Independent Assessment of the International Arrangements on Forest (IAF): October 2013 – September 2014

Independent Assessment of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)

Report of the Team of Independent Consultants

Team’ Presentation to AHEG 2

12 January 2015, New York
Origin, mandate and working modalities

- Originated in Resolution 10/2 of the 10th session of the UNFF (8-19 April 2013, Istanbul, Turkey).
- Independent assessment of the IAF works to complement other relevant intersessional activities.
- Focus on lessons learned for a possible post-2015 international arrangement on forests.
- 5 experts, one from each UN region, 2 co-facilitators (WEOS, G 77) to assure link with UNFF11 bureau.
- Interviews with IAF stakeholders, analysis of documents and processes, exchange meetings among consultants.
Purpose of the Independent Assessment

- Provides an independent expert input to AHEG
  AHEG is tasked to provide its views and recommendations to UNFF11 to arrive at decisions on the future of the IAF.

- Analyses whether the IAF (in all of its 5 components):
  - Remained relevant and appropriate to its mandate,
  - Secured tangible achievements,
  - Was efficient and effective in its mandate since 2000,
  - Had any impacts on development and sustainability of actions.

- Make recommendations for a future arrangement (including some “thinking out of the box”).
Scope of the IAF

- Promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests...
- Strengthen long-term political commitment (“to this end”)

Purpose of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)

- Promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels
- Provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development
- Facilitate implementation of forest-related agreements
The current institutional arrangement of the IAF

- **UN General Assembly**
- **ECOSOC**
- **UNFF**
  - United Nations Forum on Forests
  - UNFF Bureau; Biennial meetings; NLBI implementation
- **CPF**
  - Voluntary Support Mechanism, 14 organisations, incl. UNFFS; Organisational -led initiatives
- **Regional Organisations & Processes**
  - Regional-led initiatives
- **UNFF member countries**
  - NLBI implementation (nfp)
  - Reporting
  - Country-led initiatives

**Core Content: FOREST INSTRUMENT**
- Resolution 2000/35 and 2006/49
- 4 global objectives 2006
- MYPoW 2007-2015
- Forest financing, facilitative process

**Major Groups**

**Trust fund finance**

**Regular budget**

**Yellow:** Formally associated to the framework
IAF: Achievements 2000–2015 (I)

- Promoted a universal approach to SFM (“all types of forests”) and its implementation (FI)
- Upheld interest in a comprehensive view on forests in international development agendas, as well as the Rio Conventions
- Consensus building, dialog platforms (CLIs…), communication
- Supported by a “development-policy” platform with leverage: Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)
- Supported streamlining of forest reporting requirements
- Analytical work & outputs on critical forest issues, reporting
- Facilitative process, Sourcebook on forest financing
- Increased interactions with regional level
- Promoted the engagement of major groups
IAF: Achievements 2000–2015 (II)

Milestones (success depends on the perspective of a party):

- Agreement on the NLBI and the Global Objectives on Forests 2007
- Formulation and implementation of a MYPoW 2007-2015
- Integration of forests in the sustainable development summits (Rio+10, Rio+20, “The Future We Want”, SDG process)
- Forest finance, facilitative process – AHEG, GEF5 SFM/REDD+ Incentive, GEF6 on SFM, LFCC/SIDS
- Communication: International Year on Forests, International Day on Forests; SDGs and other UN processes; (however absence of mention of IAF in the NY Declaration on Forests)
Achievements with strengths and weaknesses
(based on the perception of a party)

Strengths:
- Universal membership
- CLIs, OLIs, RLIs; AHEGs
- Existence of FI, GOFs
- CPF engagement *per se*
- NFPs (selectively)
- UNFFS in DESA/ECOSOC
- Positioning within SDGs
- Facilitative process

Weaknesses:
- Utility of forum sessions
- SFM in CBD, UNFCCC, CCD
- Major Groups involvement
- CPF functioning
- Implementing FI and GOFs
- Links to regional priorities
- Implementing SFM (NFPs...)
- Means of implementation
Areas for improvement in the main IAF policy fields
(as defined in ECOSOC resolution 2000/35)

(i) Promote management, conservation and sustainable development…
   - Comprehensive understanding on SFM; implementing globally agreed resolutions/guidelines on forests at country level

(ii) Strengthen long-term political commitment…
   - Engagement for a comprehensive SFM approach (countries, institutions, major groups) and quality of reporting on SFM progress

(iii) Promote implementation of internationally agreed actions…
   - Stewardship of forests in national policies (economic policies, environmental policies, other sectoral policies)

(iv) Global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development…
   - Better coordination on forest-related issues (“umbrella” function)
   - Strengthen the institutional framework of a future IAF (“convening”)
   - Integrating SFM in the broader post-2015 development agenda/SDG
Main policy challenges to tackle for a future IAF (I)

(1) Implement a global forest policy agenda in support of broader development processes:

*Streamline and focus functions of IAF, clarify roles of IAF elements:*

- High level policy platform (increased visibility strategic plan as basis for implementation) → improved convening power (“Assembly”, “Special Envoy”)
- Member countries’ engagement in Policy dialogue + SFM implementation
- Effective supporting mechanism («strengthened CPF»)
- Major groups’ involvement and engagement
- An efficient and effective UNFF Secretariat in DESA/ECOSOC
- Financing SFM: upfront; policy and measures; sustained funding: new potentials

(2) Reaffirm a FI+ and extend it with clear goals to 2030 (SDG as core)

- FI+ and SDGs (Addendum to the FI and strategic plan)
- GOFs (amend, add, define concrete targets?)
- From NLBI to FI+ with improved positioning and understanding;
- Elevate the «IAF» for an effective global policy making
Main policy challenges to tackle (II)

(3) Strategic (rolling, adaptive) planning (based on SDGs, Fl+ and GOFs)
- Strategic plan for the IAF over several years linked with broader development agenda and the SDGs
- See supportive document to the China CLI: Discussion Paper on Possible Elements of a +Strategic Plan» for a Future IAF.

(4) Strengthen Science/Policy/Implementation Interface
- An enhanced CPF or an other arrangement?
  Remind the ECOSOC resolution: “Call the heads of agencies to form…."
  TORs for an effective interface/platform («UN-Forest») and secure funding

(5) Strengthen Regional Interface
- Regional Liaison for policy and SFM implementation, Facilitative process
- Biennially regional coordination meetings in the 5 UN regions, harmonized/hosted by regional/subregional/thematic entities (e.g. elevate existing regional structures to a «IAF structure»)
Main policy challenges to tackle (III)

(6) Strengthen Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) on FI implementation and engagement
   - Streamlined standardized reporting and data sharing
   - Efficient MAR triggers engagement, commitment, funding and achievement (see beneath)

(7) Adequate financial resources
   - Post-2015 IAF funding requirements need to be identified and ensured
   - Linking SFM/REDD+/Forest NAMA → New funding mechanisms
     (Green Climate Fund? An Instrument linked to the SDGs?)

→ Define the institutional setting, TOR and means of implementation to fulfill the defined (7) challenges of a future IAF → Task of AHEG2
Post-2015 IAF: Range of options (Annexed to the report)

- **UN DESA based**
  - Continuation of the current IAF
  - Strengthening the IAF
  - Institutional approach: DESA with a global institutional arrangement
  - Forest Instrument+ with regional and/or thematic Annexes
  - UN Complementary Pathway towards SFM
  - Forest Convention
  - Protocol on Forests under e.g. CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD
  - Forest Convention serviced by UNEP
- **Other UN-System based**
  - COFO/WFC with FAO as implementing agency
  - A Science-Policy platform on Forests under UNEP (serviced by a body/group of bodies, tbd)
Rethinking: the future for IAF

1. Shift to a more affirmative language and approach that helps to engage, rather than to disengage in a post 2015 IAF.

2. Broaden the conceptual basis of the land-use “forest” within the wider landscape as proposed in the post-2015 development agenda (SDGs).

3. Shift emphasis from preparing resolutions to facilitating substantive dialogue, cooperation and implementation with commitments.

4. Assume ultimate stewardship for global forests in a global landscape. Strengthen linkages to other international fora and entities that affect forests (MEAs, agriculture, trade and other agreements).

5. Increase leverage of a science/policy/implementation interface to improve effectiveness of international forest-related processes.

6. Increase opportunities for meaningful participation by multiple stakeholders, including Major Groups and funding mechanisms.
## Rethinking: the future for IAF

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

Global forest-related policy
Biennial meetings, once in New York, once in connection with major international meetings

UN Member countries:
Forest-related policy and SFM implementation;
AHEGs, CLIs, Cross-sectorial links,
MAR on forests

UN forest support mechanism «UN Forest»
A formal Science/policy/implement.
interface to support UNFA policy work and SFM implementation

Regional Forest Assemblies
Biennial, alternate with (1):
Policy coordination and SFM coordination

Post-2015 IAF Building Blocks
Overview on proposed options

Option 1. Enhanced Post-2015 IAF based on current arrangement. *Strategic approach* based on IAF gap analysis

Option 2. Post-2015 IAF with strengthened institutional approach. *Organizational approach* through a world forest organization


Option 4. Post-2015 IAF based on regional level agreements. *Regional approach*, regional LBAs followed with global FI
Enhanced post 2015 IAF

High-level Political Forum

UN General Assembly
ECOSOC

UN-UNFA Special Envoy on Forests

UNFA
United Nations Forest Assembly
Biennial meetings
Forests in a global change context

DESA – UNFA Secret.
Policy coordination functions,
Strategic Trust Fund and links to SDGs

UNFA member countries
Forest Instrument+ and SFM implementation
Reporting through existing regional UNFA coordination

CPF

Regional policy fora UNFA
Organized through the 5 UN regions with existing regional bodies
Discussion of regional forest-related policies issues and SFM

UN-UNFA Formal partnership
Science/Policy/Pilot/Interface
(subset of CPF members and other organisations)

Finances through trust funds;
1 & 2 UNFA linked, x regionally linked

Regular UN DESA budget

Blue: UNFA framework
Orange: New additions to the post-2015 IAF
Pink: Associated to the UNFA
Strengthened institutional approach

- High-level Political Forum
- UN General Assembly (ECOSOC)
- UN- SG Special Envoy on Forests
- UNFA (United Nations Forest Assembly)
  - Biennial meetings
  - Forests in a global change context
- DESA – UNFA Secret.
  - Policy coordination functions
  - Supportive Trust Fund
  - Linking to HLPF and SDGs
- A world forest institution/organization
  - Associated to the political process but self-standing
- Regional policy fora UNFA
  - Organized through the 5 UN regions with existing regional bodies
  - Discussion of regional forest-related policies, issues, and SFM
- UNFA member countries
  - Forest Instrument, SFM, REDD+ implementation
  - Reporting through existing regional UNFA coordination and the new institution

Finances:
- Blue: UNFA policy framework
- Orange: New implementation arrangement to support policy and SFM
- Regular UN DESA budget, respectively budget of intern. organisations
Complementary political pathway

Countries engaged in various tracks: REDD+
FLEGT, NYDec For, ....

UN member countries
Country level Policy Arrangements

Signature Countries of the treaty

 Entirely New Arrangements

Regular budget

Financed through trust funds (3)
Regional level agreements

High-level Political Forum

UN General Assembly ECOSOC

UNFA
Meetings every 4 years of Regional Treaties and Member States Forests in a global change context

DESA – UNFA Secret.
Global policy coordination
Strategic Trust Fund support
and linking to HLPF and SDGs

UNECE regional forest treaty

ECLAC regional forest treaty

ECA regional forest treaty

UNSCWA regional forest treaty

UNESCAP regional forest treaty

UNFA member countries (regional split)
Global Forest Instrument with its Addendum and GOF as well as regional treaty commitments for SFM Reporting through regional treaties

Finances through trust funds;
Regular UN DESA budget, respectively budget of intern. organisations

Blue: UNFA global forest policy framework (Forest Instrument+)
Orange: Treaty-type arrangement as negotiated within each region
In summary for a post-2015 IAF: “do not act in isolation”

- Comprehensive **Stewardship** for forests in international development/environmental/economic agendas (“policy”) → global forest policy harmonization (“umbrella”)
  - Address the fragmentation of global forest policy
  - More commitment in global forest policy, on all level of sustainability
  - Increased coherence between UN-Processes and others (IAF, UNFCCC, REDD+, CBD, and other initiatives such as NYDF, Bonn Challenge, etc)
  - A clear voice on forests in the UN

- **Policy support** for **SFM implementation** in regions and countries → “sustainably managing all forests globally by the year 2030”
  - Common international comprehension/definition of SFM
  - National commitment for a comprehensive approach of SFM
  - Clear understanding on the use of financing instruments, such as GEF, GCF, FCPF/UNREDD etc and a possible SDG financing mechanism
  - A monitoring/compliance mechanism to support financial options.
CLI China questions on the IAF-report

1) II A.2.2.h. Feasibility, practicality and projected costs of the **proposed options.**

2) II A. 2.2.o. The **UN Forest Assembly** needs to flesh out how this new body would materially differ in function and format from UNFF.

3) III 3.2.a. "The general budgetary implications of the options presented including with respect to strengthening CPF, establishing a UN-Forest, establishing a UN Special Envoy on Forests, and convening biennial regional meetings in years the Forum does not meet, as well as the implications of these for the Secretariat."

4) III 3.2.b. Feasibility of moving forward on components associated with each option within the context of the **UN system and ECOSOC in particular.**

5) III 3.2.c. Modalities, TORs and funding sources and levels for possible models for strengthening and possibly formalizing the CPF.
Thank you for Your Attention