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United Nations Forum on Forests
Open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group
established pursuant to paragraph 48 of Economic and Social
Council resolution 2015/33
Second meeting
Bangkok, 24-28 October 2016

Report of the Open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group established
pursuant to paragraph 48 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33
on the work of its second meeting

Summary

By its resolution 2015/33, the Economic and Social Council established a working group and an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group under the United Nations Forum on Forests. In accordance with paragraph 48 of the resolution, the expert group was to conduct up to two meetings in 2016, to develop and submit proposals to the working group on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the resolution, namely: (a) the replacement of the reference to the Millennium Development Goals in paragraph 1 (b) of the United Nations forest instrument with an appropriate reference to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (b) the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020, consistent with section XI of the resolution.

The second meeting of the expert group was held in Bangkok from 24 to 28 October 2016. The present report will be made available to the meeting of the Forum's working group.

I. Background

1. By paragraphs 46 and 48 of its resolution 2015/33, the Economic and Social Council established a working group and an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group under the United Nations Forum on Forests. The expert group was tasked, in paragraph 48 of the resolution, to conduct up to two meetings in 2016, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to develop and submit to the working group proposals on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the resolution.

II. Organizational and other matters

A. Venue and duration of the meeting

2. The second meeting of the expert group was held in Bangkok from 24 to 28 October 2016.

B. Opening of the meeting

3. The meeting was opened by Co-Chairs of the expert group, Ambassador Gholamhossein Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands).

4. The Co-Chairs welcomed the participants and delivered opening remarks. They highlighted the importance of developing a Strategic Plan that was ambitious and actionable, which would serve as a reference framework for action by all actors at all levels. They noted that good progress had been made in developing proposals for the Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020, over the past 18 months, since the conclusion of UNFF11 in May 2015. They thanked Member States, international, regional and subregional organisations and stakeholders for sharing their valuable comments and views on the Co-Chairs proposals on building blocks and options for the Strategic Plan and the quadrennial programme of work, and encouraged participants to continue to provide concrete views and suggestions during the course of the meeting.

5. In his opening statement, the Chair of the Bureau of the twelfth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, Mr. Peter Besseau (Canada) commended the Co-Chairs on their leadership under which the expert group has made significant progress in the developing proposals for the Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020. He stressed that the Forum was at a watershed moment, one that would translate the aspirations of the new phase of the International Arrangement on Forests into reality. He further emphasised the potential of the Strategic Plan to serve as a universal plan for action on forests, and to develop a coherent approach across the existing forest-related objectives and commitments, by integrating the Global Objectives on Forests and contributing to the SDGs, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the Paris Agreement, among others.

6. The Director of the UNFF Secretariat, in his opening statement, provided an overview of key actions taken by the Forum Secretariat in support of the work of the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group. He pointed out that an integral component of the Strategic Plan related to enhancing the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. He highlighted that implementation of the Strategic Plan would benefit “on the ground” implementation of sustainable forest management at all levels. In that regard, he provided an update on ongoing capacity development activities being carried out in facilitating access of Member States to forest financing and development of national action plans to implement the United Nations Forest Instrument, which are being funded by the UN Development Account and UN Regular Program for Technical Cooperation, as well as from earmarked contributions from the Government of China and unearmarked contributions from the Government of the United States of America.

C. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

7. The Expert Group adopted the agenda of its second meeting (E/CN.18/2016/AHEG/4) and the programme of work. It was noted that there would be no negotiated outcome and that the Co-Chairs, based on the discussions at the second meeting of the Expert Group, would prepare a revised proposal on the options and building blocks for the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (2017-2030) and the Quadrennial Programme of Work for the period 2017-2020. To further streamline the proposal, the revised texts will be further discussed at the informal consultations to be conducted by the Co-Chairs before the end of 2016.

8. The UNFF Secretariat introduced the relevant documents for the meeting which included: two official documents, the Provisional Agenda and Annotations (E/CN.18/2016/AHEG/4) and the report on the first meeting of the AHEG (E/CN.18/2016/AHEG/3), as well as other relevant papers, namely the AHEG Co-Chairs' proposals on the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and the 4 years Programme and the reports of the expert group meetings on "Enhancing Regional and Sub-Regional Involvement in the Work of the International Arrangement on Forests" held from 26 to 28 September 2016 in Tehran, Iran and on "Enhancing Involvement of major groups and other stakeholders in the Work of the International Arrangement on Forests" held from 5 to 6 October 2016, in Ottawa, Canada.

D. Tasks of the Expert Group

9. In carrying out its tasks, the expert group was guided by Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33, by which it had been mandated to develop and submit proposals to the working group of the Forum on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the resolution, namely: (a) the replacement of the reference to the Millennium Development Goals in paragraph 1 (b) of the United Nations forest instrument with an appropriate reference to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (b) the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020, consistent with section XI of the resolution. In developing proposals for the strategic plan, the expert group was expected to take into account the views of and proposals submitted by Member States and relevant stakeholders, as well as the relevant paragraphs of the resolution and the outcomes of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

10. Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari, ECO Deputy Secretary General presented a summary of the discussions of the Expert Meeting on Enhancing Regional and Sub-Regional Involvement in the Work of the International Arrangement on Forests, which was jointly organised by the UNFF Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), from 26 to 28 September, in Tehran, Iran.

11. Ms. Anna Stemberger, Focal Point of the Youth and Children Major Group presented a summary of the discussions of the Expert Meeting on Strengthening Major Groups and Other Stakeholders' Engagement in the International Arrangement on Forests, which was jointly organised by the UNFF Secretariat and the Canadian Forest Service from 5-6 October 2016, in Ottawa, Canada.

E. Attendance and participation

12. The meeting was attended by 110 government-designated experts from 53 countries, by 16 other experts designated by member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, other international and regional organizations, regional processes and major groups and by independent experts. The list of participants will be made available on the Forum website.

III. Outcome and closing of the second meeting of the Expert Group

13. At the closing plenary session, the Expert Group adopted the report of the meeting and took note of the Co-Chairs' summary, which is annexed to the present report. This summary reflects key views and suggestions of experts on the revised proposals by the Co-Chairs on the options and building blocks for the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests for the period 2017-2030 and the Quadrennial Programme of Work for the period 2017-2020. The report will be transmitted to the meeting of the Forum's working group.

14. The AHEG, keeping in mind the provisions of Section XIII (in particular paragraphs 46- 48) of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 entitled "International arrangement on forests beyond 2015," and also bearing in mind that the deliberations and recommendations of its second session will be considered by the Working Group of the Forum, recommended that the Co- Chairs of the AHEG, Mr. Gholamhossein Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Mr. Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands), also serve as the Co- Chairs of the Working Group of the Forum, to be elected at the first meeting of the Working Group to be held on 16 January 2017, in accordance with paragraph 46 (b) of resolution 2015/33.

Annex

Summary by the Co-Chairs

I. Introduction

1. Experts expressed their deep condolences to the Government and people of Thailand at the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadei. Experts expressed their appreciation to the Co-Chairs for their revised proposals of 11 October 2016 on Building Blocks/Options for the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (SP)¹ and on the Quadrennial Program of Work (4POW) 2017-2020². Experts also expressed their great appreciation to the Co-Chairs for their leadership and to the Forum Secretariat for the organization of the second meeting of the UNFF Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group (AHEG2) and excellent work delivered throughout the meeting.
2. Experts also expressed their appreciation to the Governments of Finland, Japan and Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United States of America for their generous voluntary contributions to facilitate the participation of experts.
3. Experts further expressed their appreciation to the Economic Cooperation Organization for hosting the expert meeting on Enhancing Regional and Subregional Involvement in the Work of the IAF (26-28 September 2016, Tehran) and to the Government of Canada for hosting the expert meeting on Strengthening Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Engagement in the IAF (5-6 October 2016, Ottawa).
4. This Co-Chairs' summary of the AHEG 2 discussions is not a negotiated text. The points presented herein do not necessarily reflect the views of all experts.

II. General Points on the Strategic Plan and 4POW

5. There was a general view that the strategic plan should be called the "United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030" in order to convey its importance and relevance to the work of the UN system.
6. Experts stressed the need to improve awareness of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) among Member States and stakeholders as it was observed that GOFs are not well known outside the UNFF and national forest agencies; in contrast, there is greater public and political awareness of SDGs and the Paris Agreement.
7. There was a general view that the strategic plan should:
 - a. Provide a reference framework for forest-related work within the UN system as whole, including promoting synergies, as well as guide the work of the IAF based on guidance provided in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33.
 - b. Be clear, concise, workable, high level, strategic, aspirational, user friendly; have enduring relevance through 2030; and provide an effective framework for implementation of SFM by actors at all levels.
 - c. Serve as a communication, outreach and messaging tool on the positive contribution of forests and the forest sector to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, the Paris Agreement and other international commitments.
 - d. Address fragmentation in global forest governance.
8. It was also noted that the concept of the Voluntary Planned Contributions (VPCs) was analogous to the concept of "nationally determined contributions" (NDCs) under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement. The term "VPCs" was intended to stress the voluntary nature of such contributions in the UNFF context. Forest-related commitments included in NDCs could form the basis of VPCs.

¹ http://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/AHEG_Co-Chairs_Building-Blocks_Strategic_Plan_11Oct2016.pdf

² http://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/AHEG_Co-Chairs_4POW_2017-20_11Oct2016.pdf

9. Several experts noted the need to clarify and further consider the concept of voluntary planned contributions (VPCs)/voluntary actions, including the view that all actors, stakeholders and partners could put forth their VPCs.
10. Various views were expressed on global goals and targets as follows:
 - a. Global goals should capture the IAF objectives and GOFs
 - b. Global goals and targets should be linked to existing internationally agreed goals and targets
 - c. Global goals and targets should also address issues not covered by the GOFs, such as coherence and complementarity of forest-related work at all levels, particularly within the UN system
 - d. Some targets may be better placed in the 4POW
 - e. Targets should be supported by existing information, baseline data and indicators, and relate to ongoing work on global forest indicators
11. There was a general view that the 4POW should focus on the Forum's contribution to implementing the SP. It was also suggested that, in general, the 4POWs should:
 - a. Set the agenda of Forum sessions
 - b. Address intersessional work
 - c. Address regional approaches and CPF contributions
 - d. Be action-oriented and facilitate action on the ground
 - e. Contain actions related to VPCs
 - f. Include concrete targets and outcomes to attract the involvement and contributions of stakeholders
12. It was suggested that the 4POW could be better considered once further progress has been made on the content of the SP. It was also suggested that thematic areas could provide a bridge between the SP and the 4POWs.

III. Introduction (Chapter I of the Strategic Plan)

13. Experts made the following points:
 - a. The language in the SP should be clear and accessible; long sentences should be avoided.
 - b. Add "trees outside forests" in the title of I.A and elsewhere in the SP, where appropriate.
 - c. Replace "global" with "international" throughout the text, where appropriate.
 - d. Add "all types of forests" throughout the SP, where appropriate
 - e. Consider replacing "achieving" SFM with "promoting and implementing" SFM.
 - f. Include ethical reasons for conserving forests, e.g. for the benefit of present and future generations.
 - g. Make specific reference to Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
 - h. Make specific reference to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.
 - i. Make reference to the green economy.
 - j. Make reference to the right to decent work.
 - k. Make reference to sand and dust storms.

- l. Streamline the text by moving some of the introductory text in I.B, I.C and the text boxes to other sections, such as annexes, the message from the UNSG, the foreword by the UNFFS Director, or the communication and outreach strategy.
 - m. Arabic numerals could be used to number chapters rather than Roman numerals.
14. Experts made a number of specific proposals to amend individual paragraphs under the Introduction. These were taken note of by the Secretariat.

IV. Vision and Mission (Chapter II of the Strategic Plan)

15. Some experts stressed that the vision and mission statements should be clear and concise.
16. It was also proposed that the vision and mission be moved to the beginning of the Introduction.

A. Vision of the Strategic Plan

17. A number of experts favored option 2 as written or with amendments, in particular to refer to “all types of forests” and “present and future generations”.
18. A few experts favored option 1 as written or by replacing “protected” with “conserved”, option 4, or a combination of options 1, 2 or 4.

B. Mission of the Strategic Plan

19. Many experts favored options 1, 3 or 4 as written or with modifications.
20. Some experts proposed replacing “the 2030 Agenda” with “sustainable development” so as not to limit the mission under any option.
21. Some experts in favor of option 3 proposed replacing “halt” with “reduce” and deleting multiple references to “policy” while others proposed to retain “halt”. Other experts considered option 3 too long to be an effective mission statement. It was also proposed a new option drawing on option 3.
22. A few experts favored a combination of option 1 and 2, or a combination of options 1 and 3.

V. Global Goals and Targets (Chapter III of the Strategic Plan)

23. Experts expressed their appreciation for the non-papers that were prepared and made available during the meeting to facilitate their discussions. These non-papers included: i) SDGs and forest contributions prepared by experts from Switzerland and Chile; ii) Non Paper on Forests and SDGs dated February 19 2016, prepared by the expert from Switzerland; iii) existing intergovernmentally agreed targets, objectives, goals, commitment on forests, prepared by the Forum Secretariat; iv) indicative list of categories of forest data where baseline is known, prepared by the Forum Secretariat; and v) initial compilation of comments on global goals and targets, prepared by the Forum Secretariat.
24. Experts expressed the view that the development and determination of goals and targets should be based on the following guiding principles.

A. Guiding principles for the Strategic Plan

25. A chapeau should be introduced which would state that the UNSPF builds on already agreed forest-related UN goals, targets and commitments to the extent possible, to support implementation of the UN

Forest Instrument and other international commitments, including the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

26. A chapeau should provide a rationale on the value-added of forest goals and targets and the UNFF in the context of promoting SFM.

27. The vision, principles and commitments reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs should provide a context for the SP.

28. Goals and targets should be consistent with the vision and mission set out in the SP.

29. Forests contribute to all 17 SDGs and the Paris Agreement, among other international commitments.

30. We would work on the basis of UN agreed language (avoid renegotiating agreed language).

31. Like the SDGs, the Goals and targets should be universal, interlinked and intended to stimulate and provide a framework for voluntary actions and contributions by countries and partners.

32. Any quantitative/numerical targets should be based on existing information and baseline data.

33. The overarching principles such as human rights, gender equality, peace and security, and partnerships, as well as other cross cutting issues of the 2030 Agenda should be taken into account in the SP and the 4POWs.

34. Should avoid extra reporting burden on Member States.

35. Targets should be:

- a. Time bound
- b. Global in nature
- c. Meaningful/impacting/relevant
- d. Ambitious but realizable
- e. Limited in number
- f. Balanced in number across the Goals

36. Targets should have value-added with respect to existing internationally agreed targets

37. Targets could be quantitative/numerical and qualitative, process-related targets

38. Key terms used in quantitative/numerical targets should be based on UN agreed definitions. UNFFS and FAO will provide a list of definitions with references by 1 December 2016.

39. Additional targets could be developed through the 4POWs and added at a later stage.

B. General views on Goals contained in the Strategic Plan

40. Experts favored either option 1 (6 global goals) or option 2 (4 global goals plus 2 cross-cutting strategies). In this regard, it was noted the goals would be more easily understood.

41. Some experts proposed that the SP should include only goals and targets, with thematic areas and priority actions being addressed in the 4POW. Others proposed that the SP include only goals and thematic areas, with targets being placed in the 4POW.

42. Some experts proposed referring to the goals as “strategic forest goals” or “strategic goals on forests” or “sustainable forest goals” to distinguish them from the GOFs and SDGs.

43. The importance of linking the goals to the SDGs was stressed.

C. General views on targets contained in the Strategic Plan

44. In addition to the guiding principles, it was suggested to limit the number of targets under each goal to no more than five and include other relevant target areas in the thematic areas for action, as appropriate.

45. Some experts proposed moving targets with a 2020 timeline to the 4POW for 2017-2020.

46. It was noted that targets should be considered in the context of ongoing efforts to develop global forest indicators, which would be used to measure progress on targets. (In this context, the Annex to the Co-Chairs 11 October 2016 proposal on building block and options for the SP was revised to show the draft indicators for SDG 6.6, 15.1 and 15.2 which are currently under consideration by the IAEG-SDGs and possible sub-indicators for SDG 15.2.)

47. Some experts proposed to establish a task team composed of FAO and UNFFS, as well as other CPF members to assist in developing quantitative/numerical targets based on the existing information sources.

48. It was also noted that the outcome of a CPF Organization-led Initiative on the development of global forest indicators could be useful and should be considered in developing targets. It was noted that the proposed targets were global in nature, rather than national, and that countries could determine if and how they might contribute to a given target through their “voluntary planned contributions” (VPCs). It was not envisioned that all countries would contribute to all targets or that all targets would be relevant to the situations in all countries.

49. It was suggested that additional targets may be considered in 2024 during the mid-term review of the IAF to reflect developments and/or improved information.

D. Specific views on targets contained in the Strategic Plan

D.1 Goal 1 targets

50. The following views were expressed:

- a. Split Goal 1 into 2 or 3 goals, to reflect the different elements of the goal
- b. Have 5 targets corresponding to the 5 elements of Goal 1 (loss of forest cover, protection, afforestation/ reforestation, degradation/restoration, resilience). In this context, FAO noted that baseline information could be made available to develop quantitative/numerical targets in most of these areas.
- c. Retain reference to “resilience to climate change”
- d. Delete references to the Bonn Challenge and NY Declaration
- e. Merge target b and d
- f. Merge targets a, b and c
- g. Merge targets e and f
- h. Delete target c
- i. Delete target h (forest fires) and add forest fires to the thematic areas for action
- j. Formulate target d using the exact language from SDG15.2
- k. Add a reference to Indigenous Peoples and local communities in target g
- l. Clarify the term natural forests.

- m. Focus on 4 areas: forest cover, SFM (per indicators for SDG 15), , biomass and restoration

D.2 Goal 2 targets

51. The following views were expressed:

- a. Have a target for each element of Goal 2 (economic, social and environmental benefits)
- b. Concern raised about measurability of “extreme poverty” in target a, noting non-monetary factors in this regard
- c. Reformulate target a to ensure consistency with SDG1
- d. Add a reference to Indigenous Peoples and local communities in target a and target d
- e. Merge target a and target f
- f. Merge target b and g and make qualitative
- g. Merge target a, target d and target g
- h. Retain target b, target c and target e
- i. Expand target b to include sustainable forest-based enterprises, in particular small and medium, as well as women’s enterprises
- j. Merge target b and target c.
- k. Add reference to access by forest and farm producers and small-scale forest-based enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services and markets
- l. Retain target d
- m. In target e, link PES to benefits for forest dependent people
- n. Clarify the term natural forests.
- o. Make target e qualitative
- p. Add NWFPs to target f
- q. Make target g qualitative
- r. Use SDG language for target f, target g and target h
- s. 5 priority targets would be target a (using language based on SDG 1), target e (as a qualitative target), food security, wood energy, contribution of forests to economic development (employment, etc.), and contribution of urban forests
- t. Add a target on the role young people play in forests, in particular forest industries in developing countries
- u. Focus on 4 areas: contribution of forest ecosystem services to national economies; poverty reduction in forest-dependent populations; contribution of urban forests; forest education
- v. Baseline information is available on forest sector employment and forests contribution to GDP.

D.3 Goal 3 targets

52. The following views were expressed:

- a. Have targets for each element of Goal 3

- b. Reorder targets to reflect Goal 3 elements
- c. Focus on target a
- d. Consider language under SDG15 and in ABTs for target a
- e. Concern about reference to high conservation value forests in target a
- f. Reformulate target a
- g. Delete target b
- h. Reformulate target b to focus on certification as a market-based tool
- i. Sustainable use of woody biomass (c) should be addressed as a target, in some way
- j. No baseline for target c and reformulate target c
- k. Delete target d
- l. Retain target d
- m. Reformulate target d by focusing on trade practices
- n. Add a target on fostering SFM
- o. Forest area allocated for total protection and forest area under SFM, could form the basis for 2 numerical targets
- p. Focus on 3 areas: protection of high conservation value forests; SFM (per sub-indicators for SDG 15.2); trade in forest products.
- q. Concern raised about measurability of a target on trade in forest products

D.4 Goal 4 targets

53. The following views were expressed:

- a. Keep Goal 4 consistent with GOF 4.
- b. Scientific, technical and technological cooperation and partnerships are a very important means of implementation and should not be deleted from Goal 4.
- c. Science and partnerships are not only about cooperation and synergies.
- d. Targets should not include concrete financial commitments, particularly in target a and target f.
- e. If numerical targets are not included under Goal 4, numerical targets should not be included under the other Goals
- f. Approach targets under Goal 4 in line with the AAAA.
- g. Modify target a to include national budgets
- h. Modify target a to include all sources
- i. Delete forest-based industries in a
- j. Retain target d, e, f
- k. Retain target b
- l. Retain target c
- m. Delete target c

- n. Delete target f
- o. Move target d and target e to Goal 6 or cross-cutting strategy 2
- p. Target d should be strengthened
- q. Make target e qualitative
- r. Move target f to the 4POW
- s. Retain target f as written
- t. Add a reference to countries with economies in transition in target b
- u. Modify target f to focus on number of countries assisted by the GFFFN
- v. Add target on public-private partnerships as a way to generate financing for SFM
- w. Focus on 3 areas: mobilization of various sources of financing, such as ODA, PES, domestic budgets; international funding for forests such as the GEF and GCF; and public private partnerships.

D.5 Goal 5/ Cross-Cutting Strategy 1 targets

54. The following views were expressed:

- a. Revise the text of Goal 5 to add “to implement SFM” after “sustainable governance frameworks”
- b. Delete reference to the 2030 Agenda in the text of Goal 5
- c. Retain target a as formulated
- d. There could be baseline information for target a.
- e. No baseline information available for target b.
- f. In target b, add positive incentives
- g. Only baseline estimates available for target c.
- h. Make target c qualitative
- i. Reformulate target d per SDG 1.4 and 5.a
- j. Delete target d
- k. Baseline information available on target d but not gender disaggregated.
- l. No baseline information available for target e.
- m. Useful to focus on land tenure
- n. Reformulate target e as an aim
- o. Reformulate target e along the lines of SDG16.7
- p. Modify target e to reflect all countries where all forests are privately owned
- q. Delete target f
- r. Reformulate targets to focus on implementation of relevant UNFI actions
- s. Add new target on global forest governance and cross-sectoral coordination
- t. Add new target on enabling conditions/environment for SFM
- u. Focus on 5 areas: cross-sectoral platforms; land tenure/ownership; access to information; cooperation

to address forest crimes; and legal forest trade

D.6 Goal 6 / Cross-Cutting Strategy 2 targets

55. The following views were expressed:

- a. Revise the text on Goal 6 to add “at all levels, in particular” after “issues” and include the same formulation as in target a
- b. Consider qualitative targets
- c. Questions/concerns were raised on target b
- d. Reformulate target b to enhance the status and role of forests in the UN system
- e. Reformulate target b to “By 2030, a mechanism for the operation of a UN Forest Programme ...”
- f. Reformulate target b to include the consideration of a possible forest convention
- g. Consider bringing targets 4.d and target 4. e under Goal 6
- h. Add a target on the science-policy interface
- i. Add a target on harmonizing national reporting (to reduce reporting burdens)
- j. Add a process related target on the collaboration between Member States, CPF, regional and subregional organizations as well as Major Groups and other stakeholders
- k. Reflect the involvement of Major Groups and other stakeholders
- l. Reflect the involvement of CPF
- m. Focus on 2 areas: joint initiatives of CPF; public-private partnerships

VI. Thematic Areas (Chapter III of the Strategic Plan)

56. There was a general view that identifying thematic areas for action could be useful specifically for clustering and building coherence for actions. Some experts were in favor of moving thematic areas and any associated actions to the 4POWs.

57. Some experts supported the idea that the initial priority actions under thematic areas would be the 44 actions contained in the UNFI, and that the Forum would identify additional priority actions as needed through its 4POWs and resolutions.

58. It was stressed that the lists of thematic areas could not be exhaustive.

59. It was noted that thematic areas should reflect the themes of the UNFI actions, as well as relevant themes from the SDG targets, ABTs, Paris Agreement, and other relevant international commitments.

60. The importance of including the cross-cutting thematic issues contained in the 2030 Agenda, and other international goals and commitments, was underscored.

61. Experts made numerous specific comments on the proposed thematic areas for action under each goal, including proposals to amend, clarify and add thematic areas. These were taken note of by the Secretariat.

VII. Implementation Framework (Chapter IV of the Strategic Plan)

62. A number of experts were of the view that chapter IV could be streamlined, and several proposals for streamlining and deletion were put forward.

63. It was suggested that the chapeau (para 30) was a strong positive statement that might be better placed earlier in the text.

F.1 Roles and responsibilities (Chapter IV.A of the Strategic Plan)

64. A number of experts proposed replacing VPCs with “voluntary actions” while some others considered VPCs a critical approach. In this context, it was noted that the actions in the UNFI and the IPF/IFF proposals for action are voluntary actions.

65. It was suggested to clarify the relationship of VPCs with the existing national reporting of the Forum and reporting commitments in other processes.

66. It was proposed to add para 37.d on the Forum’s engagement of other sectors.

67. It was noted that A.3 on the Secretariat functions was covered by Appendix 2. Some aspects could also be taken forward in the 4POW.

68. It was noted that A.4 on CPF should be clearly linked to the sessions of the Forum, particularly in the context of the scope of its odd-year sessions.

69. It was noted that A.5 and A.6 on the UN system and other intergovernmental partners were important.

70. Several experts stressed the need to enhance collaboration and coordination with regional and subregional partners particularly in the context of the scope of the odd-year sessions of the Forum, and noted their preference for developing more informal coordination arrangements rather than formal mechanisms. Some experts supported formal mechanisms.

71. It was suggested that referring to “partners” in the A.7 heading down-played the nature and role of regional/subregional organizations and should be replaced with “organizations and processes”.

72. Several experts expressed the view that a roster of government-nominated experts should be developed in addition to a roster of non-governmental experts, and noted that this idea should appear earlier in the text (para 65).

73. On the involvement of Major Groups and other stakeholders in the work of the UNFF, reference was made to the provisions of paragraphs 14 to 16 of General Assembly resolution 67/290 apply mutatis mutandis to the Forum in view of the existing modalities and practices of the Forum.

74. Major Groups put new proposals forward for section A.8. These included establishment of a multi-stakeholder advisory group to inform the Forum on cross-cutting issues and allow more flexibility for non-governmental stakeholders to engage in the Forum, and inviting a major group representative to attend bureau meetings as an observer.

a. It was noted that Major Groups make important contributions to the SFM, including by channeling “on the ground” feedback to the global level. The need to involve Major Groups and other stakeholders in the implementation of SP was emphasized. In this regard, the opportunity presented by the Forum’s odd-year technical sessions as a platform for MGs as well as regional/subregional organizations was highlighted.

b. The view was expressed that the language in the revised proposal may be too specific for the SP.

c. It was suggested that the relationship of stakeholders with the Forum or Bureau might be better taken up in the 4POW. Questions were raised as to whether MGs needed observer status for Bureau meetings in order to put forth stakeholder ideas and issues. In this regard, it was suggested that MGs could reach out to individual countries that may be willing to take forward their ideas.

75. It was suggested that the concept of a Forest Partnership Forum need not be limited to the Forum’s high level segments (para 64).

VIII. Means and resources for implementation (Chapter IV.B of the Strategic Plan)

76. Experts expressed their appreciation to Dr. Markku Simula, UNFF consultant for his presentation on the GFFFN initial stocktaking and outlook.

77. A number of suggestions were made to streamline paras 66-73, including making more succinct the references to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, while others proposed to retain them. It was also proposed to make reference to other donors, including the private sector, philanthropic organizations, domestic resources and other sources of finance.

78. It was pointed out that paras 66 and 67 are based on agreed language from the UNFI and form an important context for the SP. The importance of “pre-requisite” in para 78 was also stressed.

79. The view was expressed that there is no need to establish a new GEF focal area on forests.

80. A number of experts were of the view that the description of the GFFFN should be consistent with the language in E/2015/33. It was also noted that the resolution gives the Forum the mandate to establish priorities for the GFFFN, and the importance of capacity building was mentioned in this regard. It was suggested that the GFFFN priorities could be moved to the 4POW. (paras 74-78)

81. A number of experts expressed support for having as a priority of the GFFFN to assist countries to access financing from the GEF and GCF, especially in the context of the formulation of project concepts. .

82. It was pointed out that the GFFFN is supported not only by voluntary contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund, but also through UN technical cooperation and capacity development program sources.

83. It was noted that the GFFFN’s role is catalytic and that therefore assessing “performance” may not be as relevant as assessing the involvement of countries in the Network and the benefits received (para 78).

84. It was also noted that para 80 should not be limited to VPCs.

IX. Review Framework (Chapter V of the Strategic Plan)

85. Section A: A number of experts suggested streamlining this section and moving some details to the 4POW. It was noted that para 91 should not imply new indicators. It was also noted that the reference in para 92 to “sufficiency of resources” is not appropriate in this context. It was proposed to mention explicitly that the SP be updated as needed based on the results of the review.

86. Section B: It was suggested that paras 94 and 95 were sufficient and that para 96 pre-judged consideration of the reporting cycle at UNFF12.

87. Section C: It was suggested that paras 100 and 101 were sufficient and that paras 102-104 could be covered in the 4POW.

88. It was also suggested to maintain all sections as is.

X. Communication and Outreach Strategy (Chapter VI of the Strategic Plan)

89. Experts recognized the importance of communication and outreach.

90. Several experts proposed streamlining this section and moving some elements to the 4POW; however the importance of retaining the section as written was also noted.

91. A number of experts suggested the communication and outreach strategy should be a separate document from the SP.

92. The importance of utilizing existing regional forest communicator’s networks for activities in this area

was noted.

XI. Quadrennial programme of work (4POW)

93. Experts proposed to guide the work of all actors and stakeholders, including regional/subregional and Major Groups and other stakeholders, in the context of the odd and even-year sessions of the Forum.

94. Experts stressed the need to link the thematic priorities of the Forum sessions to the annual themes and in-depth reviews of the SDGs by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

95. Experts recognized the importance to include specific activities on the communication and outreach in 4POW.

96. Some experts recognized the importance to include items related to contributions to other forest-related processes, particularly CBD and UNFCCC.

97. Several experts proposed to move the items on roles and responsibilities of actors from the SP to 4POW, including A.2, A.3, A.4 para 45, A.5 para 48, B.1 para 75-78, B.3, and much of Sections V and VI.

98. Experts made specific comments on the proposed priorities actions to be considered under UNFF12, 13, 14 and 15, including proposals to amend, clarify and add priority actions. These were taken note of by the Secretariat.