the importance of SFM through the establishment of adequate indicators for monitoring proposed goals and targets.

57-11 ***Globally recognized role of forests for sustainable development.*** The development and promotion of a conceptual framework for SFM as a broad holistic concept to conserve and manage the world’s forests is a major achievement of the IAF over the past 15 years. This has included making the concept of SFM better known among stakeholders, decision-makers and the interested public; and political endorsement of a wider concept of SFM that is rooted in the three main pillars outlined in Box 8.

<sup>104</sup> See: <http://www.un.org/en/sustainablefuture>

Embracing this wider understanding of the role of the world's forests in the broader global policy process is a key element for sustainable development, recognising that the stewardship of these forest assets is essential for achieving broader policy objectives. At the national level, within sovereign states, SFM includes the conservation of biodiversity as well as action to underpin the provision of forest goods and services. SFM is generally well covered by national laws and regulations; instruments to introduce and monitor SFM have been (or are being developed) at international and regional levels – these include C&I for SFM (which are being promoted by UNFF) and MRV systems in respect to REDD+ (which are being promoted by UNFCCC).

57-12 **Considerable Communication and Outreach products.** This has been a highlight of the work of IAF, which has helped to articulate the role of forests in relation, for example, to the MDGs/SDGs and the work of the Rio Conventions. As previously noted, CPF members have helped develop a number of technical documents, including the Strategic Framework for Forests and Climate Change, the study on assessing and monitoring forest degradation, the work on forest finance and the Sourcebook on Funding SFM, and the so-called SFM Fact sheets<sup>105</sup>. Meanwhile, the celebrations of the IYF 2011, and the IDF in 2013 and 2014, have been valuable in promoting such messages to much wider audiences throughout the world, with a CPF Communicators' Group helping to facilitate events during the IYF and the development of a wide range of communications packages and campaign tools.

### **Relevance and Effectiveness**

57-13 **Forests in the MDGs.** The MDGs have been instrumental in attracting greater international attention to social issues, particularly poverty alleviation, with ramifications both within and outside the forest sector. Today, most of the world's 4 billion hectares of forests are economically accessible, and less than 25% can be considered as pristine. Partly due to the large area they cover, forests have the potential to make direct contributions to implementing MDG1 (eradicating extreme poverty) and MDG7 (ensure environmental sustainability). A key issue for many countries in the tropical forest belt, and certain countries in temperate areas, is how best to harness SFM to reduce poverty and improve the health and living standards of the rural poor. Continued biodiversity loss and forest degradation through anthropogenic threats, effects of climate change and fires impair the capacity of all types of forests to deliver goods and services that assure environmental sustainability. Moreover, forests are not equally distributed throughout the regions and countries, and they have not so far been recognized as a priority subject for legally imposing collective actions of the global community. Consequently, there are serious limits on realising the full potential of forests in contributing to the achievement of the MDGs.

57-14 **UNFF and the MDGs.** In spite of these limitations, UNFF has, as explained, created awareness of forests in the broader global development agenda particularly at WSSD in 2002, at UNCSD in 2012 and, currently, through the ongoing SDG formulation process. In March 2002, a *UNFF Ministerial Declaration and Message* containing 14 action points and 9 recommendations was formulated and presented to WSSD. While at the time this was a strong message to WSSD, analyzed from today's perspective, it has not appeared to have any major effect on global decision-making or the fate of forests.

For UNCSD in 2012, a 36-page booklet titled *Rio+20 and Forests- the Contribution of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to Rio+20* was elaborated. In its foreword the Chair of CPF and the Director of UNFFS declared that "while forests have not been specifically identified as one of the key themes of the

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<sup>105</sup> <http://www.cpfweb.org/76228/en/>

Summit, almost all of the themes are strongly connected to forests". It was a result of advocacy by a number of Member States, CPF and UNFFS, that the UNCSO had four paragraphs on forests; paragraph 193 includes some major development statements while paragraphs 194-196 focus on UNFF/CPF institutional issues.

**57-15 *Role of the Forest Instrument and SFM in achieving MDGs.*** Based on the analysis of the country reporting to UNFF 10, many countries stated that they lacked specific quantifiable indicators for measuring progress towards the achievement of the MDGs in general and on the role of SFM in particular. While many countries reported that they lacked specific quantifiable indicators for measuring progress towards the achievement of the MDGs, others considered that SFM was contributing to their realization. There was a general consensus among the developing countries and countries in transition that their forest development programs were contributing to the achievement of MDG 1 on poverty eradication, with 30 of 38 countries responding positively. This was also the case for MDG 7 on environmental stability, with 32 of 38 countries also responding in the affirmative. Responses to the other goals were not consistent across the developing countries, probably due to lack of clarity and assessment methodology as well as to a lack of assessment information and data for linking SFM to the various MDGs. Nevertheless, many developing and countries in transition said in their national reports that their SFM programmes had contributed to progress in the achievement of other MDGs. For MDG 3, on promoting gender equality and empowering women, 23 out of 38 responded positively and for MDG 8, on developing a global partnership for development, 21 provided positive responses. The large majority of the OECD countries felt that, with the exception of MDG 7 on environmental stability, the MDGs were not relevant or applicable to them. In conclusion it can be said that the lack of specific indicators for measuring progress towards the achievements of SFM goals as well as a proper agreed assessment or evaluation methodology and the rather low number of UNFF country reports impedes a complete assessment on the implementation of the MDGs. However, it can be said that countries obviously found the MDG goals important and that to some extent SFM contributed to their achievement.

**57-16 *SFM as globally recognized concept for forest-based development.*** The IAF has engaged in relevant work over the past 15 years in promoting SFM as an internationally acknowledged and well recognized concept to conserve and manage forest resources. Addressing the conservation and management of all types of forests more holistically and systematically is one of the chief contributions of the UNFF and its predecessors. In addition, the Forest Instrument and its GOFs have been agreed upon. Seven globally recognized thematic areas for managing, reporting and verifying the quality of forest conservation and management<sup>106</sup> have been developed. The importance of a definition of SFM through the agreement on thematic areas has been recognised by UNFF, but an actual agreement on *criteria and indicators* as set out in other processes is still lacking. This impedes to a certain extent the implementation of SFM globally. To this end, UNFF has partnered with the CPF and individual CPF members (particularly FAO, ITTO, UNEP, CIFOR, IUFRO and IUCN) and international processes such as the Montreal Process and Forest Europe for temperate and boreal forest areas, the Teheran process for LFCC and various formal approaches at (sub) regional level, such as AFF, COMIFAC and OTCA.

**57-17 *Monitoring and Reporting.*** Reporting on forest extent and condition is well advanced, by FAO and ITTO in particular, but legally recognized global definitions are lacking and the definition and alignment of

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<sup>106</sup> As set out in UNFF Resolution 4/3, the 7 globally agreed criteria on SFM are: (i) Extent of forest resources; (ii) Biological diversity; (iii) Forest health and vitality, (iv) Productive functions of forest resources; (v) Protective functions of forest resources; (vi) Socio-economic functions; and (vii) Legal, policy and institutional framework.

qualitative and quantitative indicators as well as sub-indicators and related definitions are ongoing. It also needs to be recognized that joint reporting by the major international organizations and processes using the seven thematic elements has been effective since 2004 and constitutes a usable foundation for more solid and tangible future reporting on the situation and development of the world's forests. Nevertheless, on-going C&I processes, including the FAO FRA and ITTO, generally lack adequate indicators for measuring progress in the SFM thematic elements on the socio-economic functions of forests and the legal, policy and institutional framework, which makes reporting to UNFF even more difficult since the large majority of the measures of the Forest Instrument and the IPF/IFF/UNFF proposal for action fall under these two thematic elements.<sup>107</sup> Some interviewees argued that the globally agreed definition for SFM is too vague and this is why some countries have renamed the concept (see Box 8); this is problematic and needs clarification in the preparation of the post-2015 IAF. Without indicators and targets it is difficult to efficiently and effectively monitor tangible progress and show decisive results on progress towards the SFM goals. It also impedes discussion on "performance-based funding" as it has been modelled through REDD+.

#### **BOX 8: The definition of SFM – contradictions in internationally agreed terms**

While the 7 globally agreed thematic elements embrace the concept of SFM, there is no universally agreed definition for sustainable forest management (SFM). The most widely intergovernmental agreed-on language on SFM is contained in the Forest Instrument, which recognizes: *"Sustainable forest management as a dynamic and evolving concept ... intended to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental value of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations."* The term "evolving" however is somewhat misleading, as it might lead to the conclusion that SFM is not already being implemented.

SFM, as defined in a SDG context contains three main pillars: (i) sustainable economic development of forest-based products and services; (ii) poverty reduction and promotion of local development; and (iii) global externalities, particularly the recognition of environmental services in respect to climate change, the conservation of biological diversity and the wider role that forests have to protect soils and landscapes.

Since the rise of REDD+, which embraces the core concept of SFM, confusion has been created with the term "sustainable management of forests" that refers specifically to the silvicultural management of natural forests rather than SFM more generally. Under LULUCF, some forest terms (e.g. "deforestation" and "reforestation") have been defined in ways that are not directly equivalent to their use either within the UNFF SFM concept or within REDD+, as developed under the UNFCCC.

**57-18 Forest policy instruments scattered among various global development mechanisms.** At international level, forests are dealt with under numerous processes and forums and from different angles and perspectives. Examples include UNFF, CBD, UNFCCC/REDD+, UNCCD, the Ramsar Convention, CITES and C&I processes, all of which are doing important work in forest-based development. The great majority of these initiatives are supportive of the Forest Instrument and the GOFs, even though (with the

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<sup>107</sup> While indicators from existing criteria and indicators processes such as the FAO Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) and the ITTO Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests are useful, few or no indicators exist for assessing GOFs 2-4 and the contributions of forests to the achievement of the MDGs. Serious information gaps exist in available indicators for measuring progress in implementing the twelve thematic clusters of the Forest Instrument identified in section 5.4. There is only one thematic cluster (2C: forest protection) that is adequately covered. Indicators were available to a limited extent only for the others, and in some cases are almost completely missing. Jorge Illueca, UNFF Secretariat, Subject Index and Thematic Clustering of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, UNFF Resolutions and Decisions and Relevant ECOSOC Resolutions (2007), pp. 1-7.

exception of the CBD) they do not often refer to them. . The UNFF process itself has added value to the work of several CPF members by catalyzing collaboration and synergies between (forest) policy makers and CPF implementing agencies<sup>108</sup>.

This fragmentation mirrors the reality at the national level, where (i) there is often great separation between those institutions and ministries who deal with forests as a source of goods/material and those which pursue the protective functions of forests; (ii) there may be a lack of effective land-use policies that integrate “forest” as a permanent land-use form; and (iii) access to and rights to forest resources often remain unclear and insufficiently regulated. More recent times, there are also examples of forestry agencies being excluded from responsibility for forests in their climate change roles; this limits opportunities to place REDD+ activities in a broader SFM context.

Reducing fragmentation in forest policymaking at the international level can be achieved through various means, including for example by countries improving coordination in their capitals across ministries and departments, and engagement with national stakeholders. Developing consistent messages on the role of forests in the global development processes (such as SDGs) requires a common understanding and decision-making. However, this has not yet been achieved in many of the UNFF Member States. As a consequence, SFM is generally given inadequate consideration in the development policies of Member States, and also in the cooperation strategies of donor agencies. There is potential to build coordination on the existing strands of forest governance, but there is also the need to use the various components of the global forest governance system differently than they are being used presently.

**57-19 *The ineffective role of CPF and CPF members in raising the global profile of SFM.*** Member organisations of the CPF have the potential to bring forest-related issues to broader global development agendas as they have demonstrated in various other processes in the past (water, health, education, etc.). This is particularly true for those CPF members that have subscribed to the overall sustainable development agenda, such as the World Bank (e.g. economic development), UNDP (e.g. social development), FAO (food security in particular) and others. Despite the existence of the CPF itself, whose mission is “to support the work of the UNFF in the promotion of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and in the strengthening of political commitment to this end”, the messages on forests have not yet reached the necessary convening level of the individual CPF member organizations. Thus, there is a need to strengthen the CPF especially through a competent leadership. In this regard, the wording of paragraph 3b of ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35 “to invite the executive heads of relevant organisations ... to form a collaborative partnership on forests to support the work of the Forum” should be recalled. Involvement of CPF members at the “highest level possible” would have helped support UNFF over the past 15 years. There can only be effective support for SFM if CPF members provide the necessary commitment to CPF meetings and activities at a high political level within their organisations.

It is the understanding of the Independent Assessment Team that over the past few years the CPF has no longer fulfilled such a role. At CPF meetings some agencies have been represented by staff at P 2-3 levels who cannot take decisions on behalf of their respective agencies, while the meetings are chaired by the head of forests for FAO who is indeed “high level”; such working modalities cannot be effective. Also, it is noted that some strong differences of opinion among CPF member organizations has led to public airing of differences without first recourse to internal dialogue within the CPF - this has contributed to overall weakening of the CPF coalition and therefore also to reduction in the respect it enjoys in IAF circles. It has

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<sup>108</sup> As cited in several reports by countries and organisations in AHEG 1

not helped that CPF members could not come to a consensus on the way in which forests should be presented in the recent development of the SDGs.

57-20 **UNFFS relationship with the Rio-Conventions.** Many of the organizations that form the core of the international forest regime recognize the need for coordination at the global forest policy level. Based on the outcomes of a joint workshop of UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC in 2004 (*Promoting Synergy and Cooperation the between Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in particular biodiversity-related conventions, and related mechanisms*) it was acknowledged that forests are a cross-cutting issue for all three Rio conventions. Since then efforts among the three Rio conventions to enhance cooperation on forests, while usefully aimed at promoting synergies in their work, are somehow unbalanced. In part, this might be due to the lack of an equivalent representation by an institution dealing mainly with forest issues (such as UNFFS) to help focus the discussion on forests within the Rio Conventions' Joint Liaison Group (JLG)<sup>109</sup>. The JLG is considered by some as an efficient liaison body between the three Rio Conventions, meeting annually since 2001. As its name indicates, only the Secretariats of the three Rio conventions are members of the JLG but not the UNFFS. However, and according to the UNFFS, the lack of participation in the JLG is not necessarily considered as an indication of lack of cooperation on forest issues as the outcomes of the CBD and UNCCD COPs have repeatedly emphasized and highlighted the collaboration with UNFF.

MoUs have been signed and implemented between the **CBD** and UNFF (for the period 2009-2011) and between the UNCCD and UNFF for the period of 2010-2015. The MoU with the CBD for a program of work to address biodiversity in forests is of particular interest as it followed UNFF Resolution 8/1, which requested UNFFS to explore a format and opportunities for collaboration and cooperation with the secretariats of the Rio Conventions and to develop joint activities related to SFM, the Forest Instrument and its GOFs. The MoU between UNFF and **UNCCD** aims at identifying gaps, obstacles and opportunities in financing sustainable land management and SFM, and focusing on expanding the implementation of SFM beyond tropical humid forests to include dry forests and trees outside forests, which led to the Facilitative Process workshops on the LFCCs/SIDS. However, considering the list of wishes expressed to the Rio Conventions, there are still requests that have not been followed up or implemented so far. All in all, CBD and UNCCD collaboration with the UNFF can be assessed as relevant, in spite of the fact that when it comes to follow-up in the implementation of the respective MoUs and political decision-making – as illustrated in the Aichi targets and forest biodiversity programme - UNFF suggestions have not been always been fully taken into account by the Parties. In respect to climate change, it needs however to be noted that **UNFCCC** representation in the work of UNFF (in spite of UNFF's interest and the emergence of the REDD+ agenda) has not been satisfactory, given the fact that UNFFS and CPF members have always been participating in COPs, SBSTAs and technical meetings in the framework of UNFCCC.

57-21 **UNFF and recent developments in REDD+.** While the most active partners in the CPF have, individually and sometimes also collectively (for example, through UN-REDD implemented jointly by FAO, UNEP and UNDP) been fully engaged in the development and preparation of REDD+ since its beginning in the Bali Action Plan in 2007, UNFF and CPF as a collective group (not individual CPF members) were virtually absent from the process of developing REDD+. Since Bali 2007 (the same year when the FI became “operational”) the REDD+ mechanism, supported by UN Member States and individual CPF

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<sup>109</sup> The Joint Liaison Group (JLG) between the three Rio Conventions was established in 2001 as an informal forum for exchanging information, exploring opportunities for synergistic activities and increasing coordination. The JLG comprises the officers of the Conventions' scientific subsidiary bodies, the Executive Secretaries, and members of the secretariats.

members, has developed a broader concept of SFM beyond a carbon offset approach. For example, in 2008 COP 14 (Poznan) gave more emphasis to “conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks” to place these activities at the same level of priority as deforestation and forest degradation; and in 2009-2010, the technical and safeguard modalities were refined at subsequent COPs. At COP 19 in Warsaw in December 2013 this resulted in an agreement on the overall REDD+ approach and an interim financial mechanism through the Green Climate Fund (see chapter 5.6) was developed. REDD+, as defined through the UNFCCC negotiation process and the various international readiness implementation initiatives (FCPF, UN-REDD, Biocarbon Fund, bilateral activities and the Voluntary Carbon Market) represents much more than a payment per ton of CO<sub>2</sub> sequestered. The addition of “the plus” to REDD, the co-benefits defined at the level of forests goods and services other than carbon and the safeguard policies implied in the process are fully convergent with the overall SFM characterization as defined by UNFF, although the priority setting of UNFCCC - enhancement and permanence of carbon sinks - is different. Also, considering the Aichi targets (see Table 7) and their link to SFM, there is no discrepancy between the overall intentions of the Rio MEAs and UNFF. There is thus no reason to keep separate tracks in respect to the management, conservation and use of forests. This is important to take into consideration when formulating the overall rationale for a post-2015 IAF.

### ***Impacts and Sustainability of work***

57-22 ***UNFF’s impact on the global development agenda is limited.*** The message to the world from the IAF is that forests were relevant to implementing MDG1 (eradicating extreme poverty) and MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability) and needed to be adequately considered in the process of formulation of the SDGs for the post-2015 global development agenda. In spite of the various efforts by UNFF at the ministerial level in several UNFF Sessions and by CPF and the UNFFS over the past eight years, there are as yet no measurable impacts on forests that can be clearly recognized in the global development agenda. The core problem could be the absence of a stronger political engagement of countries to commit to legal collective actions when the broader SFM is concerned.

Obviously there is a commitment to forests in the climate change mitigation framework through REDD+. Also, the integration of REDD+ in the Green Climate Fund testifies to the willingness of UNFCCC donor countries (which are the same countries that participate in the UNFF context) to invest in REDD+. Commitment has also been shown through funding of GEF for biodiversity conservation.

A broader forest policy agenda, aiming at the conservation and sustainable management of all forests has not however materialized, which is due to different reasons, including the lack of political will and lack of adequate funding for supporting the implementation of the Forest Instrument and actions required for achieving its GOFs. While those committed to the UNFF process purport to deal with development and policy, in reality what was achieved so far is more about posturing and positioning. It is a fact that a large tract of global forests are currently not managed sustainably. For example, the *Status of the Tropical Forest Management Report* of ITTO indicates that less than 10% of tropical humid forests<sup>110</sup> are sustainably managed. The collective action problem thus relates to the lack of clear recognition of forest conservation and management in the overall global development agenda and inadequate means of implementation for achieving SFM. Concrete forest-related development targets have not been defined in the MDG agenda. However, as mentioned before (§57-03) they appear under the Proposed Goal 15 and might have the potential to be gathering high political attention within the SDGs development agenda. A

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<sup>110</sup> Blaser, J. et al. (2011)

post-2015 forest arrangement needs to build on the past, address the future and should be integrated in the current formulation processes of the SDGs. It should deliver clear indicators partnered with suggested actions in relation to the role, purpose and aim of forest conservation and management in relation to the global development agenda.

**57-23 *Impact of the Forest Principles, the Forest Instrument and its Global Objectives on Forests to forest sustainability.*** The Rio Forest Principles (1992), and the Forest Instrument and its GOFs (2007) have created a non-legally binding global consensus on issues surrounding the conservation, management and use of all types of forests. While the principles that have been outlined are adequate, the lack of implementation has reduced their value considerably. Also, cross-sectorial issues, mainly relating to other MEAs (biodiversity, climate change, and desertification) and land-use aspects (agriculture, energy, and mining) have not been integrated to the extent needed by the Forest Principles and the FI. While the development of the four GOFs was a positive development for international forest policy addressing deforestation, economic and social values of forests, forest protection, and forest finance, the objectives were not linked with clear targets. For example GOF 1 does not require any follow-up action to address deforestation. Also, CPF members have their own forest strategies and are not aligned with or bound to the GOFs. In respect to UN Member countries, one can also argue that with the current weak institutional set-up, the status and ambition of the four GOFs is simply a policy intention with yet only few chances to reach any concrete targets.

**57-24 *Lack of agility to address issues with critical global implications at the right time.*** A number of emerging issues have arisen over the years that to some extent broadened the debate on SFM in the framework of the MDGs and more recently the SDGs. While the CPF and its members were proactive to the requests, UNFF and UN member countries generally were reactive and did not anticipate and address the emerging issues sufficiently well; this has had a negative effect on UNFF's impact and sustainability on global issues. This relates particularly to the following issues: climate change, including mitigation and adaptation; disaster risk reduction; forests in landscape context and land use governance; trade and investment and the various topics relating to forests in a Green Economy including the valuation of ecosystem services. In all these areas, forests have an important niche, but other processes have taken forest-related issues forward according to their own logic and some members of the CPF have single-handedly run with their view without attempting consensus-building among the UNFF-related organisations.

With its adherence to a strict MYPOW, the Forum also lost the possibility of reacting to new and emerging issues. In spite of its wide and comprehensive mandate, the UNFF has been side-lined to a process that only has limited influence. The post-2015 arrangement should correct this limited role. Today, there is no institution in place that plays an effective role of stewardship on forests and harmonizing the role in the various international development agendas. UNFF with its limited agenda following a defined work programme defined many years in advance and CPF, as a voluntary partnership with relative weak leadership, have failed to fulfil such a role in the current context.

### ***Summary of findings and conclusions***

**57-25 *Summing up UNFF in the context of MDGs, SDGs and the Rio Conventions.*** With only a year to go before the 2015 target year, not all MDGs have been achieved and certainly not all countries have made the desired progress or realised the full contribution of forests to this end. This may have arisen partly because the MDGs were formulated to address improvements in human wellbeing and the

contribution of individual sectors (including forests) cannot be easily gauged. Although MDGs were clearly linked to human welfare targets, the indicators could be easily measured for the sectors contributing to such achievement. In addition the UNFF country reporting format itself did not allow for a systematic assessment of impact on MDGs achievement. The more general problem of missing targets and indicators makes it also difficult to study progress towards the achievement of SFM.

In relation to the Rio Conventions, the Team has concluded that a major stumbling block for reaching a holistic SFM is the fragmentation of global forest-related instruments and mechanisms. Despite the UNFF having established working relationships with Rio Conventions, their forest related decision-making has no direct link to the UNFF process except for that under the CBD. Nevertheless, the COPs of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD all take forest-relevant decisions (see e.g. the REDD+ instrument, the Aichi Targets, and the forest biodiversity programme) which even if not holistic might in the coming decades influence how forests are managed more than the resolutions and recommendations made by the UNFF. Such a fragmented approach to dealing with forests risks creating problems in achievement of balanced SFM at all levels.

On a more institutional level it can be said in summary that CPF member organizations appear not to put enough effort into including forests, and forest-related decisions taken within UNFF, into their own respective policy agendas. Moreover, they do not provide the necessary high-level commitment of their own organizations at CPF meetings. This is seen as important as competent leadership is a necessary asset for encouraging coordination among participating members and for implementing a comprehensive science/policy platform to support policy processes.

**57-26 *Establish a close link to the HLPF and SDGs and prepare a Forest/SDG target link.*** The future post-2015 IAF should have clear links to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to which ECOSOC is attaching such great importance. Based on strategic and adaptive planning, the Secretariat of the post-2015 IAF arrangement should assume the role of a clearing house for integrated inputs on forests in such broader development processes, taking into account the multi-functional role of forests and the specific roles that forests have in the implementation of the various SDGs as expressed in the various draft documents prepared in the formulation process of the SDGs. Currently, as at July 2014, 17 SDGs have been proposed, with forests being explicit in two of these Goals and their associated targets. The SDGs should be taken as a main rationale for the post-2015 IAF, and should be duly integrated into the Forest Instrument (which includes the GOFs) with the aim of orientating the strategic planning of the IAF in line with SDGs and related targets.

**57-27 *Target forests across the 17 SDGs.*** One of the major obstacles in assessing the contribution of the Forest Instrument and SFM to the achievement of the MDGs was the preconceived notion by many UNFF Member States that the contribution was focused primarily on the goal related to environmental stability. However, the five regional workshops on reporting clearly concluded that the Forest Instrument (see chapter 5.4), given its cross-cutting approach, contributed to a much broader range of MDGs. One of the more strategic approaches in the consideration of the post-2015 SDGs process is the possibility of selecting forest-related targets across the broad range of SDGs, which will make reporting on the contribution of forests to the future SDGs more integrated and comprehensive.

**57-28 *Consider harmonizing targeted approaches, integrate monitoring and science/policy interface in a post-2015 IAF.*** Table 7 summarises the major agreements/initiatives that have defined targets on forests. It should be noted that almost all of these processes have a far narrower agenda than “forests” taken holistically. Experiences in these narrower processes, including CBD, have shown in the past that a

stronger engagement can be achieved when measurable and achievable targets are formulated. Targeted approaches need to go hand in hand with clear science/policy guidance and the use of adequate means of implementation, including funding. “Forests” would require a longer list of “targets” but these could nevertheless be defined based on earlier work on C&I of SFM. The main thrust of targeting could, for example, be set at the level of reaching SFM for forested countries while for LFCCs they could include more cross-sectoral dimensions given the stronger interfaces of sparse woodlands with alternative land uses. Given that the UNFF as a global policy mechanism on forest-related issues has already defined GOFs, it should be relatively easy to achieve consensus on targets.

57-29 ***Incorporate REDD+ and forest-based mitigation in a post-2015 forest policy regime.*** It could be argued that managing forests with focus only on climate change may not meet the SFM objectives that the UNFF and earlier processes have striven for. But realism dictates that the forest community accept that having increased forest cover for climate purposes change is better having less forest cover by insisting only on holistically managed forests.<sup>111</sup> In this case, the REDD+ mechanism in the framework of the UNFCCC should be welcomed; it has the potential to fundamentally change the way in which forests are managed in developing countries. With the creation of major international initiatives such as the FCPF, UNREDD, FIP and others and the integration of REDD+ into the Green Climate Fund (Decision 9/CP.19, COP 19, December 2013), REDD+ is the only international forest-based policy instrument that delivers a combination of ***upscaled*** funding, technology and capacity building to conserve and sustainably manage forests in developing countries. However, the success of REDD+ (and related forest NAMAs) will depend on the ability of the forest sector to complement its narrow carbon focus with broader environmental contributions (e.g. biodiversity) as well as economic and social ones.

The rapid development of REDD+ over the past five years suggests that there is a solid global forest policy interest for SFM. The crux (as with the Forest Principles and the Forest Instrument) is the capability to deliver substantial outcomes at the implementation level in the regions and the countries. The post 2015 UN forest process has a unique opportunity to incorporate REDD+ (and the evolving forest-NAMA concept) into its objectives and strategic programme. There is indeed urgency in this regard as recent UNFCCC decisions on REDD+ ask for creating special country-based entities for implementing REDD+. In individual countries, the challenge will be to partner established forest sector institutions in REDD+ activities and avoid their marginalisation, as could happen in a number of cases.

57-31 ***Elevate forests to a higher level of decision making and communication.*** The reality over the past 14 years or so is that at the national and global levels, institutional narrow interests are carving up the forests agenda into separate kingdoms. The potential to realise a more coordinated approach might need a more direct engagement at the top level of politicians and decision makers. Securing such engagement would be the central role for the proposed Special Envoy on Forests (chapter 6). Of all the challenges facing the IAF, the most important is that of engaging effectively with decision-makers and convincing them to intervene in ways that realise the full benefits from forests. As long as forest-related problems remain dis-connected from high political interest and media attention, a future IAF is unlikely to make any more impact than the current IAF.

A strengthened post-2015 IAF needs to make a clear case for why humankind needs to take all necessary measures to combat the loss of forests, and the grave threat this presents for all of humanity. With politicians correctly engaged and with adequate communication in place, a more comprehensive and strategic global forest agenda can be formulated, endorsed at the highest level and implemented with

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<sup>111</sup> Related arguments have been used in the past to say that mono-species tree plantations are better than bare land.

adequate financing and a greater probability of success. Only high level political support can make sure that priorities are endorsed and funding is available. Within the UN, the forests process must sell itself as central to the post-2015 development agenda and must gain prominence on the HLPF. Outside it, forests must become a key in wider development and environmental agendas. There is already priority concern at the highest levels on such issues as humanitarian relief interventions, disaster risk reduction and the negative effects of climate change, among others. Why shouldn't that be possible for forests?

57-32 ***Coordinate global objectives/targets on forests.*** Table 7 attempts to compare the most important existing objectives/targets on forests at global level. The columns referring to the SDGs are provisional, since at the time of writing, the negotiation of the SDGs had yet to be concluded. To best prepare itself to effectively engage with the new global development agenda under the SDGs, the forests community under the post-2015 IAF could give first priority to reviewing the existing GOFs and agreeing targets for them in a format that would be acceptable globally and by the many non-IAF initiatives in the forests domain. As Table 7 indicates, there is a relatively good match between the GOFs and targets formulated in other processes. Harmonization and streamlining should thus be an achievable task.

**Table 7: Processes with Targeted Goals on Forests**

| Global Objectives on Forests (UNFF 2007)   | CBD Aichi Targets (CBD 2011)  | REDD+( UNFCCC post COP-19, 2013)  | Bonn Challenge (GFLR, 2011)   | SDGs (2014): targets relating to forest* [PROVISIONAL]   |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through SFM, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.            | By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced (5)   | Reducing emissions from deforestation<br>Reducing emissions from forest degradation<br>Conservation of forest carbon stocks                   | Restore 150 million hectares of the world's degraded and deforested lands by 2020                                       | 6.6 by 2020 protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes and 15.1 By 2020 ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of ... ecosystems and their services, in particular forests..., in line with international agreements |
| Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.   | By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable | Sustainably managing forests  |   | 15.2 By 2020 promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests, and increase afforestation and reforestation by x% globally   |
| Increase significantly the area of sustainably managed forests, including protected forests, and increase the proportion of forest products derived from sustainably managed forests.      | By 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial areas are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas (11)  | Sustainably managing forests<br>Enhancement of carbon stocks<br>Conservation of forest carbon stocks  |   | 15.2 – 15.9: various targets relating to reducing degradation, poaching and trafficking of fauna and flora, valuation and benefit sharing  |
| Reverse the decline in official development assistance for SFM and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM. | Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building   | REDD+ integrated in the Green Climate Fund. Major pilot funding through partnerships such as FCPF, UN-REDD and others; Bilateral REDD+ funds, | Create approximately \$84 billion per year in net benefits that could affect income opportunities for rural communities | 15.b Mobilize significantly resources from all sources and all levels to finance SFM, and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance SFM, including for conservation and reforestation   |

\*as defined by the OWG, 19 July 2014

## 6 Options for the way forward

### 6.1 Key challenges and building blocks for a future IAF

61-01 **Relevance and impact of the current UNFF.** UNFF is the main international policy making process that is empowered to endorse SFM globally. As part of the IAF, UNFF is responsible for “promoting the management, conservation, and sustainable development of all types of forests and strengthening long-term commitment to this end”<sup>112</sup>. As explained in chapter 5, UNFF has achieved some tangible impacts in terms of its mission and goals since its creation in 2000, including *inter alia* raising the overall awareness of countries to SFM, the global agreement on the Forest Instrument and awareness-raising and communication outputs, including the IYF. However, UNFF members have not made much headway in terms of implementing even the achievable global results stemming from the UNFF.

In performing the review of the effectiveness of the work of UNFF, it is important to remember that UNFF is neither a convention nor an organization, but a functional commission under ECOSOC and does not have the same level of resources that a convention or an organization has at their discretion. Expectations regarding UNFF should correspond with its status and resources.

Taking this into account, UNFF has not played a full role as *the* main international policy-making process for SFM: instead, its convening power has often been rivalled or trumped by other treaty bodies and policy processes dealing with more narrowly-defined aspects of forests; examples include UNFCCC and CBD, and some countries, regional organisations and individual CPF member organisations. It is possible that those seeking serious commitments are wary of the consensus-oriented decision-making preferences of UNFF Member States, which may have grown out of significant polarisation of earlier years, over issues of legally binding or non-binding outcomes. Many believe that consensus politics in the UNFF led to “lowest common denominator” rather than useful decisions, and that proactive and innovative policy solutions were generally avoided. Major Groups, regional organizations and processes and other observer organizations have felt a significant lack of influence on UNFF decision-making procedure and their interest seems to have waned over time<sup>113</sup>.

The global loss of a lead role for the UNFF process appears also to be reflected at the national level where UNFF commitments have hardly been implemented comprehensively. The limited national reporting to or response to questionnaires to the UNFF may be evidence of the only modest seriousness with which some member states view the UNFF process.

In conclusion, global forest commitments, including especially the four GOFs as well as the IPF/IFF proposals for action, have not been linked to clear targets. They are more like political visions for what countries need to address. On the other hand, other policy making process, such as REDD+ as part of mitigation targets, Aichi targets, etc. do set clear targets (see Table 7). There has been insufficient implementation of the IAF objective, purpose and nine principal functions of the IAF, and of the Forest Instrument and its four GOFs. In terms of its institutional format, the rather static process that meant agreeing an agenda five to eight years in advance and “the rigid interpretation of implementing the MYPOW” has not been able to take sufficient account of upcoming topics or important emerging issues, or to be flexible enough to react when necessary.

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<sup>112</sup> ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35

<sup>113</sup> However, it should be noted that UNFF follows the rules of procedure of the UN in this regard.

61-02 **Inadequate institutional set-up.** The current location of the IAF was well selected, placing it within the central UN, with its high political profile and unparalleled convening power to get all countries together. The institutional set-up (which includes UNFF and its Bureau, UNFFS and CPF) also represented a well thought-out compromise among the UN Member States to keep the global forest policy agenda alive. However, with the experience of 14 years of functioning of UNFF, including 7 years of (attempted) implementation of the Forest Instrument, coming as they do after 5 earlier years under the IPF and IFF, it seems that the arrangements of the UNFF/IAF are equipped neither to quickly unwind the institutional complexity that characterizes the international forest policy landscape, nor to systematically buttress dialogue with implementation activities. In addition, despite its ECOSOC affiliation, UNFF has not effectively exercised its potentially high convening power to raise the SFM agenda high enough to make it an inevitable reference point for all other forest-related initiatives – even those which co-originated with it from the UNCED. Thus, despite its high placement at UN DESA level, the support of CPF and Major Groups, and its recognition in the UNCSO Rio+20 outcome “*The future we want*”, the current IAF has been insufficient to decisively drive the global forest policy agenda.

61-03 **Ensuring effectiveness of a post-2015 IAF.** A post-2015 IAF needs primarily to ensure *the effectiveness of forest policy formulation and implementation*. This can be done in various ways, including the following:

Design an efficient and effective policy-making arrangement that governs the global forest policy agenda in an integrated, practical and equitable way and that is also informed and underpinned at regional and national levels by adequate implementation arrangements, including funding, technology transfer and capacity building. Without a strong national response capacity by UNFF Member States, the UNFF will remain a high cost discussion forum largely for diplomats and forest-focused advisors and decision-makers. Thus, there is a need to:

- Be instrumental in generating an efficient science/policy/implementation<sup>114</sup> link that takes into account the overall role of forests in sustainable development and links it to latest scientific results and assessments. This also implies that the institutional set-up used in the past needs to be seriously redesigned in order to become efficient, including through revisiting the “voluntary nature” of the current “science-policy” platform (the CPF); the strict agenda setting of the Forum through MYPOWs; the implementation and financing mechanisms; the outreach and constituencies of Major Groups; and the obvious lack of convening power of the current UNFF at global, regional and national levels.
- Raise the political and media attention about the importance of the global forest-policy-making process through engaging an eminent personality to serve as the UN Secretary-General’s “Special Envoy on Forests”; this would provide forests and forest-related issues with a “public face”, link it to the High-Level Political Forum and hence to the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs, and appeal also directly to broader society.
- Develop time-bound measurable targets and indicators for the GOFs (see Table 7). Emphasis should be given to improving the conditions of all types of forests, taking into account the increased pressure on ecosystem services, the effects of climate change and climate adaptation, the social role of forests and the increased demand for forest goods, in particular wood and fibre for material needs, energy and human wellbeing.

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<sup>114</sup> Implementation as used here means actual operations or making practical use of scientific knowledge that is widespread all over the world.

- Improve forest monitoring and reporting and, in order to strengthen national capacity building and data collection processes, support the further integration of monitoring and reporting requirements that relate to forests but stem from different policy processes and international institutions.
- Reflect on the potential to promote SFM in a broader development context beyond forestry. A future arrangement should have a clearer notion both about managing forests for all forest values and about the role of forests at the broader landscape level and in the wider context of implementing the post-2015 development agenda and achieving the SDGs, and land use plans. However, this *also* requires that the institutional set-up and enabling policies at the country level allows such broader focus of SFM, which includes the need for higher level public support across sectors.

61-04 **Two central functions of a post-2015 IAF.** A post-2015 IAF should clearly, seamlessly and synergistically deliver on two central functions:

(i) Securing effective **stewardship of forests**<sup>115</sup> in the global sustainable development agenda at the “policy-making level”, where forest conservation, forest management and combating deforestation are seen as part of larger landscape management and intrinsically connected with other policy areas, such as climate change and adaptation, disaster risk reduction, agriculture, water, biodiversity, fishery, hunting and gathering, mining and tourism, to name just a few. This role implies some coordination of global forest policy-making not only with other forest processes (despite the considerable existing institutional fragmentation) but also with other natural resource utilization sectors. Success in this will require attention also to be given in the forests agenda to such issues as responsible trade and sustainable production and consumption patterns. This function directly addresses one element of the purpose of the IAF defined by ECOSOC in 2000, namely: “to provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development” and the principal functions relating to facilitating implementation of forest related agreements.

(ii) Being the “**umbrella/coordination/global framework**” **promoting and facilitating sustainable management of all types of the world’s forests.** This function addresses another inter-connected element of the purpose, namely “*promoting the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels*”. This also includes an “umbrella” role for all international forest organizations and structures. A post-2015 IAF should provide a forum for coordination of the numerous initiatives; for the development of the international definition of and guidelines that relate to SFM, (including C&I etc.); and for valuing forest products and services. Managing forests sustainably lies in the hands of countries and the people who depend on forests for their wellbeing. An effective IAF however can provide a suitable environment for knowledge and technology transfer and sharing, as well as trade, and can generate the necessary means of implementation to achieve SFM. The ultimate responsibility for SFM, however, lies in the countries and in the hands of stakeholders who own and use them at the national level.

61-05 **Establish a cross-sectoral perspective as a key function for a post-2015 IAF.** As 31% of the Earth’s land area is covered by forests, and another 15% of lands outside forests have a tree cover of more than 10%, forests and forestry-centered work are a cornerstone to managing the world’s landscapes and using its natural resources. The IAF as implemented thus far has not succeeded in linking a genuine cross-sectoral perspective with broader developmental goals. The global discourse on development and environment is moving towards more integrated management of landscapes, ecosystems and resources, including forests within them. This opens up opportunities, but also requires a recasting of the work on

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<sup>115</sup> Stewardship of forests is defined in the Definitions section of this Report.

forests and forestry to link better with other resource sectors. Pursuing the age-old economic, environmental and social roles of forests is possible while also placing their management in a truly cross-sectoral context: recognising contributions to managing climate change, food security, water, energy, raw material needs, poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction and rural development. It is in this way that forests can fully satisfy expectations of UN Member States and the global community under the post-2015 developmental agenda. Thus, the importance of a real “stewardship role for forests” should particularly be emphasized.

**61-06 *Take on topical challenges for a post-2015 IAF regime.*** A post-2015 IAF needs to evolve into a coherent and effective set of components that (re)gains political legitimacy so that it can efficiently and effectively coordinate and implement responses to the priority global forest challenges and the globally relevant processes and initiatives dealing with forest-related development and the environment in which it takes place. As referred to several times in this Report, the extreme fragmentation of organizations and processes dealing with forests in international economic, environmental and development policy-making processes and legal instruments has led to some confusion, overlap and duplication in the ways in which forests are conserved, managed and used, and has also triggered a considerable amount of contradiction in policy objectives. Fragmentation has grown from the fact that each major international agreement and institution sees forests largely or only from its own angle (WTO as traded commodities; UNFCCC as carbon sinks; CBD as biodiversity hotspots; RAMSAR in connection with wetlands; CITES as sector with threatened species that are being managed irresponsibly; UN-REDD as a GHG mitigation mechanism, etc.).

Such fragmentation has lost sight of common sense, apart from failing to comply with a number of basic principles agreed in the Forest Principles of 1992 and the Forest Instrument of 2007, especially in regard to the overall aims of SFM. Even among CPF members, there has been confusion, overlap and duplication – sometimes nearly conflict of ideas and beliefs - over the past years since CPF was established in 2001. There is also an obvious lack of effective implementation of agreed (national) C&I for SFM in many UN member countries. The various global forest assessment reports (FAO-FRA, ITTO-STFM, UNECE/FAO and others) underline the fact that the loss of forests in quality and quantity is continuing notwithstanding the fact that there is some observed reversal in these trends. A clear challenge for the post-2015 IAF regime is not simply to repeat what is already set out in the FI and the GOFs, but to tackle issues that have not yet been sufficiently taken into consideration when dealing with SFM, such as:

- *Recognition that cases exist when it is legitimate to clear forests in favour of alternative land uses:* the key is to define such circumstances and also to clarify when clearing is unnecessary, undesirable and in many cases illegal. Stopping illegal deforestation and forest degradation is clearly in the interest of all countries. Legal deforestation, however, can be debated. The question in the case of justifiable deforestation is whether there are better ways of achieving the national development objectives that lead to the deforestation; and also to what extent initiatives that are undertaken outside the forest sector, including technology transfer in agriculture and energy, could have a positive spin on keeping existing forests intact;
- *While forests can cushion against climate change, they are also vulnerable:* as forests suffer, so will the forest-dependent social and economic systems that depend upon them. Thus, while pursuing the roles of forests and SFM in mitigating climate-based risks (including the role of SFM in disaster risk reduction), attention should also go to the vulnerabilities of the forests themselves;
- *Given that forest products (fibres) are renewable, the forest community should cease to be timid about promoting greater use of forest products in economic life:* Far more energy-intensive, far less renewable products are being touted as “green”, but the voice of the forest community is muted in

adapting lifestyles and construction etc. practices for a green economy. A particular role here can be played by fast-growing plantations, planted forests, trees outside the forest within agricultural landscapes and silvicultural management of natural forests (through “guided natural regeneration”).

**61-07 *Strategic and adaptive planning and inclusiveness of the post-2015 IAF.*** A post-2015 IAF should embrace strategic planning processes instead of following a static agenda-setting process. It should embark on new policy instruments to strengthen implementation aspects, and be inclusive in the sense that existing objectives and associated targets are met:

- “New topics” as presented above and not dealt with in the present UNFF-context provide important candidates for inclusion in the agendas of the post-2015 IAF. Planning should involve *strategic thinking* and recognition that change is permanent – it should be more realistic, practicable and adaptive, with a clear focus on implementing SFM, and should clearly specify the mechanisms and resources needed for a successful implementation exercise over an agreed timeframe. While not losing sight of historical achievements and the need for a long-term vision, no inflexible long-term work plans (such as a new “MYPOW 2015-2030”) should be developed, but there should be a policy of adaptive planning, which takes account of the dynamics of emerging and growing challenges as they arise. UNFF could agree to the initial framework and elements of a strategic plan, including the setting of priorities.
- The post-2015 IAF also needs to show enthusiasm (rather than grudging acceptance) in embracing new policy instruments related to conserving and managing forests on a sustainable basis, such as REDD+ (in particular the readiness approaches), the integration of forests in NAMAs, adaptation plans and other national development planning mechanisms, the FLEG/FLEGT processes promoted by a variety of countries and institutions, the various initiatives that set forests in a landscape context, and national forest programmes and plans. These initiatives should be implemented in the context of a green economy vision and with the basics of governance and environmental justice under-pinning them.
- Last but not least a post-2015 IAF also needs to address and arrange to interface with objectives and targets already formulated besides the GOFs, including the Aichi targets of the CBD, the Bonn challenges and the upcoming targets set for the SDGs. Particularly at the level of the SDGs, the scope of goals, targets and indicators will have direct influence on forest governance, for example in, addressing the growing concern in respect of property rights, with such issues as legitimizing local (community) forest management approaches, secured tenure on forests or converting traditional forest and land rights to modern legal rights.

**61-08 *Strengthen the science-policy-implementation interface to gain a better leverage on scientific and technical information on forests in global policy frameworks.*** Under the current arrangement, the voluntary CPF has not been as effective as it could have been in scientifically and technically driving the UNFF agenda to provide more concrete outputs. As the chair of CPF, FAO is set up ideally to promote the interface of forests with other land cluster sectors, especially agriculture; however, it has missed some significant opportunities in this regard and often displays a tendency for its own forestry department to be marginalised in the institution. To strengthen the science-policy-implementation interface, the post-2015 IAF should reach beyond the forestry community to get the attention of policy-makers, media and the general public about what is at risk and to support implementation arrangements.

Scientific assessments and learning from practical arrangements, as well as sharing and brokering knowledge about technical and local developments (both existing and new ones), should be central

aspects of a new arrangement. Also, financing and funding innovations and mechanisms need to be researched in more depth. Such an interface could be supported through a more structured and results-based UN-facilitated “inter-agency network/task force/facility/organization” instead of the current “coalition of the willing and the reluctant” which the CPF appears to be. Organizations that can further support such an interface include those members of the CPF that are proactive in global forest and forest related policymaking processes as well as research organizations, think-tanks and developmental bodies dealing with forests, landscapes and related aspects. Such a new interface can draw lessons from existing arrangements already in place such as the IPCC, the CGIAR network, UN-Water, GFEP/IUFRO, “ThinkForests”<sup>116</sup> and others. It can also learn from the modalities of the international arrangements such as IPBES and UN-REDD. Furthermore, scientists (from both the natural and social sciences) and practitioners (technical personnel, people with local/indigenous knowledge, forest owners etc.) would be engaged to interact with policy-makers.

**61-09 Strengthen formal linkages with regional (and thematic) initiatives that relate to forests.** There are several strong regional processes and initiatives relating to forests that play a considerable role in global forest policy decision making, although they vary in their overall strategic objectives. For example, the meetings of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forests and the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings on forests concentrate especially on aspects of climate change and biodiversity and community-based forest management; and the forest ministers in the Forest Europe process initiated a (complex) negotiation process to prepare a legally binding agreement for forests in Europe (see also §57-07). In the African region there is the conference of Ministers in Charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC) and in the Latin American and Caribbean region, the Amazonian Cooperation Treaty (ACTO). At a technical level there are several processes with considerable experience in particular technical issues, such as data collection, forest-related information, data base and online management, C&I formulation, including the Montreal Process, Forest Europe, the UNECE Forest and Timber Committee for Europe and Northern America, the African Forest Forum (AFF), the ASEAN Social Forestry Network, the boreal forest initiatives and the six Regional Forestry Commissions and statutory technical committees (established by FAO over the past 50 years). All these processes and initiatives provide an opportunity in each region to meet and to address the most important forestry issues, both political and technical.

As the analysis in chapter 5.5 suggests, regional processes and mechanisms may well have better chances of success, when compared with the global processes, in garnering a much higher-level of political commitment of countries. A large number of regional forest-related initiatives and processes exist already and they generally do their work without any major stimulus from UNFF. While some apply UNFF agreements at the regional level, fitting them into their contexts, this does not happen in a systematic manner. A stronger institutional interlinkage of those forest-related regional initiatives and processes with an effective global body would considerably raise the profile of regional processes and mechanisms. In addition, an exchange of experiences across regions (both with successful and unsuccessful examples<sup>117</sup>) would also foster an implementation-oriented approach to global forest policy objectives. This means in particular that:

- Implementation activities at the regional as well as at country levels are more likely to be taken seriously as regions are expected to promote those policy topics where countries have already

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<sup>116</sup> A high-level discussion and information-sharing forum installed by the European Forest Institute that provides an active science-policy interface and fosters a science-policy dialogue on strategic forest-related issues. [http://www.thinkforest.efi.int/portal/about\\_thinkforest/](http://www.thinkforest.efi.int/portal/about_thinkforest/)

<sup>117</sup> Most often so-called best practices are shared, but actually policy learning also works with unsuccessful implementation cases, as these help in avoiding future mistakes. Seen from a scientific perspective best-practice cases suffer from a selection bias.

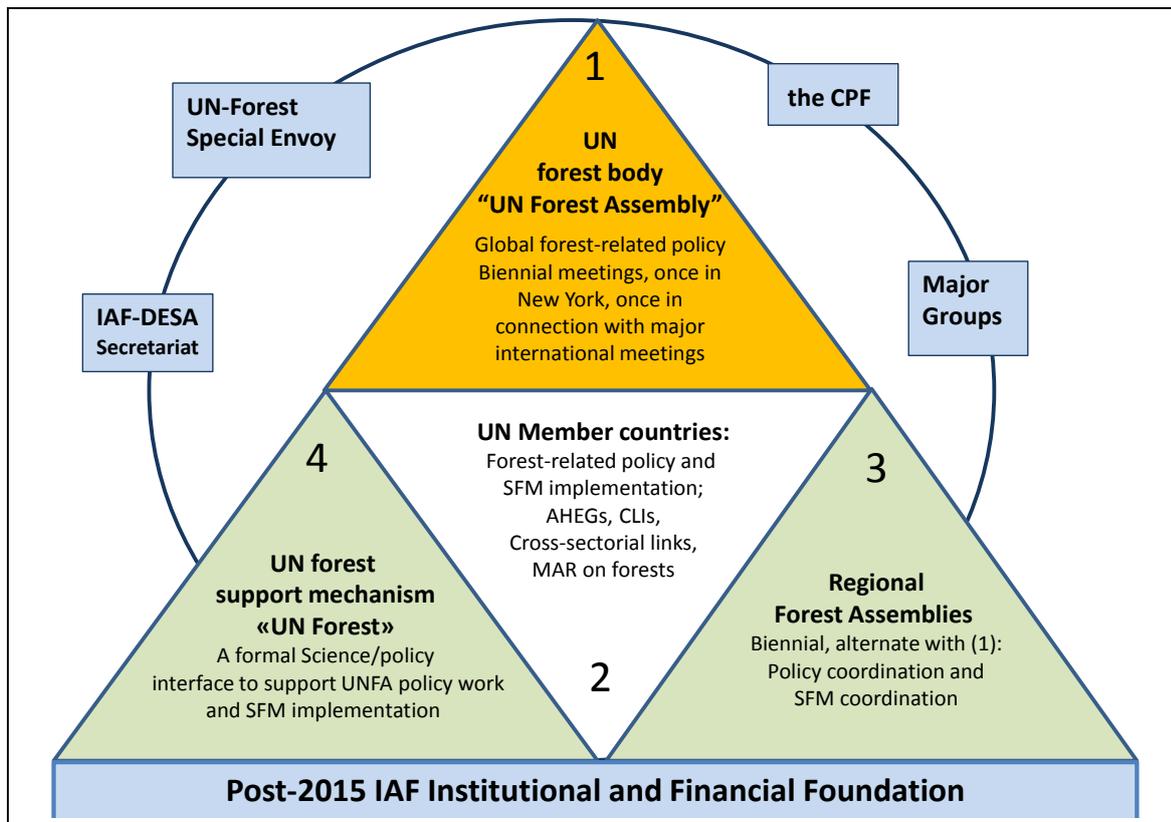
gained some positive experiences. It can thus be expected that a stronger institutional linkage between global and regional levels would contribute to increased SFM implementation.

- Political awareness and topical ownership are anticipated to be higher at the regional level. Furthermore, entrenched administrative traditions and political ideologies are expected to have a lower impact on successful implementation within any particular region. Linking regional processes to each other has the potential to create a different dynamic in the global forest-making process as regional topics can be uploaded and compared through the sharing of experiences and as global ideas are translated to the regional level. Thus a more “regional approach” in supporting a global forest policy process is envisaged.

61-10 ***Building Blocks for a strengthened post-2015 IAF.*** A post-2015 IAF must be built upon some well-defined building blocks that together form a forest governance platform. This entails a coordination mechanism taking on an umbrella function for all forest related initiatives at global and regional levels. It is proposed to have:

- (1) a “UN Forest Assembly”;
- (2) All Member countries that have committed to SFM and to the stewardship on forests in the broader development agenda;
- (3) “Regional Forest Assemblies” that comprise UN member countries as main decision-takers at both levels; and
- (4) a strong platform as science/policy/implementation interface, named the “UN Forest organization/facility/ task force/ platform”.

These building blocks can be articulated in different ways and their roles can be negotiated by the countries so that the post-2015 IAF can have either a simple coordination role for international forest initiatives or a stronger role that influences and promotes legal commitments and forest targets. Such building blocks would be influenced and supported by various institutional support elements, including a strengthened “UNFA-DESA” Secretariat for post-2015 IAF equipped with the increased human and financial resources compared to the current resource level of UNFFS, a senior person of global standing to fulfil the role of Special Envoy for Forests, the CPF as a wider voluntary platform and Major Groups. Figure 3 schematically presents the four building blocks for a future IAF. The various articulations of these building blocks are described in the options presented in Chapter 6.2.



**Figure 3: Building blocks for a strengthened post-2015 IAF and institutional support elements<sup>118</sup>.**

(1) A Global “UN Forest Assembly (UNFA)” under ECOSOC with universal membership that biennially<sup>119</sup> brings together Member States committed to SFM, Rio-Conventions and other related conventions, regional organisations, as well as CPF members, Major Groups, major global forest initiatives and other interested parties to discuss global policy issues related to the role of forests in the post-2015 development agenda and also receive reports on SFM implementation at the national level;

(2) All (UN) Member countries and specialized agencies that have committed to SFM and to the stewardship on forests in the broader development agenda;

(3) Convening of biennial regional meetings to feed into UNFA, organized with support of regional and subregional partners. Regional Forest meetings should have broad participation, including Major Groups; regional can also be interpreted in a broader thematic context, e.g. Montreal Process for temperate and boreal forest issues; ITTO for tropical forest issues; Teheran Process for low forest cover countries; the Alliance for Small Island States (AOSIS); and Forest Europe.

(4) A Science-policy-implementation body named here “UN Forests” that has the best available expertise to monitor landscape level planning and deforestation, develops and monitors C&I for SFM and develops science and technology for new and emerging issues in managing existing forests, reforestation and agroforestry. UN Forests would be in charge of scientific assessments (such as GFEP) and potential review processes; it would also study SFM implementation activities. This Facility would comprise CPF organizations that wished to engage, research institutions and think tanks.

<sup>118</sup> For further details refer to chapter 6.2

<sup>119</sup> The future IAF might discuss whether there is justification for meeting so frequently at a global level. An alternative could be to meet in inter-sessional regional meetings in between to prepare substantive inputs.

To support the building blocks, there would be:

- An adapted CPF continues to exist as a voluntary coordination body between those agencies that promote SFM.
- A strengthened UNFA Secretariat attached to DESA *inter alia* supports coordination and organization of UNFA.
- A Special Envoy on Forests, appointed by the Secretary-General of the UN raises the political commitment and profile of forests in the broader development agenda.
- Major Groups and other stakeholders e.g. philanthropic foundations support the deliberation of the UNFA, e.g., through the organization of a high-level minister segment meeting with major business partners of global companies and social and environmental NGOs (“a World Economic and Social Forum on Forests”), both at the global and regional levels. Major Groups also interact with UN Forest through a formal arrangement.

Furthermore, an efficient post-2015 IAF will require strong institutional and financial foundations.

61-11 **Current IAF and post-2015 IAF.** A comparison between the current IAF and the proposed new building blocks for a post-2015 IAF is provided in Table 8.

**Table 8: IAF “current building blocks” and proposed new building blocks for a post-2015 IAF**

| IAF Descriptor                                      | IAF 2000-2015   | Post-2015 IAF  |
|---|---|--|
| UNFF (including AHEGs etc.)                         | “Forum” for debating forest policy SFM issues globally.   | “Assembly” as an umbrella of international initiatives and agreements relating to forests  |
| UN member countries (including CLIs)                | Countries that actively participate in the UNFF   | Countries that actively participate in the UNFA [or its equivalent under other options]  |
| CPF   | Voluntary partnership to inform and technically guide the UNFF (and support SFM implementation) | Voluntary partnership that supports the UNFA and members with regard to initiatives that concern forests and SFM   |
| Regional level (including regional-led initiatives) | Coordination and information exchange, RLI  | Assemblies of varying formality (UN region level) to deliberate on regional issues relating to forest policy and SFM; produce regional policy inputs to UNFA and encourage implementation in countries of respective regions |
| UNFF Secretariat                                    | Service UNFF<br>Support the IAF overall   | Service UNFA. Supports IAF overall; Particularly support intra-UN coordination and the objective of “stewardship of forests” and linking to other major UN processes   |
| Major Groups (including MGIs)                       | Inform UNFF and global forest policy processes  | Input to UNFA and regional processes, participate in UN-Forest   |
| UN Forest   | -   | Formal and structured science/ policy/ development platform consisting of interested current CPF members and other institutions supporting the post 2015 IAF   |
| Special Envoy on Forests                            | -   | Assumes link to HLPF/UNFA and other high-level platforms and give public face to global forest agenda in context of SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda  |

61-12 **Monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards objectives and targets as defined in a post-2015 IAF.** Through the IAF, seven globally agreed thematic areas have been defined to describe SFM at national and forest-management unit levels and these are aligned to the 7 criteria of SFM (presented in chapter 5.7) and so generally serve to structure global reporting formats on SFM. Several processes have fine-tuned the approach (e.g., ITTO C&I for tropical humid forest countries; Montreal process C&I for temperate and boreal forests; C&I for Europe, etc.) as appropriate for their region or group of ecosystems. Thus, although all UNFF member countries are committed to one or the other C&I systems and they follow the FRA reporting format it should be noted that a major obstacle to effective monitoring of SFM is the near lack of adequate indicators for the sixth (Socio-Economic Aspects of Forests) and seventh (Legal, Policy and Institutional Framework) thematic areas, where most IPF/IFF proposals for action and UNFF and Forest Instrument polices and measures are located.

Moreover, the future IAF will also need countries to develop and meet particular standards; although these standards are technical in nature and need to be developed exclusively at the national level, it may be useful to draw upon global level standards -set through the voluntary certification schemes (such as FSC and PEFC).

Monitoring, assessment and reporting will get more attention in the future under a number of other processes. REDD+ will definitely influence the MAR process in many developing countries through its specific reporting requirements for performance-based payments (US\$ per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>) and in delivering financial resources and capacity building for SFM. The potential integration of REDD+/SFM in the Green Climate Fund (still at an early stage of negotiation) might also set some specific standards for MAR.

Another process that can potentially inform the MAR process on forests in a post-2015 IAF is the assessment of biodiversity trends in forests under the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. The Team believes that widespread interest in improved MAR is a good example of where the future IAF process could take on a leading role for all forest-related data processes. It is not sensible to establish new structures for such a task, which under some of the umbrellas could be greatly influenced by desire to access finance.

## 6.2 Options for future arrangements on forests

62-01 **A post-2015 IAF should remain under the UN-DESA umbrella.** As proposed in the previous chapter, the post-2015 IAF should remain based at the UN under ECOSOC and serviced in secretariat terms by the UN-DESA. Under all options, the focus of the post 2015 IAF should be on two central functions elaborated in §61-04, namely:

- Securing effective stewardship of forests in the global sustainable development agenda at the policy-making level
- Being the umbrella/coordination/global framework, promoting and facilitating sustainable management of all types of the world's forests

To fulfil such an overall mandate, the Team considered a full range of ten options for the future IAF (as presented in Annex 2) and then refined these to focus in more depth on four options, building on the experience and implementation of the UNFF over the past 15 years, in addition to a “business as usual” Option 0.

Based on the history and experience of the IPF-IFF-UNFF continuum, it can be assumed that either a voluntary instrument, such as the Forest Instrument of 2007, or a treaty<sup>120</sup> for the sustainable management of all types of forests will be at the core of the post-2015 IAF. The examination of the 44 views and proposals on the future IAF, submitted by Member States for AHEG1 in January 2014, revealed that 18 countries favoured a legally binding instrument, while 17 supported the continuation of the current IAF, including the implementation of the non-legally binding Forest Instrument, and implying LBA in a more distant future. Three favoured a strengthened IAF with the non-legally binding Forest Instrument underpinned by regional conventions. Five countries as well as the European Union responded that, at the moment, they have not made up their minds yet and would like to first see the results of the AHEGs on the future IAF. One country did not provide a clear response. It is assumed however that the countries will be more precise in their views once they attend the meeting of AHEG-2.

### **Options for a post-2015 IAF that are based on the IFF/IPF/UNFF continuum**

62-03 **Building blocks.** This section presents a description of four possible options for the design of a post-2015 IAF based on the building blocks presented in Figure 3. Option 0 is not meant to be an option for a post-2015 IAF but rather describes the current *modus operandi* for comparative reasons. The elements for future institutional options (Option 1 - 4) can be changed in a modular way and may be developed as far as member countries can agree upon. Each building block can be articulated differently, as will be shown below. It will be up to the negotiations to determine how far countries are ready to embark on the more profound changes.

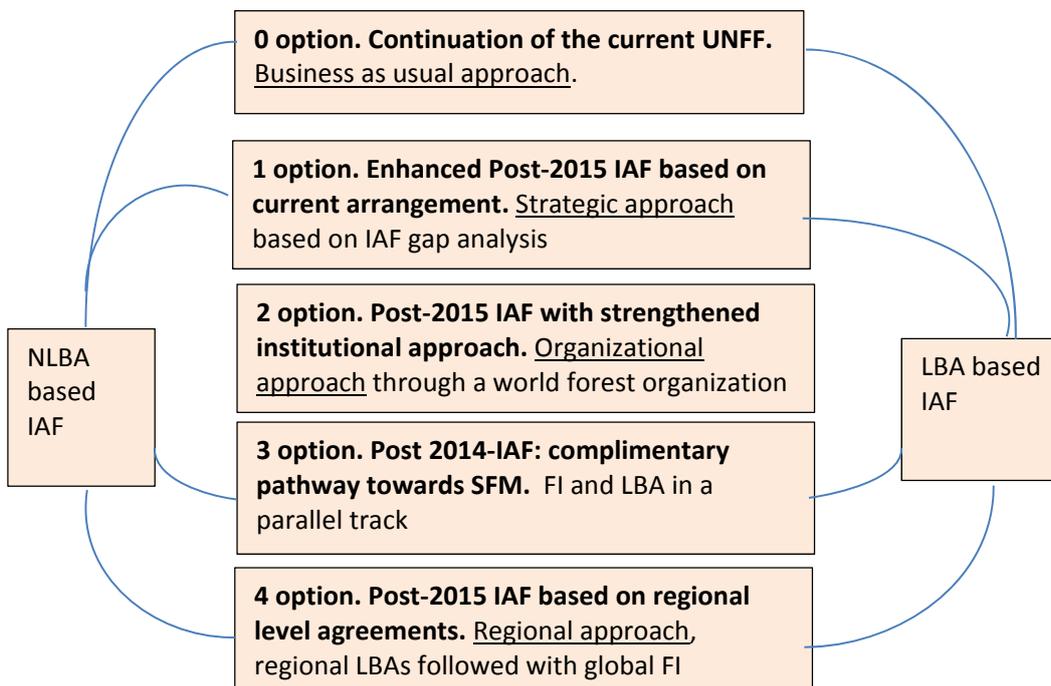
62-04 **Overview on the options.** At AHEG 1, the Team was urged to think outside the box in developing options for a future IAF. To help develop options, the building blocks were identified and these can be put together in a number of ways. To stimulate thinking about the range of possible approaches, this section presents the following four options that combine these building blocks in different ways, as well as “Option 0”. These four options are:

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<sup>120</sup> Treaty is used here instead of convention as it is a less specific and more general term

- **Option 1.** An enhanced post-2015 IAF that is based on current arrangements, but includes updating the Forest Instrument through an Addendum, the establishment of a UN Forest Assembly to succeed UNFF, with Regional Fora, the creation of UN Forest as a science-policy interface, the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Envoy on Forests. The enhanced post-2015 IAF also includes “UNFA-DESA” Secretariat equipped with the increased human and financial resources and the development and strengthening of the UN Trust Funds (including the establishment of a Strategic Trust Fund) (presented in 62-20).
- **Option 2.** This is more radical. As well as incorporating many of the elements of option 1, the concept of UN Forests is further developed to put forward the idea of a new institution/mechanism supporting global forest policy and SFM implementation.
- **Option 3.** This also builds on option 1, but in a different way. The concept presented here would offer Member States the option of making firmer, legally-binding, commitments to SFM – but only if they wish to do so – by having a parallel political track.
- **Option 4.** This includes regional level agreements, as a variant on option 3.

Elements from the different options can be combined, as appropriate. The four options are not mutually exclusive and many of the individual elements can be combined in other ways. The full range of options presented in Annex 2 could also make use of these building blocks. Figure 4 below illustrates these options, highlighting that all are possible with or without a universal legally binding agreement.



**Figure 4: Overview of the options proposed**

**Option 0: Continuation of the current UNFF (Business as before)**

62-05 **Continuation of the current UNFF<sup>121</sup>**. This option consists of the continuation and updating of the existing Forest Instrument and the institutional arrangements as established by ECOSOC resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49 on the current international arrangement on forests, such as:

- The UNFF with universal membership of all Member States of the United Nations and specialized agencies
- Existing arrangements within the UN system, particularly with ECOSOC and DESA
- High-level segments to invite ministers to take part in decision-making
- UNFF Secretariat as a division in DESA
- UNFF Bureau with members for the five world regions
- The existing UNFF Trust Fund managed by the UNFF Secretariat and Technical Cooperation Trust Fund managed by DESA
- The Voluntary Collaborative Partnership on Forests currently and since creation chaired by FAO
- Informal participation of interested regional organizations and intergovernmental organizations supporting the work of the Forum
- Ad hoc link to regional organisations and processes
- Major Groups participating in the sessions of the Forum
- A Multi-year programme of work which is based on the Forest Instrument (slightly updated) and its four Global Objectives on Forests
- Multi-stakeholder dialogues to provide a more formal forum for exchange for stakeholders and UN member countries.

Figure 2 summarizes this option graphically.

In the questionnaire sent to all member countries prior to AHEG 1, none of the countries that have responded expressed a willingness to continue with the current arrangements.

62-06 **Only cosmetic changes are needed if Option 0 is pursued**. For the continuation of an UNFF with its current arrangements, only a number of cosmetic changes need to be undertaken, including *inter alia* some updating of the Forest Instrument in respect to the time frame of validity of the GOFs, references to the MDGs/SDGs and the development of a new MYPOW. UNFF with its Bureau would continue as a Forum to produce aspirational statements to obtain consensus from the majority of member countries. CPF would continue to work as a voluntary partnership and produce statements and documents as requested or deemed necessary without any means and commitment for implementation. The interactions with the regional level will continue in the current, *ad-hoc* and non-formal level.

62-07 **The IAF Team recommends against pursuing this option further**. Following this option would mean that Member States recognize their inability to raise the stature of global forest policy-making and to do better on SFM implementation. Based on the assessment in this Report, under the current arrangements UNFF has achieved limited progress in lifting the international profile of forests, in generating concerted international cooperation in relation to forest issues and in influencing national forest policies. With the current system being continued, there would be only a minimal opportunity to act as a steward for forests and to coordinate global, regional and intergovernmental programmes on forests. For example there might be a presence in UN high level panels but without having any real

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<sup>121</sup> For the status of UNFF as a functional commissions see <http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/index.shtml>

influence; and some – but limited - visibility through special events (e.g. IYD). The major challenge of achieving the four GOFs and fulfilling the requirements of the Forest Instrument will not be attainable because the commitment of countries and means of implementation will remain insufficient. The current arrangement on forests is insufficiently empowered to face future challenges and has no arrangement to promote implementation. Thus, Option 0 should preferably not be pursued further.

**Option 1: Enhanced Post-2015 IAF based on current arrangements<sup>122</sup>**

62-08 **An enhanced post-2015 IAF.** This option is based on the pillars of the current arrangement, with some major modifications and additions that address the main shortfalls in the current arrangement, in particular the insufficient convening power of UNFF itself and the UNFF meetings, including the high-level segments; the low commitment of UN Member States and CPF members to the UNFF as well as representativeness of Major Groups; and the obvious gap between means of implementation and the objectives of the current arrangement. However, it is assumed that all parties engaged in the IAF, in particular UN Member States, are fully committed to the ideas and principles that are behind a post-2015 IAF. In this option, the four building blocks play a major role in an enhanced post-2015 IAF.

In terms of topics for development within a post-2015 arrangement the following aspects are relevant:

62-09 **Reaffirm and extend the Forest Instrument and its GOFs, taking into account developments since 2007, including the setting up of a time frame and visions for the future.** The Forest Instrument was developed based on long-standing forestry-centric deliberations since – and before - the establishment of the UNFF in 2000 (see chapter 5.4). The policy statements and action proposals of the Forest Instrument are still valid in the current context and they most probably will remain valid over the coming one or two decades as well. Thus, there is no need to reopen that text for a new negotiation in 2015. However, there have been a number of developments since 2007 within and outside the forest sector that had a large impact on forest conservation, management and use.

These include *inter alia*, naming some of the most important ones:

- the UNCSD Rio+20 results and follow up process;
- the formulation of the global SDGs with targets;
- the development of a Nagoya protocol;
- the formulation of the Aichi targets;
- the development of a reporting architecture on forests based on globally agreed C&I for SFM;
- the new ITTA 2012;
- the developments in the context of REDD+ and the development of forest-based NAMAs;
- the decentralization of forest governance and responsibility for SFM with 5 CLIs hold between 2006 and Feb. 2015 (the latest is still scheduled in China);
- the ongoing processes that sets forests as a part of functional landscapes, restoration of degraded forest land and development of trees in landscapes, including agroforestry;
- the advancements of various regional groupings focusing on specific topics (e.g. mountain forest, urban and peri-urban forests; low forest cover countries; and SIDS);
- various actions and laws combatting illegal logging and controlling trade in illegal forest-based outputs, including FLEG and FLEGT;

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<sup>122</sup> Many of the observations made here are valid for all three options presented in Option 1 and will not be repeated in the other options.

- the various processes promoted or supported by the private sector and Environmental NGOs of forest development including forest/carbon certification and CER markets;
- the increasing demand for the raw material timber and fibre;
- forest technology developments that favour planted and secondary forest against high forest;
- the emergence of the green economy concept and initiatives such as Sustainably Energy for All;
- various High Level Political Fora that relate to forests and the ongoing development of a new climate agreement;
- The Green Climate Fund.

These developments need to be taken into consideration when formulating a new IAF for post-2015. Nonetheless, it is also important to have a time-frame and visions for the future of the Forest Instrument in mind, and this would need to be agreed upon, noting that the overall timeframe of the proposed SDGs is 2030.

**62-10 *Updating the Forest Instrument 2007.*** In order to maintain its relevance in the post-2015 period there is a need to modify the current FI in a number of sections and paragraphs, e.g. as follows:

- A chapeau paragraph could be added on the significance of the UNCSD Conference, and specifically the relevance of forests and the Forest Instrument highlighted in paragraphs 193 to 196 of *The future we want*.
- Paragraph 1 (b) should be modified to take into account that the MDGs will be replaced by the SDGs for the post-2015 period. The latter could also have targets related to forests that should also be taken into account.
- Paragraph 5 establishes that Member States should be working towards the achievement of the GOFs by 2015. As indicated above, there has been some progress towards the achievements of the four GOFs. The date for the achievement of the GOFs should be extended, preferably to 2030.
- Some countries at AHEG 1 said that targets for the GOFs could be included in an updated FI. It is also possible that upcoming forest-related targets for the SDGs should be linked to the GOFs.
- A clearer and stronger linkage between SFM and climate change should be emphasized (both in terms of adaptation and mitigation, in particular REDD+).
- Several countries feel that the official title of the instrument should not include the term “non-legally binding”. The rationale is that the term “non-legally binding” sends a negative message and that there is no commitment to implement the instrument. No other voluntary agreement in the field of environment and sustainable development utilizes “non-legally binding” in its title. Meantime there are a few non-binding international documents which include: *The Stockholm non-binding declaration* (1972), *Declaration on the right to development* (1986), *Legal principles for environmental protection and sustainable development* (1987), *UNEP* (1999), *Rio declaration on Environment and development* (1992), and the *Johannesburg Declaration on sustainable development* (2002).

Option 1 would simply involve developing text and updating the current document to make it compatible for the post-2015 period. The UNFF Bureau could provide a draft of the editorial changes and submit it to AHEG 2 for discussion.

**62-11 *Development of an Addendum to the Forest Instrument that addresses new developments since 2007.*** From an implementation angle, to address the issues linked to the various developments referred to above in §62-09, an Addendum to the Forest Instrument post-2015 could be agreed to by UNFF 11. Such an Addendum could define the role of forests in the sustainable development agenda and in particular the role of forest stewardship in a broader development landscape including the chapeau level

that a future IAF could encompass at the global forest policy level. Indicative targets and indicators for implementation of actions could be specified and issues relating to the enabling environment for SFM and cross-sectoral coordination be specified. The Forest Instrument (including its GOFs) could also be reviewed in light of the SDGs and targets (including but not limited to SDG15) and possibly enhanced with a global objective on enhancing the contribution of forests/SFM to the SDGs. Clear targets and indicators up to the year 2030 could be added. Also, the linkages between the FI and its GOFs and the SDG targets could be clarified by such a document. Such an Addendum would need a good preparation, with the support of the CPF and preparative work by the Secretariat.

**62-12 Organizational structure for an enhanced post-2015 IAF.** Based on the breadth and depth of the proposed Addendum to the Forest Instrument, a strengthened IAF could address some of the proposals that came out of the analysis of the UNFF, as expressed in the building blocks for a future IAF. These include the strengthening of the regional level and a more formal inclusion of those CPF members that show a real interest in global forest policy-making through what is referred to in this Report as “the UN Forest”. Such a strengthened IAF would imply a stronger commitment for aligning research and science communities to the development of policy priorities in major forest initiatives and initiatives that affect forests. In addition, a concentration on issues that requires close coordination, such as streamlining reporting requirements on forest issues would be very effective.

**62-13 United Nations Forest Assembly (UNFA) (1)**<sup>123</sup>. To underpin the change and the intention to win back credibility, a strengthened IAF could imply a change in name and function of its main decision-making body. Figure 4 illustrates the option of a strengthened IAF under the so-called United Nations Forest Assembly (UNFA). A name change from “Forum” to “Assembly”<sup>124</sup> is proposed to signal the intention to elevate the UNFF to a broader and more inclusive level. Biennial meetings could alternate between New York (global UNFA meetings) and other locations in regions (regional UNFA meetings), if possible attached to a major international or regional event that relates to forests; both policy but also scientific events could be selected in order to allow for exchange, e.g. IUFRO and FAO world congresses, UNFCCC and CBD COPs, COFO, etc. UNFA would adopt a strategic planning process over a longer period of time, taking into account the SDGs and Post 2015 Development Agenda as well as Rio Conventions Strategic Plans and Strategies of CPF Members. The resulting strategic plan needs to be adaptive to important upcoming developments in the period of implementation that needs to be taken into account when managing forests. It should be linked with the Forest Instrument and the GOFs as well as the SDGs. The UNFA would be able to create specific sub-committees, e.g. an executive Sub-Committee on SFM Finance, and possibly others (e.g., on targets).

The UNFA would continue having a universal membership under ECOSOC and being serviced by a **Secretariat at DESA** which is located in the UN headquarters in New York. The Secretariat would be strengthened with the increased human and financial resources compared to the current resource level of UNFFS to help the UNFA assume its central functions relating to stewardship for forests and promoting implementation, with support of the Special Envoy on Forests, as well as substantive servicing of the UNFA and providing links to the HLPF and broader UN processes.

**62-14 Committed UN Member States to SFM (2).** There will be a need to secure political commitment at the highest level by presenting concrete results that clearly demonstrate the value and contribution of

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<sup>123</sup> Numbers refer to the building blocks as outlined in Figure 3.

<sup>124</sup> “Assembly” is defined here as a group of countries and institutions gathered together for a common reason

forests to the attainment of national development goals<sup>125</sup>. At UNFA, both at the global and regional levels, Member States would make a stronger commitment to connecting national targets to global ones, including through global-regional cooperation arrangements; this would mean linking the global forest policy assembly to regional ones. In this way, more actors would get involved, and regional aspects and international ones can be closer coordinated. Member States should also commit to national SFM targets, including the conservation and sustainable management of natural and semi-natural forests, reforestation and afforestation and contribution of trees in landscapes/urban areas according to their own interests and aspirations, for example through their NFPs, readiness plans for REDD+, Forest NAMAs, NAPAs or similar development plans that include forests. Countries will fully exercise their sovereign role to define those forested areas that should remain under permanent forest cover for a long period of time. Countries should consider if they would make use of their NFPs, including transforming static programs into active ones and integrating measures and activities and possible targets to be reached relating to their permanent forest estate; coordinate between NFPs and new programmes (such as readiness programs for REDD+, etc.) and use them for the implementation of the Forest Instrument and a possible new Addendum.

Coordination on the stewardship on forests in broader development agendas, including REDD+ and Aichi targets, with the overall goal of SFM at the member state level will be key. It also implies working in the context of national forest programs, including the use of multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms to exchange views and review the current status and the application of national safeguard policies as they relate to forests, REDD+, forest-based NAMAs, etc.

62-15 **Regional UNFA as a Policy Fora (3)**. The option of “an enhanced post-2015 IAF” implies biennial regional meetings (in the year when the global forum does not take place) in the form of a regional partnership forum on policy coordination and SFM implementation that makes recommendations to the UNFA global meeting. The five UN regions<sup>126</sup> and the regional economic commissions (established under the ECOSOC auspices) could act as the conveners of regional meetings that are organized through relevant regional and/or sub-regional organizations. Where appropriate, the meetings could be supported by or be associated with the existing FAO Regional Commissions and their regional secretariats. Regional meetings taking place would not require global attendance but only regional ones - they get feedback from the global level and in turn report back to the global level on the specifics most important for themselves. Also organizations and initiatives with a wider mandate, e.g., ITTO for tropical forest countries, the Montreal process countries, AFF, ACTO, CCAD, ASEAN and Forest Europe could act as conveners for such meetings. Major Groups, CPF members and regional processes that are interested on forest issues should extend support but not partake in governance of such regional coordination fora. Important will be to develop an agenda/strategic plan that addresses stewardship for forests (including issues relating to deforestation) and regional SFM approaches. At the regional level, countries can make commitments and set targets in respect to SFM or any other forest-related topic of regional and national relevance. They could also coordinate on means of implementation to achieve agreed upon goals.

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<sup>125</sup> See also FAO 2013: Implementing the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests. [www.fao.org/forest](http://www.fao.org/forest)

<sup>126</sup> UN Member States are divided in 5 regional regions/groups: the African Group, with 54 Member States; the Asia-Pacific Group, with 55 Member States; the Eastern European Group with 23 Member States; the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), with 33 Member States and the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), with 28 Member States, plus 1 member state as observer (as per July 2014).

62-16 **UN Forest<sup>127</sup> (4)**. UN Forest can be seen as a science/policy/implementation platform and a more formal arrangement than the current CPF to support a post-2015 arrangement on forests. It would be composed of those current CPF members that make a formal commitment to collaborate in UN Forest, as well as think tanks and scientists, Major Group representatives and private sector/philanthropic representatives, guided by a Governing Board to be defined by UNFA. UN Forest can take various organizational forms, including, *inter alia*,

- A stronger CPF/or successor with a more formal structure and a committed budget to carry out joint work;
- A facility or self-standing body based on models such as IPCC, IPBES, UN-Water (see Box 9) or UN-REDD.
- In whatever organizational format, UN Forest would need to be equipped with a Trust Fund (e.g., self-standing; a GEF window; a window on SFM/REDD+ in the Green Climate Fund, as well as resources, including in-kind personnel, from respective individual member organizations wishing to participate in UN Forest.

A central role of UN Forest would be to report to the UNFA on cross-sectoral challenges and opportunities and prepare scientific and technical recommendations to UNFA.

Several more specific arrangements can be taken to and improve organization and outputs. For example, sub-groups to UN Forest could take on the task of undertaking scientific assessments using scientists (both from biophysical and social science) and following the example of GFEP (IUFRO). They could provide assessment reports relating to topics that are of highest political attention or even provide assessment reports such as the IPCC that give comprehensive assessments on the global state of SFM (based on FRA, STFM, World Resources Institute assessments, etc). Especially if a large number of scientists and other eminent persons took part, this would add more value compared to the previous CPF and (if its reports are published in the same way as those of the IPCC), could also help generate much-needed media attention.

62-17 **Collaborative Partnership on Forests (or successor)**. The CPF, as a voluntary forum of major international organizations committed to forests and SFM should be adapted to better match the new ambitions of the IAF and to address identified weaknesses. Some CPF members will fulfill their role in UN Forest; others will only be engaged in CPF itself. CPF would meet according to its needs, at least once a year, in conjunction with the UNFA and a regional UNFA meeting. Coordination of the CPF is undertaken by the UNFA Secretariat and the chair of the CPF, who is recommended to be rotated among members. CPF has no provision of a permanent leadership by any of its 14 members. CPF would be affiliated to UN Forest and support its work programme. CPF would continue to promote the role of forests in the international development and environmental agendas, inform UNFA on its forest-related programmes, advance SFM implementation at the global level and assist regions and countries in their forest governance and SFM implementation. CPF should support the communication work of UNFA and help to develop and implement global forest policy in the framework of sustainable development. Executive heads of CPF member organizations that are not members of UN Forest should also be invited to attend the biennial UN Forest Assembly meetings.

62-18 **UNFA Secretariat in DESA**. The UNFA Secretariat would carry out the secretariat's function as a full functional division in DESA. This would guarantee a strong link to ECOSOC generally and to the HLPF

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<sup>127</sup> UN-Forest: the name is kept very general for the moment, and leans on the UN-Water example, though the latter is broader than a science/policy/implementation platform and comprises also a strong policy platform.

that replaced the CSD. The UNFA Secretariat would organize the UNFA meetings and would continue to be funded through regular UN Budget allocation; it would also manage the trust fund that supports participation of developing countries and Major Groups in all UNFA processes, as appropriate. It would be important to strengthen the UNFA Secretariat so that it is equipped with highly qualified staff and has additional human and financial resources (e.g. the following RB posts: one D2, minimum 1-2 D1s, 3-4 P5, 3-4 P4 and 3-5 P3 staff and adequate G-6 and G-7 posts), as well as secondments from governments and CPF member organizations. It would provide substantive secretariat support to the UNFA and its institutional set up.

The Secretariat would have a particular function to support the coordinative and stewardship role of forests in the broader sustainable development context within UN institutions. As such, it would support the advancement and integration of forests in the broader work of the UN system including through inter-departmental and organizational collaboration, involvement in international meetings and conferences in relation to forests, UNGA, ECOSOC as well as supporting the work of the proposed UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Forests. Another main function of the Secretariat would be to manage the Facilitative Process for financing and to service the possible Executive Committee of the UNFA on financing SFM (see also chapter 5.6).

#### Box 9: The example of UN-Water

UN-Water is the United Nations inter-agency coordination mechanism for all freshwater and sanitation related matters. UN-Water was formalized in 2003 by the United Nations High Level Committee on Programmes. It provides the platform to address the cross-cutting nature of water and maximize system-wide coherence of policies, planning and action especially for the purpose of implementing the water-related agenda defined by the Millennium Declaration and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Through UN-Water the United Nations acts as "One UN". The scope of UN-Water's work encompasses all aspects of freshwater, including surface and groundwater resources and the interface between fresh and sea water.

The main purpose of UN-Water is to complement and add value to existing programs and projects by facilitating synergies and joint efforts, so as to maximize effectiveness of the support provided to Member States agreed priorities including those they agreed upon under the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The revision of UN-Water in the light of the SDGs is ongoing.

Source: <http://www.unwater.org/about-us/en>

**62.19 UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Forests.** The Team recommends that the proposed UNFA should request the Secretary-General of the UN appoint a high level political person of high charisma to be the UN Special Envoy on Forests<sup>128</sup>. Supported by the President of the UNFA and the Director of the UNFA Secretariat, she/he would raise the political commitment and the profile of forests in general, forests in the SDGs and the UNCED Land Cluster worldwide, including *inter alia* through attending when necessary<sup>129</sup> the HLPF (see chapter 5.7) and the IAF's High Level Segment, Governing Bodies of the UN-

<sup>128</sup> Alternatively, a small team of "special envoys" could be formed, e.g. one from each UN region to strengthen regional policy dialog and to increase credibility at regional level.

<sup>129</sup> A position like this is easily devalued if the envoy is seen very often at every mundane or bureaucratic meeting.

Forest member organizations including Conferences of the Parties of the Rio Conventions. Furthermore, the following tasks could be assigned sparingly to this high level person:

- Holding meetings with the chairs/presidents of the governing bodies and the executive heads of the UN Forests member organizations, the President of the HLPF, the Presidents of the General Assembly and the ECOSOC, as well as the Chief Executive Officers of the multilateral and regional funding institutions, banks, private sector companies and foundations in order to raise awareness for forests and forest-related aspects and means of implementation;
- Raising an advocacy campaign to mobilize funding for SFM, in particular, private sources of funding in collaboration and cooperation with governments, the private sector and philanthropic organizations, among others;
- Bringing to the attention of UN Member States the key challenges and emerging issues of importance for forests;
- Paving the way for policy work of the UNFA through building consensus on matters of significant divergence among UN Member States and interested stakeholders.

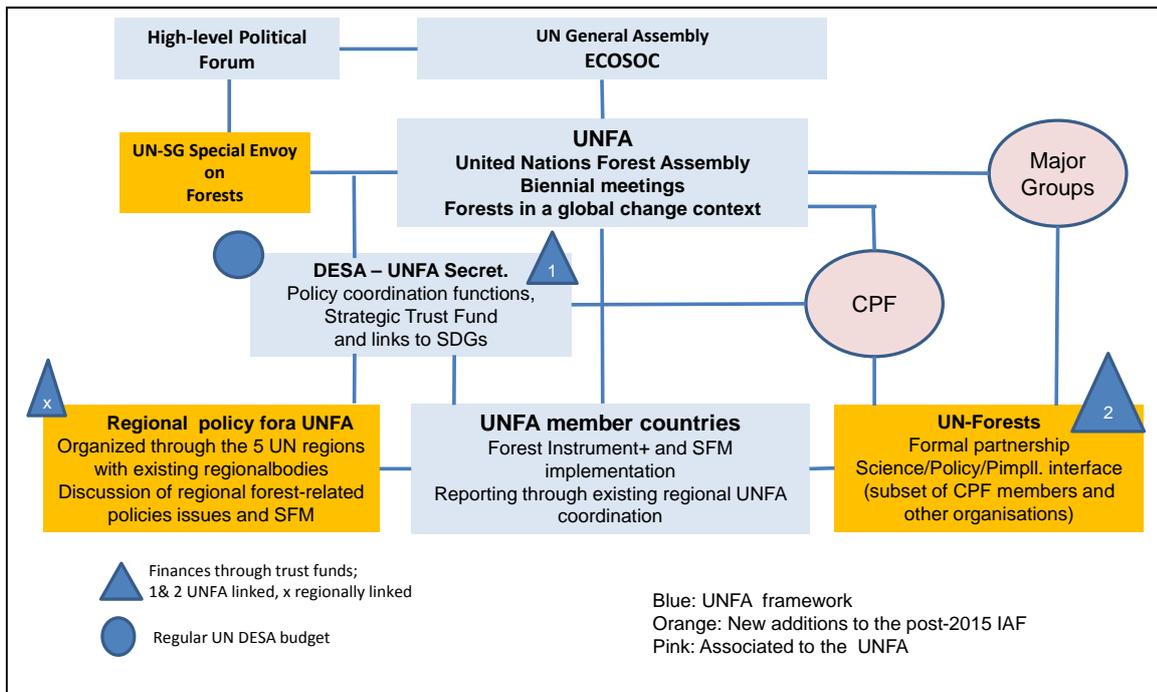


Figure 5: Option 1: Enhanced post-2015 IAF. Explanations see text

62-20 **Development of UNFA trust funds.** The Team recommends that three trust funds are established under this option: two that are operational and one is strategic. Funding for the three trust funds could come from bilateral cooperation, basket funding (e.g. the SFM window of GEF, and possibly GCF) and other sources, including private sector and philanthropic sources. Reports on the management and status of the three trust funds would be provided to the UNFA on a biennial basis.

The first operational trust fund already exists and supports the functioning of the UNFA processes, including participation of developing country participants and extra-budgetary funded staff posts in the UNFA Secretariat. It would require around US\$ 3-4 million per year and would be managed by the UNFA

Secretariat, to operationally support the work of the post-2015 IAF; support participation and work of developing country representatives and Major Groups in all relevant work of the UNFA, as appropriate; and support UNFA Secretariat level costs for AHEGs and other activities.

The second operational trust fund would have to be established to support the work of the UN Forest, including the costs of participants and secretariat services. It would require around US\$ 10-15 million per year to assist planning and implementation of the UNFA strategic work plan; and to realize a science/policy/implementation interface, including scientific assessment work and capacity building for the UNFA and the stakeholders in UNFA member countries. This trust fund should be complemented by funding allocated by UN-Forest member organizations.

The strategic trust fund would be for catalyzing the implementation of the Forest Instrument at the national and regional levels. To be effective, the UNFA Strategic Trust Fund would need funding in the order of US\$20 million per year.

62-21 **Major Groups.** Major groups will need to improve communication on global forest policy within their broad networks in order to become more inclusive and relevant in a future post-2015 IAF and include all interested members of their constituency. It is essential that in future both commercial and non-profit organisations take part in the work of the IAF. For example, this could be accomplished through the organization at IAF ministerial segment sessions of meetings with major business companies and social and environmental NGOs (“a World Economic, Social and Environmental Forum on Forests”). Both at the global and regional levels solutions could be identified and addressed and cooperate solutions proposed. Major Groups should participate in the UNFA at the global level and at the regional UNFA meetings. Major Groups should also participate in the UN Forest governing structure and be engaged in selected science/policy/implementation work and capacity building.

62-22 **Development of a Strategic Plan.** A long-term strategic plan should be developed to guide and focus the work of the IAF over the overall timeframe of the SDGs (2030). The plan would be operationalized through multi-year work plans focused on priority actions. The plan would be reviewed on a rolling basis at each UNFA session and adapted if needed to respond to changing conditions and emerging issues.

### ***Option 2: Post-2015 IAF with strengthened institutional approach***

62-23 **A new institution/mechanism supporting global forest policy and SFM implementation.** As with Option 1, this option is based on the pillars of the current arrangement, including the FI and a possible Addendum to it. Many of the elements in Option 1 are also valid for option 2, in particular the existence of a policy forum (UNFA) serviced by a Secretariat in DESA, a strong regional policy framework, the UN Special Envoy on Forests and a science-policy-implementation arm that supports the global forest policy process. The big difference to option 2 is a focus on a **strong self-standing UN institution** in charge of the science-policy-implementation interface with a mandate to generate knowledge, independently inform forest policy making and support implementation of SFM. Such a new institution would strongly focus the important, cross-sectoral dimension of forests in the sustainable development process.

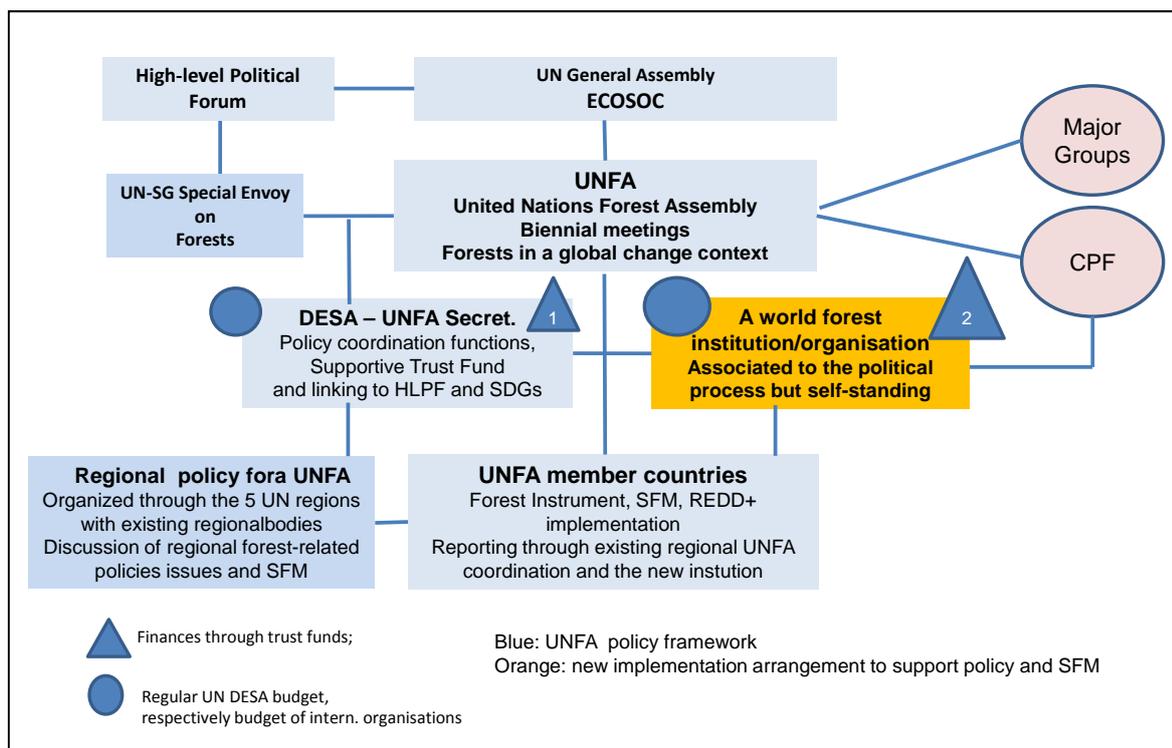
62-24 **Rationale for the creation of a new institution/mechanism.** There are several reasons that could justify a deeper analysis on the creation of a self-standing, world forest institution They include the

current weakness in orientation and leadership of most of the existing forest-related institutions as outlined in several parts of this report; the high level of competition for resources that exist between the existing international organisations for influence and standing; and the lack of an authoritative foundation that could guarantee that monitoring, assessment and reporting on forests are regarded as legitimate.

62-25 ***What mandate for a new forest institution.*** A new institution would work with a new dynamic and act as a leader for improving the conditions of all types of forests and the livelihoods of the people living from these resources. It would undertake network management at a global level and acknowledge that regional and non-governmental processes have provided critical pathways for overcoming stalled international negotiations. It could be the authority that can endorse MAR and support stewardship of forests and SFM within existing development and environmental policies and processes. Emphasis needs to be given to the engagement with other actors outside the professional forestry community and openness to other discourses is necessary if SFM is to serve a coordinating function with other sectors in support of all forest values. Thus, the institution would take a large part of the responsibility of coordinating forest-related activities and strengthening cross-sectoral communication and collaboration among the full range of actors who are driving global change.

62-26 ***Possible arrangements through the creation of a new institution.*** Option 2 is based on the building blocks presented in Figure 3. The science-policy-implementation body would be fulfilled by the new institution that it would be associated to, but organizationally separate from the high-level negotiation body (UNFA). The mandate of such a “world forest institution/organisation” would be centered on generating knowledge and capacities to strengthen SFM through effective stakeholder engagement. It would have a specific mandate to operationalize a wider programme on SFM by bringing together under the same umbrella some of the major forest-based initiatives, e.g., supporting a common approach for REDD+ readiness and implementation, forest-based NAMA design and implementation, FLEG/FLEGT processes and broader analytical work on SFM. As an organisation it could grow out of the existing “forest-centered” institutions of the CPF, FAO-Forestry, ITTO, CIFOR, IUFRO, GEF and UNEP, to name a few, associated with some of the major think tanks international on forestry (WRI-Global Forest Watch, IUCN and WWF Forest Programmes, IUFRO/GFEP, and others). A world forest institution should be developed in a way that it establishes itself as a knowledge authority that is highly regarded in all major international forums. Such an institution needs to move beyond the boundaries of forestry and embrace the role of forests and trees at the landscape level. The new institution should be formally associated to the UNFA in several ways: the organisation would feed the policy processes at the global and regional levels with relevant analytical work; it would organize, summarize and publish reports on forests and SFM; and it would receive mandates from UNFA and UN member countries to oversee and support upfront and mainstream investments to achieve SFM.

Figure 6 summarizes option 2 graphically.



**Figure 6: Option 2: Post-2015 IAF with strengthened institutional approach**

62-27 **Modalities to create a new institution.** The creation of a strong and authoritative institution to fulfill the science/policy/implementation interface would raise many questions. A key initial question relates to the willingness of existing forest institutions to embark upon this new endeavor, truly cooperate and support this innovative approach. It would be necessary for the existing organisations to work together on the strategic approach to, and mandate of, such a new institution.

The second main question relates to funding. The institution should be dealing with defined and commissioned strategic work, including forest assessments, MAR and should not be based on project/programme funding. Innovation would be needed in respect to financing, e.g., to explore the potential of a dedicated funding through the Green Climate Fund or a new fund nourished by the forest and fiber industry, carbon taxes, etc.

**Option 3: Post 2015-IAF: complementary political pathway towards SFM**

62-28 **Simultaneous and complementary implementation of the Forest Instrument and a treaty on SFM of all types of forests.** Option 3 also builds on option 1. It offers Member States the option to pursue the Forest Instrument and the GOFs as negotiated, but also gives the choice to those Member States that want to take firmer commitments for achieving SFM. The option proposed includes a parallel political track for Member States that voluntarily commit to the Forest Instrument and for Member States that commit to a legally-binding treaty with country-based targets to achieve SFM for all forest values.

In this option, both the Forest Instrument and a treaty to be negotiated would be maintained and implemented in the post-2015 IAF (2015-2030), which would have the added advantage of keeping all

Member States, both those favoring a legally-binding treaty and those favoring a non-legally binding instrument, at the same table to address pressing and emerging issues affecting SFM. Even if it is decided to negotiate a convention, it can be expected that from the time negotiations commence and the treaty enters into force probably three years or more will have passed. In the interim, all Member States would continue to voluntarily implement the Forest Instrument. Once the convention enters into force, complementary programmes of work for both the convention and the Forest Instrument can be adopted. In such an arrangement, the UNFF/UNFA Secretariat could serve as the joint secretariat for both interlinked processes<sup>130</sup>.

62-29 **Two parallel tracks for the post-2015 IAF.** In this option a less ambitious *IAF Global Policy Forum*-type of biannual meeting would be organized with all Member States (e.g. for one week), followed by a meeting of the parties of the treaty (second week). In the first week, the session could address inter alia:

- Regional and national reporting on emerging and/or pressing issues in policies that affect forests and SFM;
- The status of implementation of the Forest Instrument and the GOFs;
- Sharing information and lessons learned from international processes (coordination) and of on specific thematic areas by Member States;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue; and
- A related ministerial segment, among others, with the participation of the heads of major forest-related international organizations.

The sessions of the *IAF/Global Policy Forum* would be more technical and policy oriented, which several countries have been calling for since UNFF 5, and less bogged down in negotiating the text of resolutions. Countries would learn more about what is going on internationally and how forests interact with cross-sectoral issues and the fulfillment of the SDGs. This part of the session should be combined with a higher profile for public awareness campaign on the global, regional and national importance of SFM (“Forest Week”).

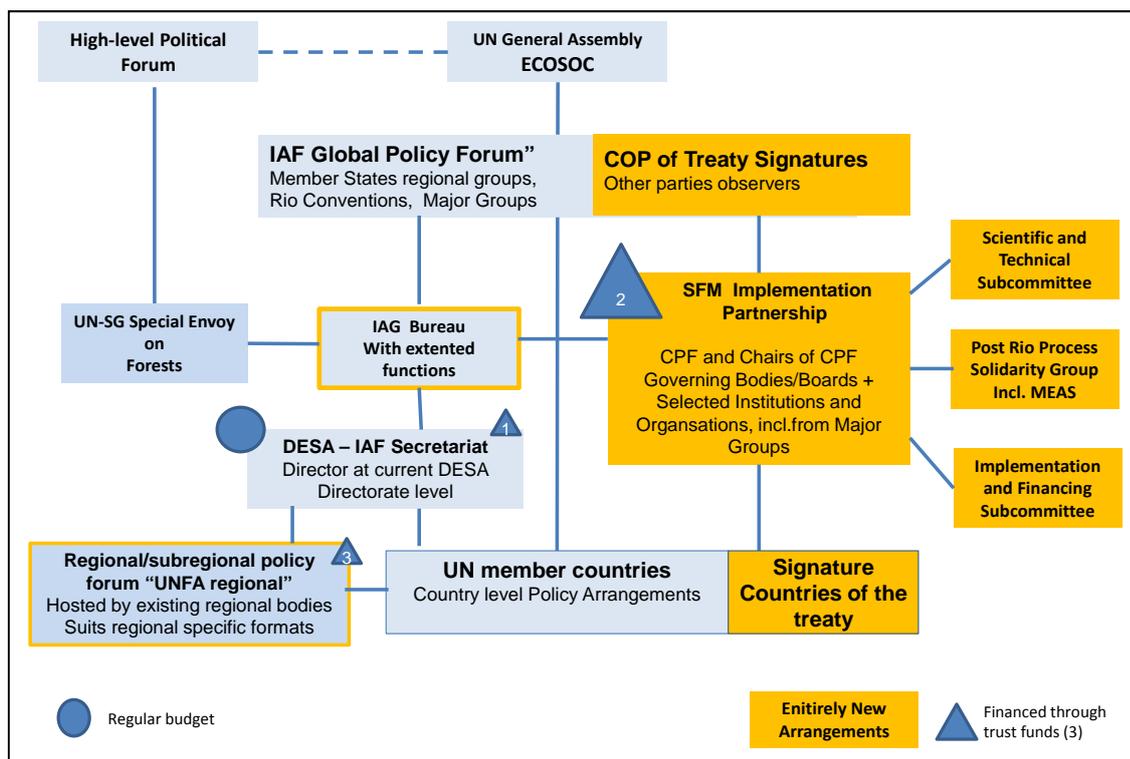
Once the session of the Forum is closed, the Conference of the Parties of the Treaty would commence, with the COP Bureau taking over for the Forum Bureau. All Member States that participated in the Forum session would be welcomed to participate in the COP, bearing in mind that those who have not ratified the convention would do so as observers, although they would be allowed to participate in the discussions<sup>131</sup>. This meeting would deliberate, within the framework of the convention, on the actions and targets undertaken in the countries and on advancing a coordinated global agenda that affects forests and forestry.

A graphic presentation of a possible arrangement based on the complementary pathway is presented in Figure 7.

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<sup>130</sup> This is not without precedent. The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm chemicals conventions were initially set up with independent secretariats, but starting in 2012 the UNEP administered components were merged into a joint secretariat serving the Parties of the three different processes, including supporting the elaboration of their respective programmes of work.. UNEP provided exclusively the secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention was provided jointly by UNEP and FAO.

<sup>131</sup> There are precedents to illustrate how the third point of this option could function, primarily in regional seas conventions and action plans. Another good example is the Caribbean Environment Programme.



**Figure 7: Option 3: complementary political pathway**

62-30 **Special arrangements for Member States having signed the Treaty.** As indicated in Figure 7, countries that have signed the treaty would have special provisions to support the fulfillment of the set objectives and targets, including MAR. Countries would first commit themselves with their own means of implementation. Also, Member States that have reached a high level of SFM implementation should support a major trust fund established for supporting initial upfront investment and mainstream investment, as appropriate. Naturally, countries that have committed to REDD+ readiness processes, or FLEG/FLEGT processes are those that already have a high probability of engaging in these more committed approaches. This type of funding should also be available to be used in the countries and supported by the SFM Implementation Partnership, as described in Figure 6.

**Option 4: Post 2015-IAF: Regional level agreements**

62-31 **Post-2015 IAF based on regional agreements.** Option 4 proposes a strengthening of implementation of SFM taking into account a much stronger long of the regional level. In this option, the global level, the stewardship role on forests would be a central element and its high level goals and action areas could be provided for by the (non-legally binding) Forest Instrument and its Addendum, with a strong UNFA serving as a coordination forum on global, intergovernmental and international forest initiatives. A core element for SFM implementation would be *regional level agreements (treaties, conventions)* that could deal with more stringent specific objectives and possible targets for a particular region and countries in the region. Such agreements would relate to the high level goals and emphasize regional and inter-regional coordination, and implementation measures conducted through existing and new financial mechanisms (including e.g. REDD+, FLEGT, NFPs, GEF, regional funding for regional

organisations and others). Each region would design its own process and modality but link to other regions and global issues through the UNFA-framework. A graphic presentation of a possible arrangement based on a global non-legally binding forest instrument and regional treaties is presented in Figure 8.

62.32 **There are precedents for this.** The Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities is an example of such an arrangement. Adopted at the Washington DC Conference in 1995, the GPA, with UNEP as the secretariat, functions as a non-legally binding global agreement for reducing marine pollution from land-based sources such as sewerage and waste water, sedimentation from deforestation and agriculture, persistent organic pollutants including pesticides, nutrients and fertilizers, and trash, among others. It is primarily implemented through protocols of several regional conventions for the protection and sustainable use of the marine and coastal environment, including the Cartagena Convention for the wider Caribbean region, the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean Sea, the Nairobi Convention for East Africa, the Lima Convention for the South-East Pacific and the Kuwait Regional Convention. Every five years the Executive Director of UNEP convenes a global meeting of governments to review progress in implementation in which the secretariats of the regional seas conventions report on the implementation of their LBA protocols and corresponding work plans. These work plans and their related projects are funded through the trust funds of these regional agreements and receive substantial support through the GEF International Waters Focal Area.

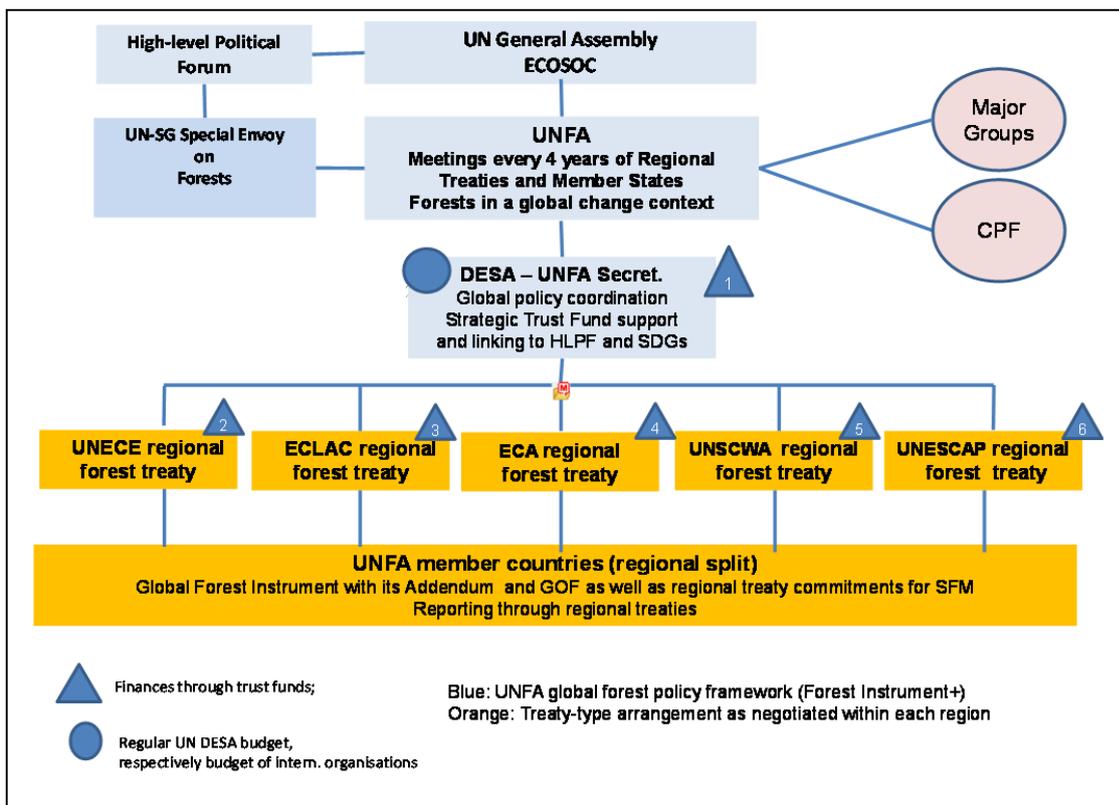


Figure 8 Option 4: Post-2015 IAF streamlined: Regional level agreements

### **Assessing Options for the post 2015 IAF**

62-33 **The core building blocks.** In this section on options for the future IAF, the Team has presented a set of institutions through which a combination of policy dialogue and follow-up practical action can be undertaken. The core building blocks will remain the forum/assembly of member states; the secretariat; the support structure (provided by the CPF to date) and Major Groups. The elements which are currently missing and which the options offer to differing degrees include an implementation mechanism; bridging to the locus of action in member states through regionalisation; and specific interfacing with the Rio Conventions. A reliable funding mechanism is still missing in all options, for obvious reasons. The Team recognizes the importance of having a reliable funding mechanism; given the lack of agreement about having a global forest fund, it has recommended the strategic trust fund as a practical and immediate step that can be taken in the near future.

62-34 **Critical support.** In considering which option to pursue, Member States will wish to avoid putting “new wine in old wine-skins”. The critical support systems such as secretariat and CPF successor cannot remain unchanged and still be expected to be “fit for purpose” in a new setting but must be strengthened to fulfil their mandates. The need for them to be fit for purpose in delivering on the promise of the post-2015 development agenda is too important for choices to be influenced by institutional elegance or symmetry. Member states should provide capacity for institutional arrangements to deliver progress on achievement of SFM.

62-35 **Identifying priorities.** The institutional arrangements for the post-2015 IAF must satisfy the ambitions of the international community regarding what the international forest process should achieve, and what has largely eluded it in recent decades. It must remain a process with universal membership, with every country feeling at home in the dialogue; it must remain open to the inputs of Major Groups; must be nimble – able to proactively take up new issues and not be locked into rigid multi-year work plans; it must remain able to draw upon the strengths of competent international organisations – but have them better motivated and also more organised rather than entirely voluntary and unpredictably funded; it must lead to action to implement the excellent pro-SFM resolutions it has already made and the others it will make in future; it must bridge the global policy dialogue with action and, to this end, it must effectively engage regional and national partners. Perhaps, most importantly, it must become more selective and focused. To have hundreds of decisions and Resolutions that do not lead to significant action cannot continue. The process must be able to prioritise and decide which elements require the most urgent action and which it should therefore be judged upon first.

62-36 **Questions to consider.** Therefore, assessing the various options that are possible for the design of a future institutional arrangement on forests, Member States may wish to consider a number of questions to help them to take an informed decision:

- (1) How adequate is the institutional provision? Will it make the post-2015 IAF an attractive and comfortable enough partner for the Rio Conventions and all other forest processes to feel that it offers them a neutral home? All the options propose a UN Special Envoy on Forests to provide a **charismatic leadership** that can bring together dispersed forest stakeholders and catalyze their convergence rather than allowing them to continue drifting into divergent directions. If well selected, could this personality, supported by a strengthened secretariat in DESA, assure more easy access to the political class through the HLPF, media and other available means?

- (2) The future IAF could also usefully consider holding high-profile periodic summits, somewhat on the scale of the COPs of the Rio Conventions – such events, being set at Head of State level, can do much to **energize attention to forests** once again. Could UNFA do this, perhaps linked to modern fora such as World Economic Forum events whether in Davos or in various regions?
- (3) To what degree do the structures of any given option allow member states greater effectiveness in taking **action** to implement what they decide upon?
- (4) How predictable can be the follow-up by the coalition of **supporting international organisations** to decisions of the UNFA? Will they be well-enough linked to the UNFA to take its demands with assurance (and with the concurrence of their Governing Bodies)? Will they still be a combination of the willing and the not so committed members so that only a few organisations take most of the load? Will they have a work programme dedicated to the IAF and a budget for it? Will they continue to compete for resources among themselves and (sometimes) with their developing-country beneficiaries? Will they all flock to the most topical issues of the day (such as REDD+ at the moment) or pursue more balanced SFM in their programmes? An, will their cooperation go beyond supporting the policy forum to also assure coordinated action in countries?
- (5) Given the desire to bridge the global policy process to field action, is the form of **regionalisation** or interface with regions appropriate or can the regionalisation prove instead to be a delaying factor standing between the globe and the country action?
- (6) In the absence of consensus in the past about assured **financing** for action (except at the price of accepting a legally-binding format), what of the options can offer best prospects of surmounting this challenge, if any?
- (7) In view of the UN in the past being consistently determined that the **DESA-based secretariat** be compact, are the proposals for any given option better than the others in terms of what the secretariat can deliver? What room is there to strengthen the secretariat? What scope is there for regular and extra-budgetary posts, and secondments from partner organisations? What about the balance of staff between policy and programme professionals and professionals conversant with forestry development? Furthermore, given greater attention to the regions, what would be the role of a global secretariat?
- (8) Given the continuing desire to remain inclusive by also having non-governmental contributions to policy dialogue, how best to get balance between commercial major groups and those non-profit organisations (largely environmental and indigenous groups) that have so far been far more present at UNFF Sessions? If non-attendance of the commercial institutions has been caused by a feeling that the process discusses matters of no interest to them, then how can this be changed?

62-37 ***The efficiency of the post-2015 IAF.*** The post-2015 IAF will also require a generalised “enabling environment” if its work is to be conducted better than in the past. The manner of working cannot remain unchanged: agendas that are set in stone years in advance and are packed with items that must be discussed at every Session even if there are pressing new developments in the world should be avoided in the future. Frequency of global meetings is high (biennially) and yet almost all options offered are calling for regional players to become part of the important mechanisms for action.

Member States may wish to consider agreeing on ways of doing business that ensure some or all of the following:

- (1) Linkage between the pace at which Resolutions are made or action points adopted and the capacity to implement them. The backlog of action points on which very little has been done is now a major embarrassment and does not do the image of the process much good – selectiveness and focus could be useful watchwords in future;
- (2) Avoiding rigidity in agenda-setting, as revealed in trying to follow the MYPOW process;
- (3) Do not generalize on Resolutions to least common denominators that can apply anywhere in the world but on common agendas that can be applied and adapted to the various forest situations. The post-2015 IAF will need to innovatively interpret “all types of forests” term to mean not uniformity but equivalent intent adapted to each region’s circumstances. This will make its decisions more capable of being implemented;
- (4) Clarity for targets: hence the oft-repeated calls in this Report for the GOFs to be accompanied by defined targets based on sensible criteria that allow monitoring, sound reporting and verification of achievements.

## **7 Conclusions and recommendations**

### ***International Arrangements on Forests***

7-01 ***A global commitment to forests and their sustainable management exists and needs to be nurtured.*** Global deliberations on forests matter. This is clear from numerous existing processes (conventions, organisations, initiatives, forums, facilities, partnerships, platforms, etc.) that support overall forest conservation and management or some important aspect of it. Most of these processes have an impact on forests but the great majority of them do not focus on forests. Whether their focus is actually on climate change, biodiversity conservation, food security, water, energy, poverty alleviation, fibre and trade, there is obvious need for orchestration so that their interventions in the forest sector are synergistic and lead to shared SFM and to effective support for broader sustainable development, as well as to achieve their own strategic objectives.

The foundation stone of a post-2015 IAF is to ensure that all parties and processes embrace shared forest policy ambitions and converting what are now divergent pathways so that they become diverse but convergent aspirations about forests and trees in landscapes. Achieving such convergence will be made all the easier if all parties recognise the shared home of overall forests agenda in the land use and sustainable development clusters but also its interlinkage with the broader UNCED themes of production and consumption patterns, trade, sustainable financing, and the fact that at the centre of it all is man in synergy with nature.

The Team is conscious, however, that forest-centred policy is often (mistakenly and due to narrow vision) perceived to be in conflict with other sectoral and development goals, particularly at national and subnational levels. These perceptions can create pressures to achieve trade-offs and can force compromises, e.g., in respect to diverging land-uses. It is important, however, that there is a level playing field between forest conservation, forest use and other interests such as other non-forest land-uses.

Within the forests sector itself, there is often incomplete understanding among beneficiaries of only part of what SFM can yield: in many countries, the distribution of rights to access to and ownership of forest lands and resources is unclear and the laws governing forest use may be incomplete, not respected or poorly enforced. This is the uneven playing field of international forest policy. The post-2015 IAF should aim to establish the rules of the game through a strong forest stewardship and help to develop the needed compromises to define the institutional, policy, and procedural measures necessary to fulfil the role of forests and trees in the sustainable development agenda at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels.

A global commitment to forests exists. The very fact that the UNFF and preceding policy processes have lasted nearly two decades with desire for continuation still on the agenda is evidence enough that there is high political commitment to forests in all regions of the world. Today most countries have progressive forest laws and regulations and policies. More than 140 countries have established national forest programmes even though many of them are inadequately implemented or inactive. More than 60 countries have embarked in the REDD+ readiness processes and 194 countries are committed to the Aichi targets. Timber certification has proven to be an effective system to promote good forest management by engaged forest owners. International organisations, such as FAO, the World Bank, ITTO and other CPF members have the potential to support such country' commitments effectively and efficiently if their governing boards are engaged and if strong leadership is exercised.

Thus, the Team concluded that there is a need for a strong IAF for post-2015. While such a new arrangement should build upon of the achievements of the UNFF, particularly the Forest Instrument, it is desired that this arrangement is different from today's UNFF institutional arrangement, its current Global Objectives on Forests, its expressive statement of "Non-Legally Binding" and the "Means of Implementation" that are now at its disposal. What is most needed from such future arrangements is legitimacy and credibility by all stakeholders.

**7-02 *Need for a body that embraces forests and SFM holistically.*** One can argue that the UNFF has had only limited impact on the fate of the world's forests since 2000. For many the UNFF has simply been a discussion forum on forestry-related concerns without any major impact, whether on global regulation of forests, or on core priorities relevant to achieving SFM at national and regional levels. Those who question the efficacy of the UNFF argue that many major developments concerning forests are decided in fora or processes outside the UNFF. They draw attention to the fact that forests are threatened most by economic activities such as crop culture and mining; and that some of the major developments at global to national levels concerning forests over the past 14 years have all happened without major influence by UNFF and its predecessor processes. They note that instead of being at the forefront, or being pro-active, the UNFF which claims to deal with all types of forests and SFM holistically has instead tended to mainly function in parallel to these other processes. Clearly the post-2015 Forest Arrangement will have to do better and embrace a leadership role on forests and SFM overall.

**7-03 *A renewed and stronger post-2015 IAF committed to SFM is needed.*** Globally, there is no common understanding between the involved parties on what a good governance framework for SFM means. The UNFF has not in the past operated effectively enough to have the necessary convening power to steer its members towards action to achieve what they have agreed upon as SFM. The diverse international forest initiatives mentioned earlier which focus on segments of the overall concept of SFM have added to significant confusion and perceived differences in standards for SFM and forest governance. Examples include (a) the CBD in respect of the role of forests for biological diversity, (b) CITES, IUCN and major environmental NGOs in matters relating to ecosystem conservation and

endangered species; (c) the ITTA on issues of trade for products from sustainably managed tropical forests; (d) the UNFCCC in respect to REDD+, LULUCF and forest sector NAMAs; (e) the UNCCD with respect to land degradation; and (f) particular intergovernmental initiatives, such as REDD+ readiness, FLEG and FLEGT initiatives, the Bonn Challenge, the Montreal process and the LFCC process. The phenomenon is that some of these initiatives have attracted considerable interest and some may have mobilized more financial resources for their programmes than the UNFF despite the fact that they each address only part of the management needs of same resource (forests).

Thus, the paramount recommendation of the Team is that the current international forest governance regime **must be a more authoritative leadership body that helps to coordinate and steer a global forest agenda and a global framework for SFM**. Such a coordination body would help to converge interests, concentrate skills and knowledge, minimise overlap and support mutual learning among the various international initiatives that relate to forests, and the role of forests, in broader socio-economic development. Clearly, the fact that the UNFF has not achieved this - despite having universal membership with 197 UNFF member countries, far more than any other forests-relevant process - raises questions. The post-2015 IAF must therefore take pride in more than its membership size: it must have something to offer that will attract other processes to desire partnership and association with it.

7-04 **Central functions of an international arrangement on forests post-2015**. In simple terms, a post-2015 IAF should have two central functions to become a compellingly attractive process to associate with: (1) stewardship of forests in providing leadership to promote the vital significance of forests globally; and (2) promoting the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests in order to ensure that its members manage the world's forests sustainably. These proposed central functions, which are described in more detail in §61.04, are:

- **Stewardship of forests**. This means providing leadership to promote the vital significance of forests for economic and social development and environmental protection of all countries. It also means integrating forests in the broader sustainable development agenda. It can be achieved by mobilising high level political support and resources at both global and country levels and through effective influencing of major international/intergovernmental processes, as well as providing relevant policy recommendations and advice, and fostering coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
- **Promoting and facilitating sustainable management of all types of the world's forests**. Under the orchestration of a broader land-use planning concept agreed among a large variety of interested parties, the public administrations (centralized/decentralized) in charge of forests, communities, including forest owners and farmers, forest dwellers, and industries, each have roles in exercising shared responsibility to manage each country's permanent forest estate sustainably. There should be no reason to allow degradation of existing forests or depletion of their capacity to prevent them fulfilling their combined economic, social (including cultural) and environmental functions. Achieving SFM is the ultimate goal and it is a positive ambition; combating forest loss and degradation provide necessary spurs to action but the ambition should always to achieve healthy, sustainable and vibrant forest resources. The post-2015 IAF should promote and facilitate action to achieve this.

7-05 **Post-2015 Development Agenda and post-2015 IAF**. The process of refining, for final endorsement, the post-2015 IAF will be concluded when UNFF 11 meets in May 2015. This offers a unique opportunity for UNFF to send agreed key messages, supported by effective advocacy, to the HLPF and to the UN General Assembly on how the forest community intends to ensure delivery on the contribution of

forests, SFM and the future IAF to the overall post-2015 development agenda. The post-2015 IAF should find its overall rationale in the integration of forests in the SDGs and in the realization of SDGs in the forest and land-use sector<sup>132</sup>.

As noted in chapter 4, forests, with their protective and productive functions, will retain their crucial roles in the future for supporting life systems on Earth, including at the landscape level. Given that the pressure on natural forests will remain high and that many forests will be lost over the coming decades, SFM will be much more necessary in the future than today. Possible actions which have been identified over recent years at the global level include, *inter alia*: accelerating action to achieve SFM and reduce incentives to “export of deforestation”; addressing global trade and shifts in forest products outputs, including illegal forest activities; advancing forest and forest products technologies and ensuring greater technology transfer; at both global and national/local levels, establishing or making more effective funding sources for managing global public goods, forest carbon stocks, biodiversity, etc. All these issues have a direct relationship to the need for international/global actions; they require true commitment to immediate action by UN Member countries and other stakeholders.

#### ***Forest Instrument and the Global Objectives on Forests***

**7-06 *Progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and towards the achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests.*** While some perceive that the Forest Instrument has received only scant attention and then conclude that this may be due to its non-legally binding nature, many, including key international organizations such as CBD and GEF, have recognized its importance.

Although there are several examples of conventions with inadequate financial mechanisms that have accomplished very little and examples of non-legally binding agreements with financial mechanisms that are being successfully implemented, it is generally believed that successful implementation of an agreement (whether legally or non-legally binding), requires adequate and predictable funding; which often calls for a suitable financing mechanism. Thus, the implementation of the Forest Instrument with its four GOFs may be becoming severely hampered by the lack of a dedicated financial mechanism. Accordingly, there is urgent need to establish at international level a strategic trust fund dedicated to catalyze the implementation of the Forest Instrument and its Addendum if countries are serious about its implementation and the achievement of the GOFs. The need for adequately resourced funding mechanisms at national level is obvious. The source of funding is a key question but, as explained in this Report, there are strong reasons for making contributions given the true value of forest resources.

**7-07 *Looking to the future with a revitalized Forest Instrument.*** Much needs to be done; the contribution of forests to sustainable development is not yet adequately realised; the fragmentation of forest processes has been a hindrance – even to correct this alone calls for continuation of the Forest Instrument. The need for a global arrangement is still valid and therefore should continue and be strengthened in the post-2015 world. This calls for more than just amendment of text in the current documentation (such as the time frame for the GOFs and the replacement of the MDGs by the SDGs); more important is mind-set change among the membership towards making a successor arrangement more action-oriented and less dialogue-centric. The membership should also make the Forest Instrument more inclusive and welcoming of other forest processes: on climate change, the CBD Aichi targets, the SDGs, new trade rules and governance, among others. In formal terms, such “opening up” could be

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<sup>132</sup> It will be essential not just to (yet again) stress how important forests are, but to say what action is intended to make their contribution happen

reflected in an Addendum that communicates the new sense of the *IAF being a home to all forest-relevant processes*.

**7-08 *Thinking beyond further debate on legally binding versus a non-legally binding status of the forest instrument.*** The Team believes that the development of the post-2015 IAF should not again be side-tracked by retaining as a central issue the global debate about legally binding versus non-legally binding status of the instrument. More important is debate about how to make forests play their roles in the global change context, including the capacities for transformation and adaptation to new contexts. The Forest Instrument will “sell” better if with it proposed strengthened means of implementation, it demonstrates accelerated progressive achievement of its GOFs.

**7-09 *Revival of the NFPs.*** The need for an intersectoral approach at all stages is one of the agreed principles of NFPs. NFPs should be integrated into wider programmes for sustainable land use involving sectors such as agriculture, energy and industrial development. This is rarely the case in practice, however, and the mandate and role of an NFP in coordinating forest-related activities across sectors is often neither clear nor widely accepted. There is widespread consensus that NFPs play an important and sometimes essential role in improving forest governance and fostering SFM. Forests are part of the livelihoods and daily lives of vast numbers of people. An NFP, therefore, can have far-reaching effects. Among its other purposes, a widely supported and vibrant NFP will ensure that the forest sector contributes its fair share towards national goals in critical issues such as good governance, democratization, decentralization, REDD+, climate change and economic policies.

#### ***Financing, facilitative process and resources mobilization***

**7-10 *The post 2015 IAF and financing SFM.*** The post 2015 IAF should play an instrumental role in catalysing financing for SFM. This role is to be upscaled and improved to promote more effective and secured SFM financing. Substantial initial catalysing upfront investments are needed to mainstream forest investments and achieve sustainable self-financing from forest services and products. The post 2015 IAF should use all necessary measures at all levels to increase funding for SFM.

**7-11 *Apply a three-prong concept for financing SFM.*** The Team strongly recommends applying the proposed three-prong approach (see Table 5) as the basis for an overall financial approach to SFM. The approach recognises three stages in achieving full forest self-financing: (i) initial upfront investment, when the forest sector needs analytical work and information systems to attract matching public and private investments (ODA funding is important at this stage); (ii) mainstreamed upfront investment for the transitional period to adapt policies and measures, generally through multilateral support; and (iii) sustained self-financing through capturing at least part of the full value of forest goods and services.

**7-12 *Apply new approaches for initial and mainstreamed upfront investments.*** The three-prong approach would help to advance a portfolio approach to financing SFM. It should help to more clearly define the catalytic role of ODA, multilateral and other international financing for thematic support and capacity building in the developing economies. There have been significant changes since the inception of IAF in 2000 and the formulation of GOFs in 2006. A post-2015 IAF will face essentially new social, economic and environmental realities, which will require new and often innovative approaches to address dynamic changes. The new reality has important implications for redesigning the financial approach to SFM. It should be opened up to new ideas, mechanisms and financing schemes. It should be more

adaptable, dynamic and innovative in its approaches, to “mobilise significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM” (as required by GOF4).

7-13 ***Self responsibility of Member States.*** As explained in §56-05, sources of SFM funding are classified as national and international, and public and private. To increase financial resources for SFM there is a need for Member States to have enabling conditions for private sector investment, as well as ODA. There is also a need for political commitment to SFM. Without this commitment, forests will not receive a sufficiently high priority to attract investment from scarce and highly competitive public sector resources.

7-14 ***Accounting for ecosystem values in the forest funding.*** The post-2015 IAF should make it a priority to address market development and issues of market failure in order to capture the true values of forest goods and market services, especially carbon sequestration, water management, biodiversity conservation, soil erosion control and other ecosystem values. These values should be properly incorporated in the international financial mechanism dealing with SFM. Many institutions and countries are working intensively on the issues. Their findings and experiences should be reviewed and successes promoted and replicated worldwide. It will be an intellectual challenge and a tremendous opportunity for the future IAF to re-affirm its global relevance and importance in the rapidly changing world.

7-15 ***Strengthen financing for the post 2015 IAF.*** Thus, a major challenge for the post-2015 IAF will be to strengthen financing for SFM, using the three-prong approach paradigm. This will include strengthening regional-based funding and fully utilising all major existing funding mechanisms including Green Climate Fund, UNFCCC-REDD+/Forest NAMA, FLEGT, PROFOR and all other available resources.

The main building blocks for the post-2015 IAF financial mechanism should therefore include the following instruments and elements:

- AHEGs to consider all major potential and newly emerging forest-related mechanisms and funding sources;
- continued development of the Facilitative Process;
- further conceptualization, development and practical application of the three-prong approach;
- creating a strategic Trust Fund for strengthening capacity to support the implementation of the Forest instrument and progress towards achieving its GOFs;
- improving linkages between all forest related funds and processes that support upfront investments (including GCF, REDD+, FLEGT, PROFOR, GEF, the FAO Forest and Farm Facility, and other multilateral development donors and agencies).

## 8 The way forward

8-01 **Forests are an important asset in global development.** Population and per capita income growth and the resulting steady increase in demand for energy, fibres, freshwater and biodiversity along with climate change and the risk of more frequent extreme events are the major drivers of change globally. Such challenges have serious consequences for the Earth's life support system in the near- and medium-term and the more distant future. With their huge protective and productive functions, forests will play a crucial global role in addressing such challenges. Knowledge of the art and practice of sustainably managing forests will remain in high demand. As one of the main renewable natural resources available to humanity, forests will be expected to help mitigate climate change, protect soil and water, provide clean air, conserve biodiversity, help maintain the mental health of humans, and produce wood fibres and other products. Humanity's future will depend in large measure on how it deals with its forests<sup>133</sup>.

8-02 **Strong building blocks for the post-2015 IAF.** In this Report, the Team has illustrated a number of options for the post-2015 IAF with the intention of elevating the forest policy dialogue and in order to provide options for addressing the current fragmentation of global forest policy divided among multiple processes and programmes. All the proposed options for a future IAF for the consideration of the AHEG include five major elements:

- (i) an elevated global forum on forests, composed of
- (ii) committed Member States that support a global coordination role based on a globally recognized strategic work plan with milestones and monitoring elements for implementation and financing;
- (iii) a stronger and more formal regional involvement in the global forest policy dialogue, which is a key for success as targeted agreements at the international level can best be fulfilled through regional coordination;
- (iv) a strong science/policy/implementation body to underpin the technical and scientific dimension of dealing with all forest values under one single SFM umbrella; and
- (v) a stronger financial and institutional foundation.

8-03 **A reinvented UNFF for a post-2015 IAF.** With the ever increasing pressure on forest land, particularly in tropical and subtropical countries, and an ever increasing demand for forest products and services in all the world's forest biomes, more than ever there is a need for a high-level international body with the **authority, legitimacy and credibility** necessary to place forests high on the global development agenda and to be more effective in promoting implementation of agreed priorities. The UN is uniquely positioned to play a leadership and stewardship role to catalyse national and international actions and infuse new energy and synergy to promote the conservation and sustainable management of the world's forests for present and future generations. A reinvented post-2015 IAF needs to be reinvigorated and further developed; it should better than in the past at exercising its unique convening power, as a subsidiary body of ECOSOC with universal membership, to attract engagement by the Rio Conventions and regional-forest processes. It can be based on the global consensus reached by the Forest Instrument and a well negotiated Addendum that embraces a more committed and engaged path to dealing with forest policy globally.

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<sup>133</sup> See also Blaser and Gregersen (2013).

8-04 **Way forward.** The Team sees the way forward for the post-2015 IAF along the following lines:

**(1) Shift to a more affirmative language and approach that helps to engage, rather than disengage.**

*The current international arrangement on forests is based on an approach that is often referred to as being “voluntary”, “ad hoc”, “intentional”, “non-legally-binding”, “deliberative”, etc. The type of negotiation conducted over the past 15 years was time-consuming and rather expensive. It is time to become more affirmative and direct about how we want to see forests, as one of the main drivers to address the global social, economic and environmental challenges over the coming decades.*

**(2) Broaden the conceptual basis of the land-use and forests and integrate forestry issues in all aspects of the post-2015 development agenda; and agree to targets, with numbers, timelines and roadmaps about how and when to achieve them.**

*The post-2015 IAF should become a global Assembly that defines a set of globally recognized targets and acts as a coordinator and knowledge broker for international organisations, programmes and projects on forests. It should include MAR for SFM that fully considers and addresses all forest values.*

**(3) Shift emphasis from a forum that negotiates text and prepares resolutions to an effective arrangement and mechanism that facilitates dialogue and cooperation, contributing to the integration and implementation of SFM within the framework of the post-2015 development agenda, globally, regionally and nationally. Regional dialogue and cooperation in particular can serve as a bridge to action.**

*The post-2015 IAF is not about the creation of a binding legal commitment but about committing to an overall goal of integrating forests into the wider development agenda.*

**(4) Assume ultimate stewardship for global forests in a global landscape**

*Formalize and strengthen strategic and practical linkages to other international fora and entities that affect forests (MEAs, agriculture, trade and other related agreements), at the global and at, in particular, the regional levels. Lead and champion forest-related agenda-setting, including the definition of trade-offs among land-uses and protection of forests and forest resources. The future IAF should embrace the complexity of its mission on how forests are dealt with in the international context, and on how to strengthen linkages to other international fora and entities that affect forests.*

**(5) Increase leverage of a science/policy/implementation interface to improve effectiveness and efficiency of international forest-related processes.**

*Enhance forest-related scientific and technical information, including traditional and local knowledge, to make it globally and more widely accessible and to constantly improve effectiveness and efficiency in forest conservation and forest management for all types of forests.*

**(6) Increase opportunities for meaningful participation by multiple stakeholders, including Major Groups, especially forest advocacy NGOs, business and industry, local authorities/communities, and funding mechanisms.**

There is no reason to negotiate words and sentences in the upcoming process of defining the post-2015 IAF. What is needed, however, is commitment to transformation and to adapt to new developmental paradigms. More than ever, the world needs an ultimate authority that will assume stewardship of the value of forests for present and future development. What is now known with certainty is that the current IAF does not suffice to take on such a role. There is a need for a reinvented UN arrangement on forests as humanity depends on forests for the sake of current and future generations.

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***“So, let’s plant the apple tree, it is time to do so”***

Hoimar von Ditfurth, 1985, in response to Martin Luther 1517<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> “Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree” (Martin Luther, around 1517).

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## **ANNEXES**

- A1 Terms of Reference of the Independent Assessment of the IAF**
- A2 A summary of potential post-2015 options, including technical details regarding legally-binding options**
- A3 Indicative list of international forest organisations, treaties, institutions, initiative and programmes showing their links to the IAF**
- A4 List of CLIs, OLI, MGIs, and RLIs**
- A5 Progress towards the implementation of the Forest Instrument**
- A6 Current UNFF Secretariat's budget and staffing**
- A7 Biographies of the Independent Assessment Team Members**
- A8 The inception report**

## **ANNEX 1: TORs of the Independent Assessment of the IAF**

### ***I. Background***

1. According to the multi-year programme 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”. At this session, the Forum will convene a high-level segment to review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests (IAF).
2. In preparation for the review of the IAF at UNFF11 in 2015 and as a part of intersessional activities on this matter leading up to UNFF11, Member States through Resolution 2 of UNFF10 decided to conduct an “Independent Assessment of the IAF”.<sup>135</sup>
3. The present text includes the scope and framework for the Independent Assessment of the IAF (see annex), its objectives, the deliverables, timelines and a substantive context for the consultants who will carry out this work. This text is developed and finalized by the UNFF secretariat, in consultation with the UNFF11 Bureau, in response to paragraph (b) (ii) (2) of Annex to Resolution 2 of UNFF10.

### ***II. Elements of the review of the IAF***

4. Based on the resolutions E/2000/35, E/2007/42, E/2006/49, and resolution 2 of UNFF10, the review of the effectiveness of the IAF should include the review of the following:
  - a) Consideration of a full range of options, including a legally binding instrument on all types of forests, strengthening of the current arrangement, continuation of the current arrangement and other options;<sup>136</sup>
  - b) Past performance of the UNFF, its processes and multi-year programme of work (MYPOW), including ad hoc expert groups and country-led initiatives, as well as future options for the UNFF; (UNFF10 res.);
  - c) Progress towards implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (forest instrument) and achievement of the four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs), including a review of the relationship of the forest instrument with the international conventions and Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) that have a bearing on the Forum’s mandate; (UNFF10);
  - d) Effectiveness of the forest instrument (E/2007/42, para 22);
  - e) The contribution of forests and the IAF, including the forest instrument, to the internationally agreed development goals (E/2007/42), para 23.
  - f) The Forum’s Secretariat;
  - g) The Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and its contributions to the work of the Forum, and related activities by individual CPF member organisations in support of the Forum’s Resolutions;
  - h) Means of Implementation for the forest instrument and relevant subsequent resolutions, and the Facilitative Process;

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<sup>135</sup> OP6 of Resolution 2 of UNFF10

<sup>136</sup> Chapeau of OP5 of UNFF10 resolution 2

- i) The UNFF within the context of the UN sustainable development framework, including the outcomes from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

### **III. Objectives of the Independent Assessment of the IAF**

5. The IAF is an informal title given to the actors which constitute the UNFF's "membership". The first and primary are Member States and countries who are members of the Forum; acting individually and working together as the Forum. The second component is the UNFF Secretariat. The third is the voluntary partnership of the CPF and other relevant IGOs in contributing to the work of the UNFF individually and collectively, including implementation of the Resolutions of the Forum. The fourth are regional organizations and their processes, and Major Groups who take part in the Forum's sessions.
6. The centrepiece of the IAF is to promote conservation and sustainable management of all types of forests through implementation of the forest instrument and achievement of its four shared global objectives on forests and subsequent Resolutions of the Forum, as well as the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The primary focus is on implementation of policies in these areas.
7. The objective of the Independent Assessment of the IAF is to assist and inform the AHEG on the IAF in preparing for UNFF11. The assessment will analyze the achievements, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the IAF since 2000. It will assess the impact of UNFF's work and the sustainability of actions and make recommendations to AHEG for a future arrangement.<sup>137</sup>

### **IV. Working Modalities**

8. To conduct the Independent Assessment of the IAF, the UNFF11 Bureau will identify a list of experts, taking into consideration competencies, including evaluation methodology expertise, as well as regional balance.<sup>138</sup> The UNFF Secretariat will hire five independent experts (consultants) from the longer list of candidates which is provided by the UNFF11 Bureau. The consultants will be hired on an individual basis. However, each of the consultants shall write a report from the perspective of their regions focused on the components of the Independent Assessment of the IAF, as outlined in these ToRs and in particular, in section V of these ToRs.
9. In addition, the Bureau of UNFF11 will appoint two Co-Facilitators, one from the North and one from the South, to act on its behalf to facilitate the consultants in their submission of a single consolidated report to the AHEGs on the IAF. The Co-Facilitators will facilitate the consultants to work together as a team to collate the various regional perspectives into one complete, consolidated Independent Assessment of high quality, as the final output for these ToRs. To this end, the Co-Facilitators will convene a first meeting with the consultants immediately following their appointments, and between the meetings of the AHEGs on the IAF to develop the consolidated output to AHEG2 on the IAF.

### **V. Assignment**

10. The consultants shall compile & analyse information and provide views & recommendations on:

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<sup>137</sup> Paragraph (b) (i) of Annex of Resolution 2 of UNFF10

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. Paragraph (b) (ii) (1)

- a) Consideration of a full range of options, including a legally binding instrument on all types of forests, strengthening of the current arrangement, continuation of the current arrangement and other options;<sup>139</sup>
- b) The past performance of the UNFF and its processes since 2000, including ad hoc expert groups, regional and country-led initiatives, as well as future options for the UNFF's role, including:
  - i. Identifying the key achievements or failures of UNFF in implementing its main functions (ten functions).
  - ii. Reviewing the UNFF structure and the sufficiency of its current biennial session in reaching intergovernmental agreement on necessary actions to be taken and in providing policy advice and guidance on all issues related to all types of forests and at all levels.
  - iii. Reviewing the role and impact of awareness-raising activities such as the International Year of Forests, and the International Day of Forests in promoting greater awareness and strengthening political and public commitment for forests.
  - iv. Reviewing the role and impact of Country-Led Initiatives (CLIs) and ad hoc expert groups (AHEG) in the work of the UNFF.
  - v. Reviewing the engagement of stakeholders, including major groups in the work of the Forum, with the view to making suggestions for their meaningful participation and involvement in the UNFF work.
- c) Review of the forest instrument and other options referenced in the aforementioned ECOSOC resolutions, including progress towards achieving the four GOFs. This should include a review of the relationship of the forest instrument with international conventions that have a bearing on the Forum's mandate, including:
  - i. Assessing the progress made in implementing the forest instrument and the GOFs, including assessing the trends reported from member states and the FAO's Forest Resource Assessment (FRA).
  - ii. Making suggestion on further strengthening the functions of the UNFF and other components of the IAF to address data gaps and related capacity development needs of countries.
  - iii. Assessing the contributions made by forests and trees to the MDGs.
  - iv. Reviewing the relevancy of the forest instrument in the context of the emerging Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UN post-2015 development agenda.
- d) Review of the Forum's Secretariat, including:
  - i. The "compact and efficient" UNFF Secretariat composed of 8 regular budget posts and voluntary Trust Fund (extra-budgetary) supported positions.
  - ii. A comparative analysis of the structure, management, human and financial resources of the Secretariat with the mandates of similar types of secretariats.
  - iii. The experience with secondments from CPF member organizations.
  - iv. The percentage of time and resources spent on supporting CPF work, by the Secretariat, both as a member and as its secretariat.
  - v. Constraints faced by the Secretariat.
  - vi. Suggestions on strengthening the Secretariat of the Forum to enable it to fulfill its functions more effectively (para 17 of E/2006/42).

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<sup>139</sup> Chapeau of OP5 of UNFF10 Resolution 2

- e) Review of the CPF as a group of member organizations, working collectively as a whole to support the implementation of the Resolutions of the UNFF, as well as individually as independent IGO's, including:
  - i. Criteria for CPF priority setting
  - ii. Programs and actions taken by different CPF members in implementing resolutions and supporting the work of UNFF since its inception
  - iii. Public understanding of the CPF "brand", and when a product should be branded as a CPF product
  - iv. Funding or absence of funding for CPF activities
  - v. Impact of CPF work
  - vi. Consideration of how the CPF can further contribute to the work of the UNFF
  
- f) Review of financing for implementing the forest instrument at national, regional and international levels and all relevant resolutions, and the Facilitative Process in this regard, including reviewing and analyzing:
  - i. The adequacy of resources for implementation of the forest instrument.
  - ii. All relevant resolutions and their implementation or lack thereof since 2000.
  - iii. The impacts of the resolutions of the UNFF9 Special Session and UNFF9 on advancing means of implementation for the forest instrument.
  - iv. The role and impacts of the Facilitative Process in helping countries to catalyze financing for implementation of the forest instrument.
  - v. Additional steps required by UNFF to advance financing for implementation of the forest instrument.
  
- g) A full range of financing options and strategies, including the establishment of a voluntary global forest fund, in order to mobilize resources from all sources in support of sustainable forest management for all types of forests and trees outside forests;<sup>140</sup> including:
  - i. Identifying detailed financing options that can generate resources from all sources for all types of forests and trees outside forests.
  - ii. Concrete steps that UNFF, CPF members and other organisations should undertake to develop forest financing options.
  - iii. The option for the creation of a voluntary Global Forest Fund.
  
- h) The UNFF, within the context of the UN Sustainable Development framework, including the outcomes from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), including SDGs, the MDGs and the UN post-2015 development agenda and taking into account the impact of UNFF in all social, economic and environmental aspects and the related services of forests and trees outside of forests within the UN system and the specific roles for UNFF in implementing the UN post 2015 development agenda and the SDGs.

## **VI. Expected output**

11. The consultants, facilitated by the Co-Facilitators, will provide one consolidated report with the results of their work on the elements referred to in Section V on Assignment. The Co-Facilitators will work with the consultants to submit an interim report for the consideration of the first meeting of the

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<sup>140</sup> Resolution 2 of UNFF10-OP21

AHEG for IAF 2015, followed by the final report, which will be required prior to and for submission to the second meeting of the AHEG on the IAF.<sup>141</sup>

### **VII. Methodology**

12. The Independent Assessment of the IAF, as one part of the overall review of the effectiveness of the IAF, needs to be forward-looking and informative, using evidence-based analysis of the strengths and shortcomings of working modalities and outcomes of to utilize various methods of work including interviews, surveys, and consultations with leaders, experts and stakeholders.

### **VIII. Duration**

13. The team will consist of five consultants, one from each of the UN regions. The assignment will begin no earlier than 1 August 2013 and conclude no later than 1 October 2014 for a total of 60 working days for each consultant.

### **IX. Travel**

14. In view of the consultative nature of the assignment, the consultants will be required to travel to the first and second meeting of the AHEG on the IAF and to UNFF11 Bureau meetings. Meetings with the Co-Facilitators will occur on the margins of UNFF11 Bureau meetings. Travel will also be required to assigned regions for not more than 20 days per consultant during the course of the contract.

### **X. Budget**

15. The work of the consultants to conduct this independent assessment of the IAF under this consultancy is dependent on the provision of voluntary funding to the UNFF Trust Fund.

### **XI. Performance Indicators**

16. The consultant's performance will be assessed against the following indicators:

- a) Timely deliverable of outputs in accordance with the given timeline;
- b) A draft which provides a cogent articulation of the key issues, a deep analysis, taking into account regional perspectives;
- c) The final output to be adhered to these ToRs.

### **XII. Competencies and qualifications**

17. Each consultant shall have the following competencies and qualifications:

- a) A thorough knowledge of international forest policies and multilateral institutions and policy processes related to forests, trees outside of forests, the Rio Conventions, and with expertise in more than one of the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable forest management;
- b) At least 20 years of experience in areas directly related to sustainable forest management and international cooperation, with broad knowledge of the interrelated nature of natural resource management and the cross-sectoral and inter-institutional nature of forests;

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.Paragraph (b) (ii) 5 of Annex

- c) Experience in governments, intergovernmental negotiations which create policies and laws and oversee enforcement of more than two areas of economic, social and environmental matters related to forests and trees;
- d) Excellent policy, analytical, technical, interpersonal and drafting skills, including experience in conducting independent assessments;
- e) No conflicts of interest;
- f) Oral and written fluency in English;
- g) Participation in UNFF activities is an advantage;
- h) Willingness to work collaboratively on a team.

***XIII. Supervising and reporting modality***

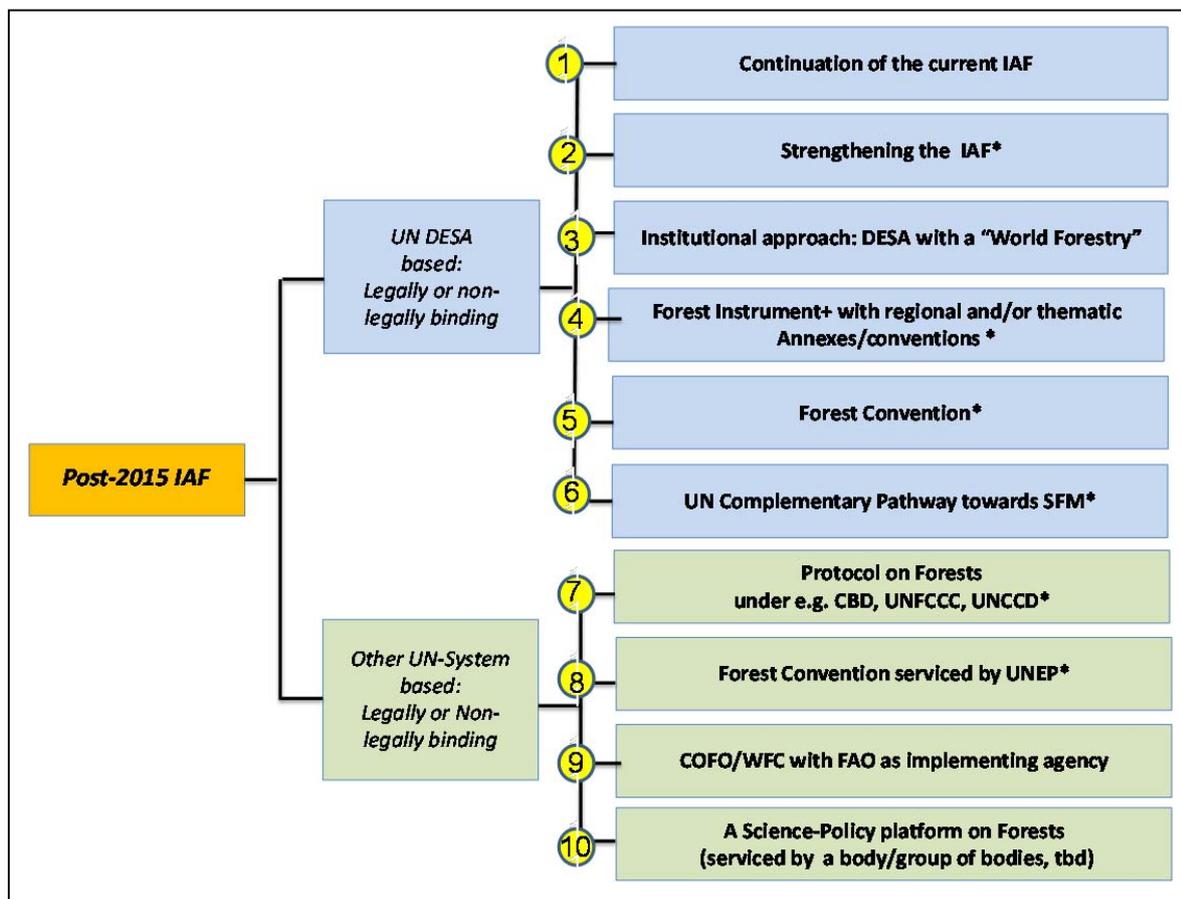
18. The consultants will work under the overall guidance of the UNFF11 Bureau, coordinated by the Co-Facilitators and will report regularly on the progress of their work to the UNFF11 Bureau through the Director of the UNFF Secretariat. The Director of the UNFF Secretariat will manage the on-going work of the consultants, having been guided by the Bureau.

## ANNEX 2: Potential post-2015 options for an IAF

### *A summary of potential post-2015 options for an IAF, including technical details regarding legally-binding options.*

This annex lists all the possible options that the Team considered for the post-2015 IAF. The first four options and option 6 listed below are described in greater detail in Chapter 6.2. This annex provides additional background information relating to options 4, 5, 7 and 8 that all pertain to legally-binding instruments.

Figure 9 below gives an overview of the options. The options proposed are not self-standing and have the potential to be combined. Some of the options are of a non-legally binding nature; other options can be implemented either through a legally-binding or a non-legally binding agreement, or a combination of both.



**Figure 9:** Options for a future UN-based international arrangement on forests.

Two layers: (i) UN-DESA based directly under ECOSOC and (ii) based on other UN organisations and/or programmes. The option marked with \* can be under a legally-binding or a non-legally binding approach or with a combination of them.

## **Background information on details relating to the negotiations of legally-binding instruments:**

### **Naming of legal instrument**

Regardless of the naming of an international legally binding instrument (treaty, agreement, framework convention, covenant, charter, protocol) their forms and structures are very similar, as are the rules applied to them. There is, generally speaking, no hierarchy among them. However if the typical use of names is analyzed more closely, it can be said that treaties are often solemn agreements (e.g. peace or border treaties); and conventions are often multilateral agreements, where a large number of countries are members, and negotiations take place under the auspices of an international organization such as the United Nations. A Framework convention generally sets principles and norms, but leaves flexibility for subsequent negotiation by the parties of (e.g.) specific obligations and details, which may be set out in adjunct protocols or annexes.

### **Institutional set-up**

The Box beneath summarizes the general institutional set-up of international agreements.

#### **General institutional set-up of international agreements**

In general, the organizational set-up of international agreements may have three types of bodies - political, expert and administrative:

- (1) Political. These are normally bodies consisting of representatives of all Parties to the treaty in question (usually Member States). One example is the CBD COP.
- (2) Expert. Subsidiary bodies may be set up that provide support, for example through the provision of scientific information (e.g. IPCC) or for implementation activities. There may also be working groups to undertake specific tasks.
- (3) Administrative. These may include the Bureau and the secretariat.

In some cases *judicial bodies* might also be established (e.g. WTO Dispute Settlement Body).

### **Substantive content**

In general, the following elements are included in the text of international agreements: preamble; terms and definitions; purpose, aims and objectives; principles; general provisions/obligations; monitoring and reporting; membership; institutional set-up; financial arrangements; compliance, settlement of disputes, arbitration, conciliation; amendments, additional annexes and protocols; reservations, withdrawal, termination; technical details (e.g. depositary, signature, ratification or accession, entry into force, authentic texts).

In the context of a future IAF the following more specific aspects might also be needed to take into account:

- Relations to existing treaties and processes (e.g., complementing, strengthening or balancing selected treaties/processes, creating synergies between agreements/processes)
- Relevance for achieving globally agreed goals (e.g., MDGs, SDGs, GOFs)
- Relevance for national implementation and national policy development (e.g., support of national forest policy issues)

- Relevance for political and public attention for forest issues (e.g., forest issues in relation to other policies, role of the forest sector)

### ***Negotiations, rules of procedure, funding instrument development***

It is important to decide whether an international legally instrument is negotiated *under the rules of procedure of the United Nations*

- If negotiated under the rules of procedure of the UN, all costs relating to conference servicing (meeting rooms, interpretation into official languages, translation and reproduction of official documents) will be covered by the UN. Additional special arrangements might be needed if negotiated under, for example, a UNEP or FAO mandate, as they might not generally be able to use funding from the general budget of the UN. In terms of rules of procedure, agreements negotiated within the framework of an organization such as UNEP would require that the rules of procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly (previously UNEP's Governing Council) be applied.
- If negotiated outside the UN, the respective set-up, including rules of procedures, would either need to be developed from scratch or could be based upon those provided for by the governing body that was expected to administer the envisaged future instrument. There would be a requirement to meet all costs, including those required for conference servicing.

### ***Further detail relating to a Forest Convention (Option 5 or 8 in Figure 9)***

Levels of obligations: two choices could be made:

(1) Either *one level of obligations* could be accepted by all member countries (this is the case for most legally binding agreements);

(2) Or *differentiated levels of obligation* could be negotiated (as is the case with monetary union within the EU). This would also give countries flexibility to implement additional obligations at a later time, when ready to do so in accordance with their political and economic settings.

Timing: it might, or might not, be desirable to fix the life-span of the instrument in question:

(1) *a specific life span* (as with ITTA ) creates an opportunity for periodic review of progress against goals, evaluation of implementation activities and renegotiation of objectives; conversely

(2) *no specific timing* need be chosen if it is considered that the objectives of the convention are universal and are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

Membership: member countries could be grouped according to their roles. For example, caucuses might be created, as with producer and consumer countries under ITTA. Such an approach might be effective, for example, in implementing a funding option in developing and least developed countries, or in providing specific support for technology transfer.

Scope and coverage: four sub-options seem feasible:

(1) *a comprehensive sustainable forest management treaty* that addresses all kinds of forest-related issues;

(2) *a gap-filling treaty* that addresses only those aspects that are not addressed by other international treaties related to forests. This would help avoid duplications and potential legal complications with respect to existing international instruments;

(3) *a treaty* that would leave countries with considerable discretion as how to achieve its objectives; it would include general principles, but leave room to agree more substantial commitments at a later stage (e.g. through adjunct protocols, as is the case with UNFCCC);

(4) *a treaty with only limited scope in terms of content*, covering only specific aspects of SFM. For example, such a treaty could deal with aspects of illegal logging, monitoring, traditional forest knowledge, technology transfer, etc.

Institutional set-up: It is likely that some principal bodies, such a strong political body (the COP), a Secretariat, a Bureau, a funding mechanism and potentially scientific and technical bodies, will be needed; if required, additional committees may be established.

There are therefore **two general options** for a forest convention:

Option A: **Enhanced Forest Convention**. This would imply the following:

- Levels of obligation: one strong level of obligation for all members
- Timing: no specific life span is selected as objectives are general and unlikely to change in the near future
- Membership: universal membership
- Scope and coverage: either a comprehensive SFM treaty or a treaty leaving countries with discretion about how to achieve its objectives
- Institutional set-up: establishment of strong political body (COP), Secretariat, Bureau, funding mechanism and scientific and technical bodies

Option B: **Differentiated Forest Convention**. This would imply the following:

- Levels of obligation: differentiated levels of obligations for members
- Timing: a specific life span is selected to renegotiate objectives, and evaluate implementation activities against goals
- Membership: in caucuses that relate, for example, to scope of treaty or different levels of obligation
- Scope and coverage: either a gap-filling treaty or a treaty with only limited scope in terms of content
- Institutional set-up: strong political body (COP), Secretariat, Bureau, funding mechanism and scientific and technical bodies. Additional bodies might be established for servicing members accepting higher levels of obligation.

Both Options A and B can be negotiated with different hosting arrangements:

- under the rules of procedure of the UN in general (costs will be covered by UN budget and maybe additional voluntary contributions);
- under the rules of procedure of a UN programme such as UNEP or a specialized UN agency such as FAO. This might imply however that additional costs may arise as those negotiations might not be covered by the UN budget
- outside the UN where new rules of procedure can be developed or those of an envisaged administering body can be applied to the negotiation process. In addition it can be expected that additional costs arise for funding all costs related to conference servicing.

***Further detail regarding a Framework convention (Forest Instrument + with regional and/or thematic Annexes/conventions) (option 4 in Figure 9)***

Level of obligation / Timing / membership:

In terms of the level of obligation, timing and membership the same options are available under a framework convention on forests as under a forest convention (see discussion of option 5 or 8, above).

Scope and coverage:

In relation to the scope and coverage of a future framework convention it seems feasible to assume that a framework agreement is more general in scope, with less specific obligations. Framework conventions therefore leave Member States with considerable discretion in how to achieve agreed results, and this may help in having a broader (more universal) membership.

Focus of instrument:

In general, a framework convention is more suitable for comprehensive policy development and coordination, and less suitable to enforcing implementation, which can, however, be achieved through a strong protocol/annex).

Institutional set-up:

Principal bodies would include a strong political body (COP), a Secretariat, a Bureau, a funding mechanism and scientific and technical bodies; additional committees could be established if needed.

Follow up of framework convention:

It is likely that a framework convention would be followed by an additional supportive agreement (usually a protocol or sub-agreement); alternatively annexes aimed at specific topics or regions could be developed. These supportive agreements could be time-bound. The convention text should include text providing a decision-making and organizational framework for the adoption of further agreements and/or setting minimum standards.

***Further detail regarding a Forest Protocol e.g. under CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD etc. (Option 7 in Figure 9)***

Level of obligation / Timing / membership:

In terms of the level of obligation and timing, the same options are available under a protocol of another convention on forests as under a forest convention (see discussion of options 5, above). However in terms of membership, while not all member parties to the framework agreement have to be part of the forest protocol, membership of the framework agreement may not be universal.

Scope and coverage: The scope and coverage of a forest protocol is likely to be constrained by the terms of its framework agreement; in particular, it cannot contradict the framework agreement.

Focus of instrument: This could relate to enforcing implementation of forest-related aspects of the framework agreement.

Institutional set-up:

This would need to reflect the fact that not all contracting parties of the framework agreement have to be parties to the protocol.

A forest protocol would reflect the framework agreement; if negotiated under the CBD, it would probably be strong on forest conservation; if under UNFCCC, it would probably be strong on forest sinks, LULUCF and REDD+; and if under UNCCD, it would probably be strong on reducing forest degradation, supporting rehabilitation of degraded sites and afforestation. Thus, in each case, it might have a very different focus than a more autonomous forest treaty, which could potentially refer to all forest functions and all aspects of forest stewardship.

### ANNEX 3: Organisations working in forests and forestry

Indicative list of selected international forest organisations, treaties, institutions, initiatives and programmes showing their links to the IAF

| Organization/Initiative/Institution   | CPF Member | Forest or multi-sectoral | Political or technical | Work Field | Global or Regional outreach | National outreach | Link to IAF |
|---|------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Multilateral Agencies/processes with focus or working areas on forests</b> |            |                          |                        |            |                             |                   |             |
| ADB – Asian Development Bank  | -          | M                        | T                      | M T E      | +                           | ++                | +           |
| AfDB - African Development Bank   | -          | M                        | T                      | M T        | +                           | ++                | +           |
| CBD Secretariat   | Yes        | F                        | P                      | E          | +++                         | +                 | ++          |
| Convention on Migratory Species   | -          | M                        | T                      | E          | ++                          | ++                | -           |
| CITES   | -          | F/M                      | P                      | T          | ++                          | ++                | -           |
| COFO – Committee on Forests (FAO)   | -          | F                        | P                      | M T E      | +++                         | +                 | ++          |
| FAO-FD- FAO Forest Department   | yes        | M                        | T                      | M T E      | +++                         | ++                | +++         |
| IDB – Inter-American Development Bank   | -          | M                        | T                      | M T E      | ++                          | ++                | +           |
| ITTO  | yes        | F                        | T                      | M T        | ++                          | ++                | +++         |
| GEF   | yes        | F/M                      | T                      | M E        | ++                          | +                 | +++         |
| ILO – International Labour Organization                                       | -          | M                        | P                      | T          | +                           | +                 | +           |
| OECD  | -          | M                        | P                      | E          | ++                          | +                 | -           |
| RAMSAR – Convention on Wetlands   | -          | M                        | P/T                    | M          | +                           | ++                | -           |
| UNCCD Secretariat   | yes        | F                        | P                      | E          | ++                          | +                 | ++          |
| UNDP  | yes        | M                        | P                      | E          | ++                          | +                 | +           |
| UNEP  | yes        | F/M                      | P                      | M E        | ++                          | +                 | ++          |
| UNFCCC Secretariat  | yes        | M                        | P                      | E          | +++                         | ++                | ++          |
| UNECE – Forest Industry and Timber Committee                                  | -          | F                        | P                      | T          | +++                         | +                 | ++          |
| World Bank Group (IDA, IDRB, IFC)   | yes        | M                        | T                      | M T E      | +++                         | ++                | ++          |
| <b>Regional Initiatives with links to forestry</b>                            |            |                          |                        |            |                             |                   |             |
| AFF   | -          | F                        | T                      | M T E      | ++                          | +                 | +           |
| AFPNet  | -          | F                        | P                      | M T        | +                           | -                 | +           |
| ASEAN   | -          | M                        | P                      | T E        | ++                          | +                 | -           |
| ASFN – ASEAN Social Forestry Network  | -          | F                        | T                      | M E        | +                           | +                 | -           |
| Amazon Treaty (OCTA/ACTO)   | -          | F                        | P                      | M T        | ++                          | +                 | +           |
| AU – African Union  | -          | M                        | P                      | E          | +                           | +                 | -           |
| CAN – Comunidad Andina  | -          | M                        | P                      | M T E      | +                           | -                 | -           |
| Carpathian Convention   | -          | M                        | P                      | E          | +                           | +                 | -           |
| CCAD – Com. Centroamerica Ambiente y Desarrollo                               | -          | M                        | P                      | T          | +                           | +                 | +           |
| COMESA - Common Market East & South. Africa                                   | -          | M                        | P                      | M          | +                           | ++                | -           |
| COMIFAC   | -          | F                        | P                      | M T        | +++                         | ++                | +           |
| ECOWAS – Economic Community of W. African States.                             | .          | M                        | P                      | T          | ++                          | +                 | +           |
| FAO Regional Commissions  | -          | F                        | T                      | M T E      | ++                          | ++                | -           |
| Forest Europe   | -          | F                        | P                      | T E        | +                           | +                 | ++          |

|  |     |      |   |       |     |     |     |
|--|-----|------|---|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| LFCCs Secretariat  | -   | F    | P | E     | ++  | +   | ++  |
| SARC-South Asia Regional Cooperation /CF                       | -   | M    | P | E     | +   | +   | -   |
| SADC- Southern African Development Community                   | -   | M    | P | T E   | ++  | +   | -   |
| UN Regional Commissions (5)                                    | -   | M    | P | T E   | ++  | ++  | +   |
| <b>Research/Specialist Institutions with focus on forestry</b> |     |      |   |       |     |     |     |
| Biodiversity International                                     | -   | F/M  | T | E     | +   | +   | -   |
| CATIE – Centro Agronomico Trop. Invest. & Ens.                 | -   | F/M  | T | M E   | ++  | ++  | -   |
| CIFOR  | yes | F    | T | M T E | +++ | +   | ++  |
| CILSS – Intergov. Perm. Com. to Drought Sahel                  | -   | M    | T | M     | ++  | ++  | +   |
| EFI – European Forestry Institute                              | -   | F    | T | M T   | ++  | ++  | -   |
| FSC - Forest Stewardship Council                               | -   | F    | T | M T   | +++ | +   | -   |
| Forest Trends  | -   | F    | T | T E   | +   | +   | -   |
| ICIMOD – Intern. C. for Integrated Mountain Dev.               | -   | M    | T | E     | +   | -   | -   |
| ICRAF  | yes | F/M  | T | M E   | +++ | ++  | ++  |
| IIED – Intern. Institute for Environ. & Development            | -   | F    | T | T E   | +   | +   | -   |
| IISD - Intern. Institute for Sustainable Developm.             | -   | F/M  | T | E     | +   | +   | -   |
| IUCN   | yes | F    | T | M T E | ++  | ++  | +   |
| IUFRO  | yes | F    | T | M     | ++  | +   | +++ |
| MFF – Mangroves for the Future                                 | -   |      |   |       |     |     |     |
| PEFC   | -   | F    | T | M T   | ++  | +   | -   |
| RECOFTC – The Centre for People & Forests                      | -   | F    | T | M     | ++  | ++  | +   |
| RRG – Rights and Resources Group/Initiative                    | -   | F    | T | E     | +   | +   | -   |
| WRI – World Resources Institute                                | -   | F    | T | E     | +   | +   | -   |
| <b>Thematic Initiatives on forests</b>                         |     |      |   |       |     |     |     |
| ETFAG – European Trop. Forestry Advisory Group                 | -   | F    | P | M T   | +   | +   | +   |
| FLEG   | -   | F    | P | T     | ++  | ++  | -   |
| FLEGT  | -   | F    | P | T     | ++  | +++ | -   |
| FCPF   | -   | F    | T | M E   | ++  | +++ | -   |
| FIP  | -   | F    | T | M E   | +   | +   | -   |
| TFD – The Forest Dialogue                                      | -   | F    | T | M T E | +   | +   | -   |
| IPC – International Poplar Commission                          | -   | F    | T | M     | +   | +   | -   |
| Model Forest Network   | -   | F    | T | M     | ++  | ++  | +   |
| Mountain Partnership   | -   | M    | T | M     | +   | +   | -   |
| NFPF   | -   | F    | T | M T   | +++ | +++ | ++  |
| FFF  | -   | F/ M | T | M T   | +   | +   | -   |
| PROFOR   | -   | F    | T | M T E | ++  | +   | ++  |
| REDD+ Partnership  | -   | F    | P | E     | +++ | -   | -   |
| GFP – Growing Forest Partnerships                              | -   | F    | T | M T E | +   | -   | -   |
| Global Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative                 | -   | F    | T | M     | ++  | +   | -   |
| Silva Mediterranean  | -   | F    | T | M     | +   | +   | -   |
| WCMC–World Conservation Monitoring Centre                      | -   | F    | T | E     | +   | +   | -   |

|  |   |     |     |       |     |    |   |
|--|---|-----|-----|-------|-----|----|---|
| UN-REDD  | - | F   | T   | M E   | +++ | ++ | - |
| <b>Global/Regional Environmental NGOs/Civil Society Organisation with focus on forests</b> |   |     |     |       |     |    |   |
| ASOCAFOR   | - | F   | T   | M     | -   | +  | - |
| Birdlife International   | - | F   | T   | M     | +   | +  | - |
| CARE   | - | M   | T   | M     | ++  | ++ | - |
| COICA  | - | M   | P   | E     | ++  | +  | - |
| CI - Conservation International  | - | F   | T   | M E   | +   | ++ | - |
| FERN   | - | F   | T   | E     | +   | -  | - |
| FFI – Fauna and Flora International  | - | F   | T   | M     | +   | ++ | - |
| Forests Peoples Programme  | - | F   | T   | E     | +   | +  | - |
| Friends of the Earth   | - | F   | T   | E     | +   | +  | - |
| Global Witness   | - | M   | P   | E     | ++  | -  | - |
| Greenpeace   | - | M   | P   | E     | +++ | +  | - |
| IFSA – Intern. Forest Students Organisation  |   |     |     |       |     |    |   |
| Rainforest Alliance  | - | F   | P   | E     | ++  | +  | - |
| Red Interamericano de Bosques  | - | F   | T   | M     | +   | +  | - |
| STP- Society for Threatened Peoples  | - | M   | P   | E     | +   | -  | - |
| TNC – The Nature Conservancy   | - | F   | T   | M E   | +   | ++ | - |
| TRAFFIC  | - | F   | T   | T     | +   | +  | - |
| Tropenbos Netherlands  | - | F   | T   | M     | -   | ++ | - |
| Transparency International   | - | M   | P   | E     | ++  | -  | - |
| NTFP-EP – Non-Timber-Forest-Products-Exch P.   | - | F   | T   | M T   | +   | +  | - |
| WCS – Wildlife Conservation Society  | - | F   | T   | M     | +   | ++ | - |
| WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature   | - | F/M | T/P | M T E | +++ | ++ | - |
| <b>Private Sector Associations working on international forestry issues</b>                |   |     |     |       |     |    |   |
| ATIBT – Inter-African Forest Industry Association  | - | F   | T   | M T   | ++  | +  | - |
| IPPA – International Pulp and Paper Association  | - | F   | P   | T     | +   | -  | - |
| TFF- The Tropical Forest Foundation  | - | F   | T   | M     | -   | +  | - |
| TFT - Tropical Forest Trust  | - | F   | T   | M T   | -   | +  | - |
| WBCSD – World Business Council for SD  | - | M   | P   | T E   | ++  | -  | - |
| ACPWP - Advisory Com. on Paper & Wood Prod.  | - | F   | T   | T     | ++  | +  | - |

**Legend:**

- Sectoral: focusing on forest and environment (F); or multi-sectoral dealing with other sectors (M)
- Mainly political (P) or mainly technical (T);
- Working field: managing forests (M); products & trade (T); externalities (E)
- Global/regional outreach/National outreach: +++ strong; ++ considerable; + low; - none
- Working link to IAF/UNFF: +++ close; ++ considerable; + some; - none

#### **ANNEX 4: Country-led, Organisational-led, Major Groups-led, Regional-led Initiatives**

The organisation of CLIs, OLI, MGIs and RLIs has been generally assessed as a successful element of the IAF since 2000. They can basically be divided into two categories: (a) those initiatives that addressed issues in the UNFF MYPOW and (b) initiatives on issues indirectly addressed by the Forum's MYPOW. Initiatives that fall under the first category are:

1. CLI: Forthcoming workshop on International Arrangements on Forests beyond 2015, a Country-Led Initiative in Support of the UNFF (Beijing, 29-31 October 2014);
2. OLI: CPF Organization-Led Initiative (OLI) on Forest Financing in Support of the UNFF (Rome, 19-21 September 2012);
3. CLI: The CLI L'viv Forum on Forests in a Green Economy: Actions and Challenges for the Countries of Eastern Europe and Northern and Central Asia (L'viv, Ukraine, 11-14 September 2012);
4. CLI on a Pathway to a Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development: Focus on the Role of Markets in Sustainable Forest Management (Hanoi, Vietnam, 10-13 January 2012);
5. CLI on Contribution of Forests to a Green Economy (Bonn, 4-7 October 2011);
6. CLI: International Seminar on Challenges of Sustainable Forest Management—Integrating Environmental, Social and Economic Values of Forests (Tokyo, 8-10 March 2011);
7. CLI: Workshop on Forest Governance and REDD+ in Latin America and the Caribbean: a Country-Led Initiative in Support of the UNFF (Oaxaca, Mexico, 31 August – 3 September 2010);
8. MGLI: Major Groups-Led Initiative in Support of the UNFF: Applying Sustainable Forest Management to Poverty Reduction: Strengthening the Multi-Stakeholder Approach within the UNFF (Accra, Ghana, 26-30 July 2010);
9. CLI China: Forests for People: the role of National Forest Programmes and the NLBI in All Types of Forests: A Country-Led Initiative by the People's Republic of China in support of the UNFF (Guilin, China, 17-20 November 2009);
10. CLI: International Dialogue on Financing Sustainable Forest Management: a Country-Led Initiative in Support of the UNFF (Paramaribo, Suriname, 8-12 September 2008);
11. RLI: Australian-Swiss Region-Led Initiative (RLI) on Regional Input in Support of the UNFF (Geneva, 28-30 January 2008);
12. CLI: International Expert Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the UNFF: Charting the Way Forward to 2015 (Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, 13-16 February 2007);
13. CLI: International Expert Meeting on Scoping for a Future Agreement on Forests (Berlin, 16-18 November 2005);
14. CLI: International Expert Meeting on Innovative Financial Mechanisms: Searching for Viable Alternatives to Secure Basis for the Financial Sustainability of Forests (San Jose, Costa Rica, 29 March – 1 April 2005);
15. CLI: Future of the International Arrangement on Forests (Guadalajara, Mexico, 25-28 January 2005);
16. MGI: Expert Meeting on Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge and the Implementation of International Commitments (San Jose, Costa Rica, 6-10 December 2004);
17. CLI: Global Workshop on Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies in Support of SFM (Brazzaville, Congo, 24-27 February 2004);
18. CLI: Lessons Learned in Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action (Viterbo, Italy, 17-20 March 2003);
19. CLI/OLI: International Expert Meeting on Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Progress towards SFM (Yokohama, Japan, 5-8 November 2001);
20. CLI: International Meeting of Experts on Financing SFM (Oslo, Norway, 22-25 January 2001);
21. CLI: International Expert Meeting on Shaping the Programme of Work of the UNFF (Bonn, Germany, 7 November – 1 December 2000).

Those under the second category include:

22. CLI: Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralization in Africa, a South African-Swiss Country-Led Initiative in Support of the UNFF (Durban, South Africa, 8-11 April 2008);
23. OLI/CLI: Global Initiative on Forest Landscape Restoration (Petropolis, Brazil, 4-8 April 2005);
24. MGI: Practical Solutions to Combat Illegal Logging: Dialogue on Best Practice for Business and Civil Society (Hong Kong, 8-10 March 2005);
25. CLI: Swedish Country-Led Initiative on Lessons Learned on Sustainable Forest Management in Africa (Uppsala, Sweden, 18-22 October 2004);
26. OLI: Gender and Forestry: Challenges to Sustainable Livelihoods and Forestry Management (Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, 1-10 August 2004);
27. CLI/OLI: Decentralization, Federal Systems in Forestry and NFPs (Interlaken, Switzerland, 27-30 April 2004);
28. Swedish Country-Led Initiative on Lessons Learned on Sustainable Forest Management in Africa (Nairobi, Kenya, 9-13 February 2004);
29. CLI/OLI: Expert Meeting in the Role of Planted Forests in SFM (Wellington, New Zealand, 24-28 March 2003);
30. OLI: Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies for the Sustainable Management of Mangrove Forests (Managua, Nicaragua, 3-5 March 2003); and
31. CLI/OLI: Workshop on Forests and Biological Diversity (Accra, Ghana, 28-30 January 2002).

## **ANNEX 5: Progress towards the implementation of the Forest Instrument**

The principal sources of information on progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and towards the achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) are the 57 national reports submitted by Member States to UNFF 10 and the responses of governments to the questionnaire of the UNFF Secretariat on the future of the IAF. Other references such as FRA 2010, the WRI- UNEP- Google Global Forest Watch, the *FAO Yearbook of Forest Products 2011*, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Forest Management Certification process and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), among others, were also utilized in preparing the following assessment.

### ***The Global Objectives on Forests***

In assessing progress towards the achievement of the Forest Instrument GOFs, country experts (who were consulted through five regional workshops) agreed on the use of eight FRA indicators for Global Objectives 1-3. However, since an advance report of FRA 2015 will not be available by UNFF 11, only FRA data for 2005 to 2010 can be utilized, with data from the 2010 FRA coming only 3-4 years after the adoption of the GOFs.

#### ***Global Objective 1***

For Global Objective 1 on reversing “the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation”, FRA indicator T.1 on the extent of forests and other wooded land and FRA indicator T.2 on forest ownership and management rights were utilized, covering the period 2005 to 2010.

FRA 2010 shows that the world’s total forest cover was a little over 4 billion hectares, with other wooded land estimated at 1.1 billion hectares. Although the rate of deforestation worldwide is decreasing, it still continues at an alarming rate mainly due to conversion to agricultural lands, with approximately 13 million hectares lost per year since 2000.

More recent information has been provided by the on-line Global Forest Watch mapping application utilizing satellite technology, open data and crowd sourcing, launched by the World Resources Institute (WRI), UNEP and Google in February 2014. Its assessments indicate that 20.8 million hectares of tree cover was lost in 2012. From 2000 to 2012, 229.8 million hectares of forest cover was lost and 80.6 million hectares of forest cover was gained for a net loss of 149.2 million hectares, or 12.43 million hectares per year.

According to FRA 2010, by 2005 80% of the world’s forested area was publicly owned, with 18% privately owned and 2% classified as other ownership, including unknown and disputed ownership. Public ownership was predominant in all regions and subregions, with the exception of Europe (excluding the Russian Federation). Data was unavailable for 2010. With 80% of the world’s forests in the public domain, governments bear much of the responsibility for achieving Global Objective 1.

Both the FRA and Global Forest Watch data and information indicate that there has been some progress towards Global Objective 1 in the form of a reduced rate of global deforestation, but that global efforts still fall far short of the goal.

#### ***Global Objective 2***

In assessing progress towards the achievement of Global Objective 2 on enhancing “forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people”, five FRA indicators were incorporated: T.3.1 on the extent of forest designated and managed for production, T.3.2 on the extent of forest designated and managed for protection, T.3.3 on the extent of

forest designated and managed for conservation, T.3.4 on the extent of forest designated and managed for social services and T.11 on forest wood removals and the value of removals.

According to FRA 2010, approximately 30% of the world's forests are used for production of wood and non-wood forest products. Nevertheless, the area of productive forests has declined by approximately 50 million hectares from 1990 to 2010. On the positive side, plantation forests in 2010 accounted for 254 million hectares, or 7% of total global forest cover, with three-fourths consisting of native species.

While FRA 2010 reported on wood removals for 2005, no such data was available for 2010. Therefore, there was no basis to use this indicator for assessing progress towards Global Objective 2.

Approximately 8% of the world's forests are classified as protective, amounting to a surface area of around 330 million hectares designated for soil and water conservation, avalanche control, sand dune stabilization, desertification control or coastal protection. From 1990 to 2010, the area of forest designated for protective functions increased by 59 million hectares.

FRA 2010 reports that 463 million hectares of forest, or 11.5% of the world's total forested area, are designated primarily for the conservation of biological diversity. The largest portion is found in South America (116 million hectares), followed by North America and Africa. "Central America and South and Southeast Asia have the highest percentage of forests designated primarily for conservation, while Europe (including the Russian Federation), and Western and Central Asia have the lowest".<sup>142</sup> The increase in the surface area of protected areas reported by countries in 2010 was 5.5% above the figures provided in 2005.

A minority of countries reporting to FRA 2010 indicated that they had designated and managed forests for social services. Many countries indicated that this designation for them fell under the category of forests with multiple uses, making it difficult to quantify this area. "Globally, an estimated 3.7 percent of the world's forests were designated for the provision of recreation, tourism, education or conservation of cultural and spiritual heritage. However, the only subregions and regions with fairly good data were East Asia and Europe. The provision of such social services was reported as the primary management objective for 3 percent of the total forest area in East Asia and 2 percent in Europe."<sup>143</sup>

According to a new indicator in the UNFF 10 national reports for measuring the recreational aspect of forests, 24 developing countries reported that over 72 million persons collectively visited their national parks in 2011.<sup>144</sup> Fifteen reported increases in the number of visitors from 2005 to 2011, while six informed of declines. Three provided data only for 2011 and 14 provided no data for 2005 and 2011.

Six of the 14 donor countries provided figures on the number of visitors to their national parks in 2011, led by Japan (887.8 million), followed by the United States (279 million), Italy (36.5 million), Canada (10.6 million), Finland (2.1 million) and Portugal (0.2 million). Two experienced increases and two experienced declines in the number of visitors from 2005 to 2011, while there was little fluctuation for a fifth. A sixth provided data only for 2011.

Lithuania was the only country with an economy in transition that reported on the number of visitors to national parks, which grew from 180,000 in 2005 to 290,000 in 2011.

The results for Global Objective 2 are mixed. Forests designated for protective functions and for the conservation of biological diversity have increased in surface area, and payment for ecosystem services is on the rise, particularly in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Social services provided by national parks in the form of recreation and tourism are also on the rise. On the down side, the area of productive

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<sup>142</sup> FAO (2010), *The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010*, p. 57.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* p. 147.

<sup>144</sup> Approximately 65% of this total were visitors to national parks in China.

forests has declined from 1990 to 2010, although plantation forests in 2010 accounted for 7% of total global forest cover.

### *Global Objective 3*

One FRA 2010 indicator—T.3.10: forest designation and management—was used in assessing Global Objective 3 on increasing “significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests”. Fifty-two percent of total forest area are covered by a management plan, led by Europe (94.7%) followed by North and Central America (65.8%), Asia (64.7%), Oceania (24.1%), Africa (16.9%) and South America (16.1%). The information and data contained in FRA 2010 indicated a positive trend in the total forest area considered to be under SFM in 2010, although differences in definitions of SFM and lack of agreement on assessment methodology prevented concrete conclusions on trends.

Nineteen of the 38 developing and recipient countries that provided national reports to UNFF 10 reported that their countries were participating in SFM certification programmes. Of these, 12 participate in the FSC Forest Management Certification process. Countries that reported the largest extensions of certified forests in hectares were Brazil (7.28 million), Malaysia (4.65 million), South Africa (1.57 million), Mexico (0.59 million), Ghana (0.42 million), Guyana (0.36 million) and Venezuela (0.14 million). Eighteen countries reported that they do not participate in forest certification programmes and one country provided no response.

All but two of the 14 donor countries participate in forest certification programmes, led by Canada with 150 million hectares in 2011. In addition to being the country with the largest extension of third-party certified forests, accounting for approximately 40% of the world’s total, from 2005 to 2010 it increased its area of certified forests by 30 million hectares. Canada is followed in total surface area of certified forests by the United States (84.45 million), Finland (22.43 million), Australia (11.04 million), Norway (9.37 million), Germany (8 million), Finland (5.7 million), Austria (3 million), Japan (1.26 million), Italy (0.81 million), Switzerland (0.68 million) and Portugal (0.39 million).

Three of the five countries with economies in transition participate in third-party forest certification processes: the Slovak Republic (1.38 million), the Ukraine (1.2 million) and Lithuania (1 million), while the other two do not.

A broader examination of forest certification processes provides a sharper picture of trends towards the sustainable management of forests. The majority of reporting countries informed that they are engaged in the FSC process and/or the PEFC, which is the most extensive of global certification programmes. A number of allied national certification processes were also cited such as, among others, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) in the United States, the Brazilian Forest Certification Programme (CERFLOR), the Lembaga Ekolabel Indonesia (LEI) and the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC).

Taken collectively, by February 2014 the certification of the world’s sustainably managed forests reached 437.41 million hectares, equivalent to 11 percent of the earth’s total forest cover. This was an increase of nearly 161 million hectares since 2006, representing an increase of 58.2 percent in certified forests in the eight years from 2006 to 2014.<sup>145</sup> It should be noted, however, that these figures are inflated since there is some double counting, unofficially estimated at around 10 percent, between FSC and PEFC.

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<sup>145</sup> As of April 2014, forests certified by PEFC and FSC covered 258 million hectares and 179.41 million hectares respectively for a total of 437.41 million hectares. Forest Stewardship Council, Global FSC certificates, types and distribution (April 2014), p. 4; and [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org) (consulted 24 April 2014).

When examined according to type of forest, of the 179.41 million hectares certified by FSC in April 2014, 52.7 % are boreal; 37.0%, temperate; and 10.2%, tropical/sub-tropical.<sup>146</sup>

If the FRA figure of 460.03 million hectares that were in protected status in 2010, is assumed not to have declined since then and is added to the figures for certified forest, then the total amount of the world's forests that are protected and sustainably managed in 2014 is approximately 897.44 million hectares, which is equivalent to 22.5% of the world's existing forests. However, there is the problem of double counting between FSC and PEFC, as well as some double counting between forest certified areas and protected areas, since some countries will have protected areas that are also forest certified.

UNFF 10 national reports, FRA 2010 and data from global and national certification processes indicate progress towards the achievement of Global Objective 3, although the goal is far from being achieved. While a number of countries are participating in forest certification processes, many have yet to move in this direction.

#### *Global Objective 4*

UNFF 10 national reports are perhaps the major source of information on progress towards the achievement of Global Objective 4 on reversing “the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and” mobilizing “significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management”.

Given that this was a first attempt by countries to report on overall budgetary figures for forest financing, figures were presented inconsistently from one country to another, largely due to distortions in the selected indicators that were introduced to the UNFF 10 reporting format following the conclusion of the five regional workshops on reporting held from 2011 to 2012. Moreover, many countries reported that forest financing was spread across a number of sectors and that data from these sectors was not easily available. Indicators for reporting on Global Objective 4 to future sessions of the Forum need to be further refined with a clearer assessment methodology, building on the indicators used in the UNFF 10 reporting format and the outcomes of the five regional workshops on reporting.

Recipient countries: Of the 38 developing and recipient countries, 22 reported that there had been a significant increase in forest funding in their countries from 2007 to 2011; 12 reported no significant increase in forest funding; and 4 declined to respond or provided unclear responses.

Twenty-four developing and recipient countries provided overall government budgetary figures for 2007 and 2011. Of these, six countries (Afghanistan, China, Jamaica, Nepal, Philippines and Venezuela) reported increases in forest financing over 100% during this period. Three reported declines in funding. Eight countries provided figures only for 2011, while another six provided no figures for either year. Fourteen countries reported that forest financing was spread across various sectors, including agriculture, energy, water, climate change, nature conservation and other sectors.

Twenty of the 38 reported that they had established national forest funds to mobilize additional resources for SFM.<sup>147</sup>

On the critical issue of trends in forest-related official development assistance (ODA), 17 countries provided information for 2011, but eight did not for 2007, making it more difficult to assess if there has been an improvement or not. Three countries reported increases from 2007 to 2011. Five recorded

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<sup>146</sup> Forest Stewardship Council, Global FSC certificates, types and distribution (April 2014), p. 11.

<sup>147</sup> Although a diversity of national forest funds exist, they generally are trust funds that receive a percentage of different forms of government revenues, such as taxes or fees, with the funds deposited being destined for general or specific forest management activities. Such trust funds have also been established in countries at the state/provincial and local levels.

declines in ODA flows, while one did not receive ODA at all during this period. Most—21 countries—were unable or did not provide ODA figures for forest financing for both 2007 and 2011.

The 17 countries that provided information for 2011 received a total of \$168.7 million in forest-related ODA. Of this amount, nearly two-thirds is for five countries.

Donor countries: Eight of the 14 donor countries responded that there had not been a significant increase in the mobilization of forest financing in their countries from 2007 to 2011, while four responded affirmatively. Four declined to respond.

Half of the donor countries reported overall government budgetary figures for forest financing for 2007 and 2011. Of these, five countries (Cyprus, Finland, France, Israel and the United States) reported increases in government forest financing of 12 to 27% from 2007 to 2011. For two, government forest financing remained static for this period. Five others responded that the figures for both years were unavailable, indicating that financing was spread across multiple sectors (agriculture, energy, water, climate change, nature conservation and other sectors) and, in all likelihood, is more difficult to track and record. One responded that it does not have a specific budget for forests.

Eleven of the 14 countries provided data and information on forest-related ODA provided in 2011, with nine also reporting figures for 2007. Of the latter, six reported increases and three reported decreases for the 2007 to 2011 period. Substantial increases in forest-related ODA were provided by Norway, France, the United States and Canada.

Collectively, 10 of the 11 donor countries contributed \$1.494 billion.<sup>148</sup> However, much of this was destined for REDD+ and climate change initiatives by donor countries such as Norway, France and Germany, among others. The leading contributors of forest-related ODA in 2011 were Norway (\$545 million), France (\$270 million), the United States (\$250 million), Japan (\$172 million), Canada (\$49 million) and Finland (\$43.5 million).

The UNFF 10 national reporting format included a new indicator on the establishment of mechanisms for the payment of ecosystem services (PES). Of 38 developing and recipient countries, 10 reported that they had established PES mechanisms, with most being in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Countries that have expanded substantially financial resources for PES payments from 2005 to 2011 include China (\$1,184.4 million), Mexico (\$75.4 million), Argentina (\$32 million) and Costa Rica (\$18.9 million).

Of the 14 donor countries, 5 reported the existence of PES mechanisms, with a sixth reporting that opportunities for PES are being explored at the state and local levels. Three countries were unable to provide figures for the payment of ecosystem services in 2011. Austria reported that there was a diversity of PES mechanisms in the country, but that it could only provide an estimate for the national mechanism. Switzerland and Japan reported that their payment for ecosystem services amounted to \$633.9 million and \$311.4 million respectively in 2011. Eight other donor countries reported that they do not have PES mechanisms.

Three of the five countries with economies in transition reported that they have established PES mechanisms, but were unable to provide estimates of the payments. Based solely on the UNFF 10 national reports, the results on progress towards the achievement of Global Objective 4 are mixed. The trend in ODA flows for forest financing cannot be determined with the information provided by only 11 donor and 17 recipient countries. Nearly 60% of developing countries reported significant increases in forest financing, but from the information and data provided it would appear that this was the result of increases in public sector forest financing, innovative country financial mechanisms such as payment for

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<sup>148</sup> It was not possible to include the information for Switzerland since it was not year specific, but oriented more to overall support to the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, REDD+ projects and the REDD+ Partnership, among others.

ecosystem services, national forest funds and ODA, albeit the information on the latter was sparse. A few donor countries reported significant increases in forest-related ODA, with most of it related to REDD+. In any case, as indicated earlier, the indicators for reporting on Global Objective 4 to future sessions of the Forum need to be further refined with a clearer assessment methodology, building on the indicators used in the UNFF 10 reporting format and the outcomes of the five regional workshops on reporting.

### ***Cross-cutting and thematic clusters of the Forest Instrument***

The European Union and some of its member countries reported in their submitted views and proposals on the IAF that the actions to be undertaken by Member States in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Forests Instrument were already embedded in their national forest policies and plans before its adoption in 2007. A number of developing countries and countries with economies in transition have demonstrated progress in the implementation of the actions called for in the Forest Instrument, while several others appear to be lagging.

Following is an assessment of progress on policies and measures called for in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Forest Instrument that for purposes of reporting have been grouped according to five cross-cutting clusters (1A-1E) and seven thematic clusters (2A-2G).

**1A: Strengthening political commitment for sustainable forest management:** Two FRA 2010 T14 indicators on the existence of a forest policy statement with a national scope and the existence of national forest programmes (NFPs) were used to assess political commitment for SFM at the national level. National forest policies existed in 135 countries, while 46 countries did not have them. Another 52 countries did not provide data. The figures were very similar for NFPs with 135 and 46 countries indicating the existence and non-existence of NFPs respectively and 55 providing no data. Forty-five countries endorsed their national forest policies between 2005 and 2009; the other 90 did so before 2004. According to FRA 2010, it appears that countries have widely incorporated the commitments negotiated within the framework of the IPF/IFF/UNFF continuum and that one-third of the 115 NFPs initiated since 2000 originated after 2005.<sup>149</sup>

Cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination for achieving SFM is an important element of the Forest Instrument and UNFF resolutions. A new indicator on cross sectoral-coordination mechanisms was incorporated into the UNFF 10 national reporting format. Of the 57 countries that submitted national reports, 53 responded that they had established inter-institutional mechanisms or processes for cross sectoral cooperation to achieve SFM. Three responded that they had not and one did not respond. The descriptions provided revealed a great deal of diversity among the mechanisms and processes employed. This is a very interesting subject that could be further considered at a future session of the Forum. It would provide countries the opportunity to exchange experiences and lessons learned on how to address more effectively the challenge of generating greater cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination in support of SFM and avoid policies and actions that are at cross purposes.

Twenty-eight developing and recipient countries reported that their NFPs had been revised to include specific measures and resources for eradicating poverty. Seventeen of these also responded that their national poverty eradication plans and strategies (NPESs) or their equivalent have been revised to incorporate SFM. Two that did not revise their NFPs to address poverty eradication informed that they had revised their NPESs to include SFM. Eight did neither, although five of these indicated that their NFPs and national forest policies were addressing poverty eradication.

The large majority of donor countries responded not relevant or no. However, three did report that their NFPs and relevant policies are addressing poverty eradication, with one indicating that corresponding revisions have been made to the country's NFP and NPES.

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<sup>149</sup> FAO (2010), pp. 151-152.

One measure of the importance of the Forest Instrument to a country is its translation into official national languages. For 31 of the 57 countries, the Forest Instrument was available in their official language since it was translated by the UN Secretariat from English into the other five official UN languages for its adoption by the General Assembly. However, three of these also translated the Forest Instrument into other languages. India translated it into Hindi, Madagascar into Malaga and Switzerland into German. Other countries translated the Forest Instrument into Albanian, Burmese (Myanmar), Dari and Pashto (Afghanistan), Dutch (Suriname), Finnish, Italian, Japanese, Malay, Miskito (Nicaragua), Sinhala (Sri Lanka), Slovak and Turkish. Switzerland, Germany and Austria collaborated in translating it into German. In short, in addition to being available in the six official UN languages, the Forest Instrument has been translated into 16 other languages.

**1B: Financing sustainable forest management:** This is covered under GOF 4.

**1C: Capacity building and technology transfer:** For measuring progress in this area, two new indicators - on the adequacy of capacity and available technology, and on the employment of incentives for promoting improved technologies and practices for SFM - were utilized.

Twenty-three developing countries reported that they do not have adequate capacity and technology to implement SFM, while thirteen answered that they did. Two did not respond. The comments provided by countries immediately after this question provide insights into the challenges that they are facing.

Twelve of the 14 donor countries informed that they are actively engaged in SFM-related technology transfer. Only one country with an economy in transition reported that it is engaged in SFM technology transfer as a donor.

Five developing and recipient countries—Brazil, Mexico, Nepal, South Africa and Sri Lanka—and one country with an economy in transition—the Slovak Republic—reported that they are also donors providing capacity building and technology transfer for SFM to other countries within their regions through South-South and North-North cooperation. It is likely that this type of support is also channeled through triangular cooperation, which is addressed further below under enhanced international cooperation.

Incentives are helping to promote improved technologies and practices for SFM in 28 developing and recipient countries. These include low interest loans, tax breaks, subsidies and SFM certification programmes for improved market access, among others. Several of these countries were employing three or more of these types of incentives.

Ten donor countries reported that they have in place incentives for promoting improved technologies and practices for SFM, mainly in the form of subsidies, tax breaks and economic benefits derived from participating in forest certification processes. Three answered that they do not have such incentives and one did not respond. Four of the five countries with economies in transition informed that they are employing incentives for promoting SFM technologies and practices, with subsidies and forest certification processes being the most cited.

For the remaining clusters of the policies and measures of the Forest Instrument, it was necessary to utilize new indicators for assessing progress in their implementation since these were not adequately covered in FRA 2010.

**1D: Stakeholder participation:** The engagement of stakeholders in achieving and maintaining SFM features prominently in the Forest Instrument. All but two of the 57 countries reporting to UNFF 10 in 2013 informed that they have programmes for involving stakeholders in SFM policy formulation, planning and implementation. Fifty countries have established stakeholder participation programmes at the national level, 41 at the sub-national level and 44 at the local level. Thirty-five countries have stakeholder participation programmes at all three levels. As in the case of inter-institutional cross-sectoral

cooperation and coordination in support of SFM, this is a subject that could be further considered at a future session of the Forum, taking into account the wide range of experiences and approaches described by countries in their comments.

**1E: Enhanced international cooperation:** Fifty-two of the 57 countries responded that they are actively engaged in international cooperation in SFM. Thirty-six specified that it was in the form of North-South Cooperation. Twenty-one developing and recipient countries actively participate in South-South cooperation, while nine Donor countries and countries with economies in transition are involved in North-North cooperation. One donor country—Australia—is involved in both South-South cooperation with developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as horizontal cooperation with New Zealand. Six donor countries and 13 recipient countries are engaged in triangular cooperation.<sup>150</sup> South-South and triangular cooperation appear to be increasing as important pathways for catalyzing SFM in developing and recipient countries.

**2A: Forest law enforcement and governance:** Since the adoption of the Forest Instrument in 2007, 34 of the 38 developing and recipient countries reported that they have taken steps to strengthen forest-related legislation, law enforcement and governance in support of SFM. Thirteen of 14 donor countries and four of five countries with economies in transition have also done so. However, the national reports do not provide an indication of the role played by the Forest Instrument in these developments.

Thirteen of the 14 donor countries, two of the five countries with economies in transition and 35 of the developing and recipient countries are participating in international agreements or partnerships to address illicit international trafficking in forest products, including timber, wildlife and other forest biological resources. Further details on how countries addressed this critical issue are provided in the comments section of the respective national reports and would be worth addressing in a future session of the Forum.

**2B: International Trade in forest products:** This issue also features prominently in the Forest Instrument. According to the *FAO Yearbook of Forest Products 2011*, worldwide importation of forest products, excluding non-wood forest products, increased from \$238.6 billion in 2007 to \$258.4 billion in 2011. For the same period, exports increased from \$234.3 billion to \$245.9 billion<sup>151</sup>

All 14 of the donor countries reporting to UNFF 10 provided statistics on imports of timber products for the years 2007 and 2011. Thirteen did so for exports.

Five experienced a growth in imports during this period, while nine saw declines. Collectively, imports declined from \$125.1 billion in 2007 to \$116.1 billion in 2011. The largest importers in 2011 were Germany (\$37.6 billion), the United States (\$31.4 billion), Japan (\$12.5 billion) and Italy (\$11.4 billion).

Exports of timber products increased for seven and declined for six. When aggregated for the 13 donor countries, timber exports also declined from \$123.8 billion in 2007 to \$121.6 billion in 2011. The largest exporters in 2011 were Germany (\$49.1 billion), the United States (\$34.6 billion), Finland (\$14.5 billion) and Canada (\$9.1 billion).

The global economic downturn commencing in 2008 may have contributed to the decline in overall trade of forest products from 2007 to 2011 for reporting donor countries.

Twenty-three developing and recipient countries reported an aggregate of \$20.6 billion in timber products imported in 2007. Twenty provided figures for 2011, which together increased to \$30.8 billion.

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<sup>150</sup> Triangular cooperation is a recent form of development cooperation in which a donor country provides an emerging donor that has technical expertise, such as Brazil, Mexico, India, Malaysia, South Africa or Morocco, with resources aimed at capacity building in beneficiary countries that are located in the same region as the emerging donor.

<sup>151</sup> FAO, *FAO Yearbook of Forest Products*, FAO Forestry Series 46, FAO Statistics Series 202 (Rome, 2013), pp. 226-228.

The others did not respond or indicated that the figures were not available. Of the 15 countries that provided figures for imports for both years, 11 increased their imports and four experienced declines. The leading importers among the reporting developing and recipient countries in 2011 were China (\$14.0 billion), Venezuela (\$3.5 billion), Saudi Arabia (\$3.3 billion), Brazil (\$2.6 billion), Vietnam (\$1.3 billion) and Mexico (\$1.36 billion).

Twenty-five developing and recipient countries reported a combined \$22.7 billion in timber exports in 2007. For 2011, 21 reporting countries exported an aggregate of \$23.7 billion. Twenty countries provided data for both years, with 10 showing increases in exports and eight declines during this period. Two—a small island developing state and a low forest cover country—reported zero exports. The leading exporters in 2011 were Brazil (\$9.7 billion), Malaysia (\$6.1 billion), Vietnam (\$3.7 billion) and the Philippines (\$2.2 billion).<sup>152</sup>

In contrast to donor countries, although on a much smaller scale, international trade in timber products demonstrated larger increases in imports and modest increases in exports for reporting developing and recipient countries from 2007 to 2011.

Despite their importance nationally and in international trade, data and information on non-wood forest products (NWFPs) remains inconsistent, fragmented and incomplete. Nevertheless, the national reports submitted to UNFF 10 provide a glimpse and insights into their scope and value. A number of NWFPs were identified in the national reports, including, among others, nuts (chestnuts, pistachios and pine nuts), fruits, herbs, mushrooms, honey, cinnamon, anise flower, frankincense, cork, bamboo, Christmas trees and game meat.

Seven donor and 13 developing and recipient countries provided data for non-wood forest product (NWFP) imports for 2007, which together added up to \$8.1 billion. This figure increased to a combined \$17.0 billion in 2011. The 19 countries that provided data for 2011 also did so for 2007. The major importer of NWFPs among the reporting countries in 2011 was China (\$16.0 billion). Far behind were Germany (\$347 million), Japan (\$201 million), Portugal (\$174 million), the United States (\$115 million) and India (\$53 million).

For these same countries, exports of NWFPs were significantly lower. Together they amounted to \$2.4 billion in 2007, dropping moderately to \$2.2 billion in 2011.

**2C: Protection of forests: This is covered under GOF 3.**

**2D: Science and research:** The further refinement of SFM requires solid scientific and technical knowledge, which is reinforced in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Forest Instrument. Forty-two countries reported that they have an institute or institutes that are promoting the development and application of scientific knowledge and technological innovations for SFM. Eleven developing countries and one country with an economy in transition informed that they do not have any such research and development institutes. Of the 42 countries with forest research institutes, 36 offered extension programmes for the use of their scientific and technological innovations directed at forest owners, local and indigenous communities and other stakeholders.

Nearly half of developing and recipient countries were unable to provide figures for funding SFM research. Others could only provide it for the public sector, since figures from the private sector were not easily available. With few exceptions, funding for research and development in SFM in developing countries in 2011 reported by 17 countries is very low. The exceptions are China, India, South Africa and Sri Lanka, but their research budgets (ranging from \$19.7 million to \$40 million in 2011) pale in

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<sup>152</sup> The large majority of the developing and recipient countries providing international trade figures for forest products participated in the five regional workshops on the Forest Instrument and national reports described earlier on.

comparison to Canada, Finland, Italy, Japan and the United States, which varied from \$66.2 million to \$454.7 million. Of these five developed countries, only Canada, which had the largest research funding, and Italy aggregated funding from both the public and private sectors.

**2E: Public awareness and education:** The most important public awareness event in support of SFM was the IYF in 2011. A richness of detail is provided in the national reports of the many activities organized in support of the IYF. Fifty-four of the reporting countries organized a large number of activities promoting SFM throughout the year. Only two responded that they did not organize activities in support of IYF and one did not respond. Fifty-five countries also reported that they have on-going actions for increasing public awareness of the importance of and benefits provided by forests and their sustainable management.

**2F: Private sector and industry:** No other issue is reiterated more in the Forest Instrument than the critical role of the private sector and industry in the achievement of SFM. Forty-seven of the 57 countries reported that they have in place participatory mechanisms for engaging the private sector and industry. Eight stated that they had no such mechanisms and two did not respond.

Forty-one countries answered that they have established or strengthened public-private partnerships to advance SFM. Of these, 10 are donor countries and three are countries with economies in transition. Twenty-eight are developing and recipient countries.

**2G: Indigenous and local communities:** The participation of indigenous and local communities as a key element for achieving SFM is highlighted in the Forest Instrument. Forty-seven of the reporting countries have established participatory mechanisms for the engagement of indigenous and local communities. Of these, 24 had participatory mechanisms for indigenous people, with most of the others responding that this was not relevant to them. Forty-five had participatory mechanisms for local communities.

Forty-five offered training and extension programmes to indigenous and local communities for developing and implementing resource management approaches for reducing pressures on forests. Developing and recipient countries with the most extensive extension programmes in 2011 included China, Liberia, Mexico, Myanmar, Turkey, Sri Lanka and Venezuela. Twenty-three countries did not have data available on the number of persons reached through extension programmes.

On the issue of tenure and user rights of local communities and indigenous peoples over publicly owned forests, forty-six stated that it is recognized by law. Five answered no and three that it was not relevant to their countries. Fifty-five responded that indigenous and local communities are benefitting in their countries from the goods and services provided by forests. On the question of traditional forest-related knowledge and practices, 45 reported that it was being used in forest management, planning and implementation. Eight responded no, two that it was not relevant to their situation and two did not respond.

#### **Concluding observations:**

Progress in the implementation of the cross-sectoral and thematic clusters of policies and measures contained in the Forest Instrument have been substantial according to the UNFF 10 national reports and other reference sources, although the causal relationship between the Forest Instrument and the national actions in support of SFM are not always clearly stated or perceived. Nevertheless, the Forest Instrument and its Global Objectives on Forests serve as both a framework and roadmap for achieving SFM that for some countries directly led to implementation and for other countries indirectly contributed to a national dialogue leading to complementary actions.

Greater support is needed to improve the effectiveness of the Forest Instrument. To this end, the establishment of a strategic trust fund for supporting the implementation of the Forest Instrument and the achievement of its GOFs would catalyze SFM efforts at the national level, particularly in developing

countries and countries with economies in transition. The trust fund would be strategic in the sense that it would provide priority support to (1) the development of national action plans for the implementation of the Forest Instrument, (2) the preparation of national reports on progress in the implementation of the Forest Instrument and towards the achievement of its GOFs and (3) the further mobilization of resources for the implementation of the national action plans of the Forest Instrument.

Commencing with the UNFF MYPOW adopted in 2007, Member States have been requested to submit voluntary reports on the implementation of the Forest Instrument and progress towards the achievement of its GOFs. The national reports to UNFF 10 are a starting point for the establishment of indicators and a baseline for measuring implementation and progress. However, it is unrealistic to expect countries to report on the implementation of the Forest Instrument and progress towards the achievement of its GOFs every two years, given that this is too short of a period for clear trends to emerge. It would be highly advisable for national reports on the Forest Instrument and its GOFs to be undertaken every five years, preferably the year following the issuance of the FRA, e.g., 2016, 2021 and so on. This would also greatly reduce the reporting burden for Member States.

## ANNEX 6 Current UNFF Secretariat's budget and staffing

### Budget in DESA context:

- The regular budget (RB) of UNFFS started at US\$1.56 million in 2002-3 and reached US\$3.35 million in 2014-15; its share was 1.5% and 2.4% of the DESA total regular budget in these two years, respectively.
- The extra-budgetary (XB) budget of UNFFS started at US\$1.35 million in 2002-3 and reached US\$3.53 million in 2014-15; its share was 1.5% and 39% of the DESA total extra-budgetary budget.
- Among 10 DESA Divisions/Offices, the UNFFS received the lowest allocation of RB resources and increases since its inception 13 years ago.
- Unlike other DESA Divisions which are receiving increased RB resources, UNFFS has increasingly been relying on extra-budgetary funding to implement its programme of work. This situation has created major challenges for the Secretariat, as the XB resources are neither sustainable nor predictable.

### Budget in Rio Conventions Context:

- For the period 2009-2013, the regular budget of UNFFS rose from US\$ 3.01 million in 2009 to US\$ 3.44 million in 2013, but has remained smaller than any of the Rio Conventions secretariats
- On average, the size of the UNFFS budget is equivalent to 26%, 30%, and 11% of the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC budgets, respectively. The UNFSS budget has over the period 2009 – 2013 grown about as fast as that of the UNFCCC and faster than for the CBD and UNCCD

### Staffing in DESA context:

- For the period 2002-2014, the UNFF Secretariat has been staffed through RB, XB, and CPF secondment, in total rising from 9 in 2002 to 17 in 2014 (but now falling – see below).
- Out of 426 DESA RB in 2002/3, UNFFS had 6, a number that remained unchanged until 2008/9 when it rose by 2 posts to 8. The respective shares in the two years were 1.4% and 1.8%;
- For XB posts, the DESA total in 2004/5 was 19 posts when UNFSS had 5; in 2014/15 all the DESA XB posts are in UNFSS ;
- Unlike other DESA Divisions/Offices, UNFFS has increasingly been relying on XB positions
- The number of RB posts has remained at 8 since 2008. Among 10 DESA Divisions/Offices, UNFFS has the smallest number of RB staff.
- For 2014-2015, only 4 out of 8 XB staff can remain in their XB posts due to lack of unearmarked XB resources. (In 2011-13, 78% of XB funds were earmarked for specific projects and could not be used for staff.) So the actual number of UNFFS staff for 2014-2015 currently stands at 13 (8-RB, 4-XB and 1-CPF seconded)
- The level of staffing support through CPF secondment has diminished both in terms of number and staff level, showing the downward trend since 2004.

### Staffing in context of Rio Conventions:

- For the entire period 2009-2013, the UNFF Secretariat had, even after adding 8 extra-budgetary staff members, much lower numbers than any of the Rio Conventions.
- For the period 2009-2013, the number of UNFFS staff has not changed whereas the number of CBD and UNFCCC staff recorded 4.4 and 19.8 per cent increases respectively.

## **ANNEX 7: Biographies of the Independent Assessment Team Members**

### **Consultant Team Members**

**Dr Jürgen Blaser (Switzerland)** is Professor for International Forestry and Climate Change at the School for Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences of the Bern University of Applied Sciences (since August 2011), and also acts as the Global Advisor on Forests to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Between 2002 and 2011 he was the head of the Forest and Environment Team and Vice-Director of Swiss Intercooperation. From 1996 to 2001 he was Senior Forestry Advisor at the World Bank. Previously, he worked for more than 15 years in international forest development cooperation with assignments in Latin America, Africa, Tropical Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Dr Blaser was chair of the ITTO in 2001 and led the development of the Status of Tropical Forest Management Reports 2005 and 2011 for ITTO. More recently, he has advised the World Bank on the design of the Forest Investment Programme, and he was a core member of the Technical Advisory Panel for the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. He also was the team leader of the Strategic Evaluation of FAO's role and work in forestry 2011-2012. Dr Blaser has served on the Boards of CIFOR and Tropenbos, and is currently serving on the Board of the Tropical Forest Foundation and the Sustainability Panel of Precious Woods.

**Dr. Jorge Illueca (Panama)** received his Ph.D. in History with a specialization in Environmental History of the Neotropics from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1983. From 1972 to 1980, he was Assistant Professor in the Mexican-American Studies and Latin American Studies Departments at California State University, Los Angeles, serving as Department Chairman from 1973-1974. From 1983 to 1989 he was the Executive Secretary of the National Commission on the Environment of the Republic of Panama. During this period he was also appointed Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary Ambassador of the Republic of Panama to various global and regional environmental meetings. He was elected President of the Governing Council of UNEP for the 1986-1987 period. From 1989 to 1992 he served as the Coordinator of Environmental Management of UNEP. In 1993 he was a Research Affiliate and Guggenheim Fellow at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI). From 1995 to 2002 he served as Assistant Executive Director of UNEP in charge of the Division of the Environment Programme (1995-1998) and the Division of Environmental Conventions (1998-2002). In 2002, he was seconded by UNEP to the UNFF Secretariat to help facilitate the negotiations of a legally-binding/non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. He is currently the President of Latin American Consultants for Sustainable Development and Environmental Management (LAGA).

**Mr. Mafa E. Chipeta (Malawi)** holds forestry B. Sc Hons and M. Sc degrees with specialisations in forest products and industry planning from the University of Wales in Britain. On retirement in 2010, Mafa Chipeta was serving as FAO Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa and FAO Representative to Ethiopia, the African Union and UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Earlier he had served in FAO Rome Headquarters as Director of Policy Assistance for all aspects of agriculture and food security, co-ordinating 9 policy offices worldwide; was first FAO Focal Point for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for which he synthesised the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) later adopted by the African Union. Before that he was FAO Representative in Uganda, FAO Senior Forestry Officer and acting head of planning and statistics, UN system forestry focal point for follow-up to the Rio Earth Summit, after service as a professional forester and forest industries expert in FAO, junior expert in UNECA (Addis Ababa), Malawi government and the private sector. During 1999 – 2001, Chipeta was Deputy Director-General of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in Indonesia. Since retirement, Mafa Chipeta has done a wide range of consultancy or pro-bono assignments. Most assignments have been on agriculture and food security at both regional and country level. Global clients or partners have included FAO, IUCN, Instituto Lula of Brazil and Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry. Regional clients or partners have included African Union, UNECA, SADC, Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU), African Forestry Forum. Country work has included Ethiopia, Malawi and South Sudan, while analysis has covered more.

**Dr Maxim Lobovikov**, citizen of the Russian Federation, Master in Science (MSc) in Economics on Forestry and Forest Industry (with honor), PhD in Economics (1985), Docent (1989) at the Saint-Petersburg Forestry Academy (Russia). Post-Doctoral study and research work at the University of California at Berkeley (USA) and University of Helsinki (Finland). He has Master of Business Administration degree (MBA) from the Rutgers, the State University of New

Jersey (USA, 2006). He has over 40 years of work experience in research, education, project, business, administration and consulting work on forest economics, management, policy, environment and development in Russia, Europe, North and South America, Asia and Africa. Author of over 70 scientific publications and books. Over 20 years of international experience at the University of California at Berkeley (USA), University of Helsinki, Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA), European Forest Institute - EFI (Finland). Director of Economic Program at the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (Beijing, China), Director of the International Commodity Body (ICB) at the Common Fund for Commodities (Amsterdam, Netherlands), Senior management at the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (Rome, Italy). Coordinated the Russian Forest Sector Outlook Study to 2030. An editor and author of "World Forests, Society and Environment" book series. Expert of international level on forest sector economics, management, administration and policy.

**Ricardo M. Umali (Philippines)** has extensive international and national experiences for 39 years in the private, government, and academic sectors on forestry, natural resources, and environmental management, climate change, and related fields. For the last 18 years, he has been the President and CEO of Sustainable Ecosystems International Corp. and managed about 90 development projects in Asia/Pacific. He is Board Director of PICOP Resources Inc. and Geodata System Technologies Inc. He served as International Team Leader / Consultant / Project Manager to 49 environment, natural resources and related projects funded by multilateral and bilateral organizations like the WB, UN, ADB, ITTO, FAO, UNDP, ESCAP, CIDA, FINNIDA, East-West Center and others in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Rome, Hawaii, New York, Japan, Brazil, and some parts of Africa. He was a former Assistant Secretary, Undersecretary, Acting Secretary, and Director-General (Natural Resources Management Center) of the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). He has represented the Philippines in various international meetings, conventions and conferences organized by UN and other international agencies. He obtained a degree in forestry from the University of the Philippines College of Forestry and Renewable Natural Resources and graduated with a Master's degree, university fellow, from the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies in 1974.

## ANNEX 8: Independent Assessment Team Inception Report (February 2014)

The inception report is an integral part of this report. The contents page is presented here; the full text is available on the UNFF Website<sup>153</sup>.

### DEFINITIONS AS USED IN THE IAF INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

1. INTRODUCTION**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 1.1 The Framework of the Assessment**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
    - 1.1.1 Rio Summit and Post-UNCED Dialogue on Forests
    - 1.1.2 Forests in the UNCED Land Cluster and the three 'Rio Conventions'
  - 1.2 The Origins of the Present Independent Assessment
  - 1.3 Purpose of the Inception Report
2. BACKGROUND OF THE ASSESSMENT
  - 2.1 The Global Context Shaping the International Arrangement on Forests
    - 2.1.1 The Forest Resource Base
    - 2.1.2 Forests in a Global Change Perspective
    - 2.1.3 Global Forest Governance**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 2.2 Overview of UNFF's mandate
    - 2.2.1 Principal Functions of the Forum
    - 2.2.2 Institutional Set-Up of the IAF and its Mandate
  - 2.3 Resourcing UNFF **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
    - 2.3.1 Funding for Action in SFM
    - 2.3.2 Resourcing of UNFF Secretariat for Facilitating Dialogue
3. CONTENT OF THE ASSESSMENT**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 3.1 Purpose of the Assessment**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 3.2 Scope of the Assessment**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 3.3 Stakeholder Analysis
  - 3.4 Constraints Facing the Assessment
- 4 ASSESSMENT DESIGN
  - 4.1 Methodology
  - 4.2 Assessment Questions
  - 4.3 Data Collection and Tools
    - 4.3.1 Study of former review findings
    - 4.3.2 Interviews **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.4 Quality Assurance
5. ORGANISATION OF THE ASSESSMENT
  - 5.1 Roles and Responsibilities
  - 5.2 Timeline
  - 5.3 Travel of the Independent Assessment Team Members**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 5.4 Consolidation Phase (Feb – June 2014)
  - 5.5 Deliverables**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Inception Report: Key Documents and References

### ANNEXES

Annex 2: Current initiatives that shape global forest policies beyond UNFF

Annex 4: Proposed Table of Contents for the Main Consultant Report on the Assessment of the IAF

Annex 5: Overview on Former Assessments of the International Arrangements on Forests

Annex 7: Participation in UNFF Workshops, Participation in UNFF Workshops, Country-Led Initiatives, Organization-Led Initiatives, and Ad-Hoc Expert Group meetings

Annex 8: Official documents and decisions of the CPF member organizations with reference to UNFF and Forest Instrument since 2005

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<sup>153</sup> See <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/iaf/IAF-Inception-Report-Feb2014.pdf>.

