

II. Proposed Format for the Voluntary National Reports to UNFF 5

**National Report to the Fifth Session of the
United Nations Forum on Forests**

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I. Key Contacts

Head of Forestry in Sudan

Name: [Dr. Abdelazim Mirghani Ibrahim]

Title: [General Manager]

Contact information:

Address: Forests National Corporation (FNC) Sudan-Khartoum P.O.Box 658

Phone: +249 183 471575

Fax: +249 183 472659

E-mail: Abdelazim_fnc@hotmail.com

UNFF national focal point for Sudan

Name: [Dr. Abdelazim Mirghani Ibrahim]

Title: [General Manager]

Contact information:

Address: Forests National Corporation (FNC) Sudan-Khartoum P.O.Box 658

Phone: +249 183 471575

Fax: +249 183 472659

E-mail: Abdelazim_fnc@hotmail.com

Person to contact concerning the national report, if other than the UNFF national focal point:

Name: [Dr. Abdelazim Mirghani Ibrahim]

Title: [General Manager]

Contact information:

Address: Forests National Corporation (FNC) Sudan-Khartoum P.O.Box 658

Phone: +249 183 471575

Fax: +249 183 472659

E-mail: Abdelazim_fnc@hotmail.com

E-mail: [insert information]

II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action

1. General

The IPF/IFF proposals really from a sound useful basis for addressing all the forestry activities in Sudan. They are all applicable to the Sudanese conditions. Moreover the progress assessment method as designed in this report format is a suitable way of monitoring the progress made in all issues. Priority areas for the Sudan are many specially those concerned with forest protection, combat of desertification, expansion of forest plantations to meet the local need, monitoring trends of change in the supply and demand sides of wood and non-wood products, awareness raising and involvement of local communities in forestry planning and management. International Cooperation Programmes started to revive in the last few years in the form of regional projects and partnership in programmes. To enhance the participation of stakeholders in forest sector planning, decision making and management they were involved in the implementation of initiatives such as the National Forestry Programme Facility, Criteria and Indicators and the Review of Forest Policy , legislation and organization which were all supported by the FAO.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF2:

Combating deforestation and forest degradation

2. preparing diagnostic studies to analyse historical and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, including processes outside the forest sector

Reports on (the State of the World's Forests) and (world's Forests Resources Assessment 2000) released in 2001 by the FAO, showed an annual deforestation in the Sudan during 1990-2000 to be 0.96 million hectares.

These reports made use of previous studies by FNC in collaboration with FAO namely the National Forest Inventory (NFI) covering the area between latitudes. 10° -16° North and the Forest products Consumption Survey (FPCS) in 1995 covering the same area. The reports, however, indicated a big deforestation rate resulting from a wide gap between the consumption and the allowable removal rate and the horizontal expansion of agriculture. The participation of the Sudan in the land cover mapping project (AFRICOVER) executed by FAO and financed by the Italian Government confirmed and quantified the declining forest cover of the country.

3. formulating and implementing national policies and strategies, through an open and participatory process, for addressing the underlying causes of deforestation

To face this situation a series of forest policy amendments took place to cater for combating desertification and forest degradation. The forest policy of 1986 stipulated a percentage of 15% of the country's land area to be reserved as forest. It also emphasized the role of communities, private sector and NGOs in this respect. The 10 year comprehensive National Strategic Plan (CNSP) targeted a 25% of the country's total land area to be reserved as range land, wild life reserves and forest reserves

4. raising awareness of the importance of issues related to deforestation and forest degradation and the multiple values of forests

Extension and afforestation: The objectives of forestry extension is to increase public awareness of the important multiple roles of forestry, promotes forestry protection and development and advocate the need for the rational use of renewable natural resources. The means used are:

Organizing of village committees, forestry associations and other bodies and the establishment of a

dialogue between the resident forestry extensionist and each of these bodies for awareness raising and conflict resolution.

Lectures, talks and shows in schools, clubs etc.

Use of mass media including radio and television programmes and newspaper articles.

Arbor Day celebrations held annually where free of charge seedlings are distributed and technical advice provided.

Through foreign aid and general support from the national Development budget, a boom in afforestation and replanting of Acacia senegal trees was achieved during the implementation phase of the first 3 years of the comprehensive national strategy (seed collection, seedling production and replanting activities). However, in the two ensuing eras, performance declined following disruption of foreign aid and the halt of federal support starting from 1996. This poor performance can be attributed to the following factors:

Sharing the revenues of non-reserved forests' between the Centre and the states by virtue of a ministerial decree No. 40/1997 issued by the Council of Ministers'. The said decree does not assign any responsibilities to the states regarding forests development and protection.

The wide gap between the approved investment projects for the purpose of achieving the quantitative targets and the actual budget. The latter represented only 33% of the total expected investments (see table 5).

Rejecting the proposed budgets for the implementation of some of the National Comprehensive Strategy projects. Moreover, spending within these approved budgets was occasionally frozen during the National Comprehensive Strategy lifetime.

Transferring the budget allocated for the development of forests sector from the central financing to self-financing.

Lack of security in some of the productive forests' areas has resulted in the decline of the Forests Notional Corporation's revenues. This adversely impacted forests' activities particularly if we take into consideration the fact that the corporation is a self-finance unit.

Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forest and fragile ecosystems

5. creating or expanding protected areas to safeguard forest and related ecosystems and their full range of values and, developing and applying criteria and methodologies for assessing the conditions and management effectiveness in protected forest areas

Reserved and under reservation forests went up from 2.9 million feddans in 1992 to 23.3 million feddans in 2002 ' thanks to the President's decree no 1993/628 which stipulated the reservation of 955 forests with a total area of 9.5 million feddans. Therefore, the reserved areas increased by four folds compared to reservations done in the previous 70 years. Areas reserved during the time when the strategy was in effect represent 46% of the targeted 150 million feddans set by the strategy.

By adding the previously reserved forest areas to those reserved as natural resources (20.2 million feddans) the total becomes 43.5 million feddans equivalent to 7% of the county's area which is a bit less than one third the targeted total area in the strategy. While implementing the National strategy reservation activities face the following problems:

High cost in terms of surveying and registering lands which resulted in 1997 in a total cessation of the process until 1999. The process was only resumed at the end of 1999 when the judiciary agreed by virtue of the presidential decree 1993/629 to reduce registration fees for forestland covered by the decree.

Reservation was completely halted in the Kassala, Khartoum, River Nile, and northern Kordofan states, due to trespass acts that transformed a total of 281060 feddans into agricultural, residential or industrial lands. In other states like the Blue Nile, Sinnar, and Greater Darfur where trespasses were medium or light and individual induced; efforts were focused on encroachment removal rather than reserving new lands. In other states like Gezira no reservation of forests has been made as a result of the fact that the state's agricultural policies are forest threatening.

The complexity of reservation procedures, involving 14 steps, and the multiplicity of the competent authorities (8 parties).

6. developing and implementing partnership mechanisms to engage forest owners, private sector, indigenous people and local communities in the planning and management of forest conservation areas and developing and implementing a range of innovative mechanisms for financing and encouraging forest conservation

Sudan is a member in the National Forests Program Facility (NFP) the Facility support is expected to result in:

Development of consensus through a democratic process on how to address issues relevant to forests and trees at national level. The outcome of the negotiations and concessions through group discussions at workshops and other fora will form the gist of the NFP.

National Forest programme will be compatible with other related strategies such as the National Environmental Strategy, the land use plan and will form an integral part of the National Development Strategy. This important coordination will be realized through participatory approaches adopted in workshops and National Teams deliberations.

The workshops and studies shall identify means and ways of integrating agricultural and animal production with the forestry programmes. The integration process is aimed at increasing food productivity and hence contributes to poverty alleviation.

The contents and obligations regarding international conventions and agreement are discussed in workshops and other mechanisms supported by the Facility. Deliberations on these topics help to explain the importance of those agreements and identify the role of different stakeholders in meeting the obligations towards them.

Private forestry is not common in Sudan albeit encouraged by FNC and the forest regulations. Local communities have, however, been attached to nearby forests providing local paid labor and getting free goods such as tree leaves, fruits, tubers, roots etc as a bonus. FNC also provides land for villagers to raise their crops in lieu of planting of tree-less areas inside the forest. In gum production areas the whole family engages in the different gum development operations from planting to tending and harvesting of gum. Gum gardens are either privately, communally or state owned.

Several national and international NGOs are active in forestry development. Their efforts are concentrated on awareness raising, the adoption of participatory management techniques and working with villagers on community forests and environmental programmes.

Forestry village communities and the Gum producer's Union are also among the active NGOs

7. Giving high priority in national Forest Programs to the rehabilitation and sustainable management of forest and trees in environmentally critical areas, recognising the linkage between forest protection and sustainable development and improving the coordination among such policies and programmes

National Forest Programme:

In 1984/1988 The World Bank (WB) and bilateral co-financers conducted a Forestry Sector Review that reiterated the importance of the development of the forestry sector and enabling it to supply the needs of fuel wood and support of agricultural production. It also emphasized the importance of the community participation, noted the importance of data generation for planning purposes and the need for institutional and capacity building. It also noted the need for improved forestry training and research support. The findings of the Review were used to prepare a seven year Forestry Conservation Project whose budget was 58.8 US million dollars to be provided by WB and co-financers. The project was frozen in 1989 after being pencilled for final signature. That Review was adopted as the country's National Forest Programme (nfp) because the outcome of the review concurred with the requirements of the NFP even before the NFP concept was finally developed.

When the review was finalized in 1986 a new forest policy statement was issued that drew heavily on the original 1932 policy statement but contained, in addition, the new policy trends of privatization, participation and inter-sectoral interactions. In 1989 new forestry legislation was enacted and a basic

institutional reform was conducted through the replacement of the old Forests Department by a parastatal organization named the Forests National Corporation (FNC). In implementing its nfp the FNC emphasized stakeholder participation, partnership and awareness-raising. It also managed to conduct the following:

- Forest Products Consumption Survey with technical and financial support by FAO, (1995).
- National Forest Resources Inventory, (for areas outside conflict zones); (1998).
- National Energy Assessment (2000) in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and Mining.
- Forestry Outlook Study for Africa (FOSA), 2002.

The FNC managed to keep the NFP on-going despite limited local funding and rare external support. It is currently planning to update/revise the NFP to include forest areas not included in the original Review and to secure participation of stakeholders and related sectors in the formulation process. The outcome of the current ongoing TCP on policy revision and institutional reform will be integrated into the updated/revise NFP to form a holistic framework document for future forestry development. The NFP revision will be in line with the basic principles and operational guidelines issued by FAO (1996) for the formulation, execution and revision of national forest programmes.

The NFP actually gave high priority to rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and trees. Strict measures are taken to confine removals to areas, which are managed according to approved management plans. Since 1997 the following management plans were formulated:

- *Acacia nilotica* forests, (central region)
- Jebel Marra Forests, (Dar fur region)
- *Acacia nilotica* forests (Khartoum)
- Al Ain Forest, (Kordofan Region)
- *Acacia nilotica* forests, (Dinder River)
- Wad El Bashir forest, (Eastern Region)

Serious efforts are now going on to put all reserved areas under sustainable forest management plans. Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low -forest cover

8. expanding forested area, establishing and managing plantations to enhance production of forest goods and services, while avoiding the replacement of natural ecosystems, and recognizing the role of imports in satisfying the needs for forest products and services

Plantations were established since the start of forestry practice in the Sudan. Plantations include both indigenous and exotic types. The largest plantations (52227 ha.) are made of *Acacia senegal* raised to compensate for areas damaged by fire, illicit felling and senility. These are followed by *Acacia nilotica* (18200 ha.) planted as part of a managed rotation to produce millable timber, building poles and fuelwood. Teak, *Tectona grandis* (10130 ha.) is in third position while *Eucalyptus microtheca* (5742 ha.) comes last among the most important planted stock. Various other species including *Khaya spp.*, *Cupressus spp.*, *Oxytenanthera abyssinica*, *Acacia seyal*, *Prosopis spp.* and *Acacia mellifera* are planted on a small scale.

Forest Policy and Laws encouraged local communities, private individuals and organizations to establish plantations

The areas annually planted are by far below the strategic and policy targets. The constraint is always available funding

9. Improving the efficiency of international cooperation to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and building capacity to monitor forest resource

After the withdrawal of almost all the international organizations cooperating with the forestry service by 1996 recent years witnessed increasing international cooperation like the regional projects of Africover and Acacia operation, cooperation with the university of Helsinki and the FAO Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) to review the policy, legislation and organization of the FNC.

Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands and promotion of natural and planted forests

10. Promoting the creation of new forest resources through plantations and recognizing their role in rehabilitation of degraded lands and forests in environmentally critical areas

Establishment of plantations for the restoration of the fertility of exhausted agricultural lands is in practice in rain-fed areas. A total area of 100000 ha has been planted in the Dali and Mazmum mechanized rain-fed farming area.

11. Promoting policies to meet increasing demand for wood and non-wood forest products and services through sustainable forest management

The Sudan is considered thinly populated with only 31 million inhabitants dispersed over its vast area (2002 projected from 1994 population census). The bulk of the population (approx. 66%) is rural and almost entirely depends on fuel wood as the main source of energy and on round timber for roofing and building of thatched huts. When sizable portions of the country were heavily forested the rural population enjoyed unlimited benefits from their forests. In addition to obtaining their wood requirements at will they used the forests for grazing, for wildlife hunting and for obtaining forest food in the form of tree leaves, fruits and tubers. They also used their shade for their social functions and other recreational purposes. The rural people traditionally valued the forest as a great gift of God and have deep convictions with regard to trees originating from their religious belief which call for planting tree and urges individuals to refrain from removing them without a proven right to do so. In spite of this, the forests experienced severe destruction not because of the lack of appreciation of trees but because of the fact that with increased populations the needs for fuel wood, for grazing and for speculative cultivation also increased; and these are economic necessities that are often vital means of survival.

Energy alternatives have been promoted to meet the wood-fuel deficit. Most prominent in the *Gabat-Gas Project*. The project aims at changing consumption attitudes by reducing fire wood and charcoal consumption by 50% in a period ranging between 3 and 5 years. This could be achieved by encouraging the use of other biomass alternatives in order to protect forests and preserve the environment. The project will be implemented by the corporation in collaboration and full coordination with other governmental authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

The Corporation has established relations with other entities and most importantly with the United Arab Emirates Suda-Gas company whose

Distribution of gas cylinders and their accessories reached 88521 units (table 18). Preparations are now underway to shift to the next phase of the project.

This phase aims at establishing permanent gas storehouses in the cities and urban centers together with establishing mobile storehouses in rural areas. It also aims at encouraging the use of brick ovens and traditional bakeries using gas, kerosene and furnace instead of firewood and charcoal. In this respect, The Sudanese Embassy in Egypt is trying to contact Egyptian experts to foster this process. The Forests National Corporation endeavors, in collaboration with the Sudanese Organization for Construction Materials, to encourage the use of biomass energy alternatives. The corporation is implementing this task by conducting experiments on brick production using gas in some locations in Khartoum State.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 3

Economic aspects of forests, including trade

12. valuation of forest goods and services (this may include, among other things, the development and use of new valuation methodologies, valuation of a wider range of goods and services, and policy decisions that reflect a more comprehensive assessment of forest values)

A study on valuation and investment in sustainable forest management in Sudan has been prepared in September 2003 by a working group of experts under the overall supervision of the Chief, forestry planning and statistic branch, forestry department, FAO, Rome and the guidance of the Senior Forestry Officer, FAO, Near-East Regional Office, Cairo. The study estimated the contribution of forestry to (GDP) and reviewed the valuation of forestry goods and services in the Sudan including wood and non-wood products, Gum Arabic, fodder, social and environmental services, control of desertification, conservation of soil and water resources, carbon sequestration, conservation of wild-life and marine Eco-systems and Eco-tourism and recreation opportunities.

13. the amount, scope, or quality of market data and information for wood and non-wood forest products and their substitutes

The market data and information for wood products is highly reliable and available but for the non-wood products is incomplete. Arrangements are now being made to collect data and information for non-wood products apart from the Gum Arabic whose data are sufficient.

14. participation in forest certification and labelling schemes and work toward mutual recognition and comparability of such schemes, and

Sudan has participated in East Africa Forest Certification Initiative supported by development partners. Capacity building strategies have been developed and implemented. National working group for forest certification is acting as a liaison and coordination body of the forest certification issues. It is anticipated that the on going forest sector reforms in Sudan will open further opportunities for forest production and trade by other actors including private sector and farmers. Certification will therefore have an increasing role to play in promoting sustainable forest management in future.

Forest Laws and Presidential and Ministerial Orders have been promulgated to control the illegal trade in wood and non-wood forest products

15. Efforts to reduce illegal trade (exports from or imports into your country) in wood or non-wood forest products. Please indicate achievements made, lessons learned, constraints encountered, and planned initiatives.

Forest laws and presidential and ministerial orders have been promulgated to control the illegal trade in wood or non-wood forest trade.

Forest health and productivity

16. If damage to forests from air pollution is a significant problem in your country, please provide information on recent national strategies or programmes to minimize damaging air pollution. Please indicate if your country is involved in any international cooperation efforts aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge, increasing information access or reducing the impacts of long-range air pollution on forests, as well as your views on the role of enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels to facilitate such work.

Not applicable

Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs

17. Please provide information on recent efforts to assess long-term trends in national supply and demand for wood, non-wood forest products and services and whether your country's national forest programme or similar policy framework for forests takes into consideration future needs for forest goods and services. Please provide views on how enhanced

cooperation at the regional and international levels, including through UNFF, could further facilitate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action

The NFI and FPCS finalized in 1998 and 1995 respectively assessed the long-term trends of supply and demand for forest products and services.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4

Social and cultural aspects of forests

18. Strengthening the role of women in sustainable forest management, including through capacity building and greater participation in community-based forest management

Women participated in a number of forestry projects especially those concerned with combating desertification as well as community forests. They are also involved in seedlings raising and silvicultural operations like first thinning in some of the FNC forest reserves.

19. Integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management programmes, particularly as regards (a) recognition and respect of the customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous and local communities, (b) participation in decision making regarding the management of forests, (c) the attainment of secure land tenure arrangements, (d) capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities

Some of the forest management plans (Rawashda forest) integrated local communities in sustainable forest management.

Traditional forest-related knowledge

20. Inventorying, cataloguing, and applying traditional forest related knowledge for sustainable forest management and promoting research on TFRK with the involvement of the knowledge holders

Not applicable

21. Supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices

Not applicable.

Scientific forest-related knowledge

22. Disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institutions and networks

All forest reserves and field and production data are made available to all universities and research institutes.

23. Enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes, including priority setting of research, addressing of knowledge gaps and using scientific knowledge to support decision-making

Forest research centre and universities are represented in the FNC Board of Directors. They are involved in most technical committees and teams.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

24. Improving information on national forest resources, making the information widely available, assisting other countries in their related efforts

FNC is a focal point and coordinator of the land cover database in the country. Data is disseminated to all users and updating programmes are planned. Data in the FNI and FPCS is available to all universities and research organizations. Cooperation with FAO is continuing to finalize the report on forest resources assessment for the year 2005 (FRA2005)

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

25. Developing and using criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (at national level and/or sub national level and for policy, planning, management and/or monitoring purposes), and participating in regional and/or international C&I processes

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management have been developed under the guidance of the Senior Forestry Officer of FAO Near-East Office. Methodology and terminology have been adapted to the Sudanese practice by a working team from FNC, universities and Forestry Research Centre.