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Assessment of progress made on the implementation of the U.N. non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and towards the achievement of the four global objectives on forests

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

This report was prepared to contribute to the United Nations Forum on Forests’ (UNFF) assessment of progress in implementing the U.N. non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (forest instrument) and towards the achievement of its four global objectives on forests. Specifically, the report consolidates and analyzes information provided in 16 voluntary national reports, and includes actions taken, challenges encountered and lessons learned, as well as information relevant for future reporting. An exemplary pilot project on the implementation of the forest instrument in Ghana, showcasing actions to determine priorities, analyze gaps, strengths and weaknesses, among other measures to address identified challenges are described. The report also draws on other sources of information, including the FAO’s Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010, and inputs provided by regional and subregional entities.

National reports indicate that many of the countries have introduced or strengthened policy, institutional and normative measures and other actions, building on existing efforts, which support implementation of the forest instrument and its four global objectives, while others are in the process of doing so. The continued usefulness of existing forest policy frameworks and strategies, such as national forest programmes, for sustainable forest management was noted, as
were the benefits of the forest instrument as an overarching framework for ongoing and enhanced activities. Nevertheless, developing countries in particular identified challenges encountered, especially resource constraints. In this regard, a number of initiatives are planned and underway to assist countries with future voluntary reporting to the Forum.
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I. Introduction

1. The present report responds to UNFF Resolution 7/1, specifically paragraphs 19 and 20, requesting the Secretary-General to prepare an analytical report for the Ninth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) to help the Forum assess overall progress in implementing the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (hereinafter also referred to as the forest instrument) and towards achieving its four global objectives on forests. Specifically, it analyses and consolidates information provided in national reports and provides information relevant for future reporting.

2. At the time of completing this report, voluntary national information was submitted by 16 Member States. An exemplary pilot project on the implementation of the forest instrument in Ghana is featured to showcase the steps taken to determine priorities, analyze gaps, strengthens and weaknesses, as well as other measures to address identified challenges. In addition, information contained in FAO’s Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010, (hereinafter referred to as FRA 2010), and inputs provided by 15 regional and subregional entities were considered in the preparation of this report.

II. Relevant Forum decisions

A. Global objectives on forests and the forest instrument

3. With a view to achieving the main objective of the international arrangement on forests and enhance the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC) through Resolution 2006/49 adopted the four global objectives on forests\(^1\), as follows, agreeing to work globally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement by 2015:

a. Global objective 1: Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.

b. Global objective 2: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.

c. Global objective 3: Increase 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.

d. Global objective 4: Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

\(^1\) The four objectives are presented in section IV.C of the report.
4. In December 2007, through Resolution 62/98, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the forest instrument\(^2\), with the following purpose:

   a. to strengthen political commitment and action at all levels to implement effectively sustainable management of all types of forests and to achieve the shared global objectives on forests;

   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;

   c. to provide a framework for national action and international cooperation.\(^3\)

5. In paragraph 5 of the instrument, Member States reaffirm their commitment to work at all levels toward the achievement of the four objectives by 2015. Moreover, paragraphs 6 and 7 of the instrument identify, respectively, 25 national policies and measures and 19 actions related to international cooperation and the means of implementation to achieve the instrument’s purpose. Therefore, the implementation of the instrument can be a means to achieving the four global objectives. Monitoring and assessment of progress, along with a request for voluntary national reports as part of regular reporting to the Forum are noted respectively in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the instrument.

6. While the forest instrument and global objectives are sometimes referred to separately in Forum resolutions they are, in practice, inextricably linked and share the aspiration of enhancing sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests towards achieving internationally agreed development goals. This point is reflected in paragraph 2(b)(i) of UNFF Resolution 8/1 underlining the integrated framework offered by the forest instrument as a means to ensure coherence and avoid duplication. While there is no direct hierarchical or linear relationship between the global objectives on forests and national and international provisions contained in the instrument, paragraphs 6 and 7 can be understood to mean that implementation of achievement of the global objectives and the forest instrument contribute to sustainable forest management overall.

III. Status of reporting to the Forum: 2002-2010

7. From 2002 to 2005, the Forum invited Member States to submit voluntary national reports on progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for actions for the corresponding Sessions of the Forum. Following the adoption of the forest instrument in 2007, reporting focused on the instrument and its global objectives. Since 2002, eighty-six countries have provided national reports, ranging from 14 in 2002 to 54 in 2005. Three countries\(^4\) provided national reports to all six Sessions. Another 24 countries

\(^2\) At the time of adoption, the forest instrument was available in all six official UN languages.

\(^3\) General Assembly resolution 62/98, annex, para. 1.

\(^4\) Finland, Mexico and New Zealand
presented reports to three to five Sessions. However, 41 countries provided national reports to only one of the six sessions in which they were requested.

8. For the Forum’s Eighth Session (May 2009), 21 countries submitted progress reports. Inputs were also received from 29 regional or subregional entities, and CPF members. The reports provide useful insights into actions being taken and indicated the considerable potential of the instrument as a framework. However it was recognized that only a short time had elapsed since adoption of the forest instrument in 2007.

9. To facilitate preparation of the voluntary national reports for the Forum’s Ninth Session, the Forum Secretariat circulated guidelines and a format for countries to draw on, as appropriate, and a survey to regional and subregional entities. While finalizing this report, 16 countries and 15 regional and subregional entities had submitted reports. The uneven response by countries to requests for national reports is likely due to limited resources and technical capacity, as well as to the burden on countries by increasing reporting demands.

IV. Summary of national reports submitted for the Ninth Session of the Forum

A. Overview

10. At the time of the completion of this report, 16 countries, including 11 developing countries and countries with economies in transition and 5 developed countries, submitted reports:

Bangladesh
Brazil
Cameroon
Cyprus
El Salvador
Finland
Gabon
Ghana

Jamaica
Mexico
Mozambique
New Zealand
Papua New Guinea
Philippines
Slovak Republic
Switzerland

11. National reports indicate that many of the above countries have introduced or strengthened policy, institutional and normative measures and other actions that support implementation of the forest instrument and its global objectives on forests, while others are in the process of doing so. These efforts were seen to build on existing initiatives aimed at implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for actions and previous resolutions and decisions of the Forum. Some countries reported that many of the elements of the forest instrument already formed part of their policy and legislative framework for achieving

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5 Cyprus and Finland noted that their national reports for UNFF 8 were still valid, with both providing updates.
sustainable forest management, emphasizing national forest programmes, plans and related strategies as useful vehicles for taking forward the forest instrument.

12. The interconnections and cross-over between the global objectives and paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument were reflected in most national reports. Numerous actions reported as contributing to a particular global objective also contributed to one or more of the provisions contained in the instrument. Overlap across the four global objectives was also evident, with some actions reported under one global objective often seen as relevant to achieving another objective. Countries also reported on governance and related policy matters, linked to provisions of the instrument.

13. National reports, available at the time of writing, have been published at the Forum website (http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff9.html). Although the number of responses remained relatively limited, they gave a valuable indication of the broad range of actions taken. The report was also complemented by information from other sources, including regional and subregional inputs also available on the Forum website (http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff9.html#regions).

14. Among the country reports, Ghana described its pilot project on the implementation of the forest instrument. While raising the awareness of stakeholders in Ghana about the forest instrument, Ghana carried out an assessment of the current situation of the instrument vis-à-vis its implementation. The assessment results provide a helpful baseline for monitoring progress on the implementation of the instrument and for reporting to UNFF. A monitoring system is currently under development, drawing on existing tools in the forest sector. Lessons learned from this pilot project will be presented below as an example to help demonstrate how the forest instrument can serve as an important mechanism for coordination with other national policy processes. Further details of the project will be announced at the Ninth Session of the Forum.

B. Ghana pilot project: Assessment of the implementation of the forest instrument

15. In 2008 Ghana became the first country to systematically implement the forest instrument, with technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project entitled “Moving Forward in the Implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests” aimed to identify Ghana’s gaps, strengths and weaknesses with respect to the national policies and measures set forth in the forest instrument, and to determine priorities and initiate programmes needed to address identified gaps and weaknesses.

16. The following resulted after the launch of the project in 2009:

- A Project Steering Committee with representation from stakeholders in the forest sector was established to review project activities and advise on issues related to implementation.
Regional stakeholder workshops were organized to raise awareness among forest users and others and to help assess Ghana’s implementation in relation to the forest instrument.

Outcomes of regional workshops fed into a national stakeholder workshop.

The Forestry Commission began collaborating with civil society organizations (such as Care, Word Wildlife Fund), traditional authorities, private sector institutions (such as the Ghana Timber Association), and initiatives like the Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the EU, to dialogue and review progress on project implementation.

17. Based on regional and national stakeholder consultations, the following four areas from paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument, and initial “catalytic” activities for each area, were identified as priorities for making progress on sustainable forest management:

a. **Priority area: Promote cross-sectoral coordination**
   Initial catalytic activity: Enhance the visibility of the forestry sector’s contribution to national development planning

b. **Priority area: Strengthen forest law enforcement**
   Initial catalytic activity: Enhance the watchdog role of communities in combating corruption and other illegal activities

c. **Priority area: Develop financing strategies for sustainable forest management**
   Initial catalytic activity: Enhance the access of local stakeholders to funding sources that support socio-economic activities in the forestry sector.

d. **Priority area: Integrate national forest programmes into relevant national development plans and poverty reduction strategies**
   Initial catalytic activity: Enhance the capacity of District Assemblies in the development and implementation of district forestry programmes.

18. Stakeholders also identified three thematic areas as cross-cutting issues needing priority attention: (a) gender, (b) education and (c) science and technology. A monitoring system is currently being pilot tested in two forest districts to implement the initial catalytic activities in the four priority areas identified. An evaluation system is also being pilot tested.

19. **Challenges** in implementing the forest instrument:

- Insufficient funding and human resources for collaborative forest management, as well as to build capacity for resource management, improve infrastructure and strengthen law enforcement capacities.

- Widespread poverty among rural forest dependent communities, many lacking viable alternative forms of livelihood.
• Unsustainable agricultural practices resulting in loss of forest cover due to the lack of a suitable land-use policy framework to address impacts of agriculture on forests.

• Lack of effective inter-ministerial collaboration to harmonize conflicting land use policies (e.g. conservation versus bush meat trade). Many of the drivers of deforestation are outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the Forestry Commission.

• Limited natural resource accounting in the national budget to capture the contribution of the forest sector to national development.

20. Lessons learned. Although the pilot project is still in its early stages, the forest instrument has the potential to provide an overarching and integrated framework and performance assessment tool for national actions and international cooperation related to Ghana’s forests. Through the pilot, the instrument has already served as an effective framework for:

(a) Stakeholder engagement and raising public awareness,

(b) Developing forest sector monitoring and evaluation systems, and

(c) Developing a database of existing forest related policies, structures and initiatives

21. The lessons learned from the pilot project have been documented and shared at national and international fora and will be featured during UNFF9. Ghana’s approach has shown promise for application in other countries. Three countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia will shortly join the pilot effort. Broadening these efforts to additional countries however depends on international support and funding availability.

C. Progress toward the global objectives on forests and related actions in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the forest instrument

Global objective 1: Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation

22. FRA 2010 provides up-to-date information on the state of the world’s forest resources. Forests currently cover 31 percent of earth’s land mass. Deforestation rates, particularly the conversion of tropical forests to agricultural lands have decreased during the last decade from 16 million hectares annually in the 1990’s to an average of about 13 million hectares annually. Nevertheless, deforestation rates are still alarmingly high, particularly in South America and Africa. Large-scale tree planting has reduced significantly the net loss of forest areas, resulting in a drop in annual net loss from 8.3 million hectares from 1990-2000 to 5.2 million hectares per year from 2000-2010. Today, planted forests account for 7 percent of total forest area, or 264 million hectares, increasing by approximately 5 million hectares per year from 2005-2010. In addition to the conversion of forests to agricultural lands, forest fires, pests and diseases, natural disasters, conflicts in forested areas and invasive species have been major causes of deforestation and forest degradation.
Following are examples of actions reported by countries to achieve global objective 1 and implement actions of the forest instrument [e.g. 6(o), 7(d), 7(h), 7(i) and 7(j)]. A number of the actions contribute to the achievement of other global objectives.

- Enforcement of forest legislation to prevent land use change. Preparation of national plans for the control and prevention of forest fires, with emphasis on the protection of forests from fires, which for Cyprus in particular included the reinforcement of traditional preventive measures with more advanced technologies, including an automatic fire detection system. Some countries reported on actions taken to protect forests from other forest health hazards. For example, Mexico reported on measures to assess the impact of pests and diseases on forests, with plans to adopt appropriate response technologies.

- Efforts to promote reforestation and restoration of degraded forested lands, including those affected by forest fires, with particular focus on priority watersheds. Brazil, for example, reported that it expanded its planted forest area from 350 to 650 thousand hectares, while Mozambique reported on the reforestation of approximately 35,000 hectares from 2005-2009. Moreover, Mexico’s massive reforestation project, which is carried out through a comprehensive policy, planning and programming approach, includes: updating its national forest programme 2001-2006; a strategic forestry programme till 2025; a public awareness and reforestry programme for 2007-2012, an institutional programme 2007-2012; and a revision of its forest finance strategy that commits substantial funds to the forestry sector, including for projects implemented by local authorities and communities. Other relevant examples include the extension of forest cover through afforestation, particularly on private lands, which have contributed to reversing forest cover loss in countries like Cyprus. Examples related to REDD+ strategies, in the case of Philippines, were also mentioned as being carried out vis a vis the all four global objectives. In Mozambique, reforestation activities generated 8,000 jobs during 2005-2009 and large scale commercial forest plantations were established in several areas.

- Mechanisms for strengthening stakeholder participation, particularly of women, to reverse loss of forest cover were also noted.

- Improvements in forest monitoring mechanisms were also mentioned as useful to generate accurate trends in the increase or loss of forest cover. El Salvador, for example, is attempting to raise funds to undertake an inventory of its forest resources, while the Philippines has adopted national Criteria and Indicators for SFM and an Audit System to assess the performance at the forest management unit. The Philippines is also undertaking national inventories of forest resources in ancestral domain sites.

For several countries a well-conceived national forest programme underpinned by strong national legislation was perceived as the foundation for effectively carrying out actions to reverse the loss of forest cover. The importance of forest law enforcement in addressing illegal logging and trade in forest products was also cited by some countries. Other developments include recently developed national reforestation and afforestation policies in Bangladesh and Mozambique, with the latter country promoting reforestation through a new presidential initiative and public forest awareness campaigns. Cyprus cited
its efforts to adequately fund rural development programmes to promote forest protection and expansion, while Papua New Guinea reported on the development of a new reforestation policy supported connected to a plantation development programme.

25. Despite efforts in support of this global objective, Papua New Guinea reported forest replenishment impediments due to resource constraints. The need for funding to empower indigenous peoples in technical and scientific and traditional modes of monitoring forest areas was also highlighted. Causes cited for loss of forest cover include expansion of the agricultural frontier, urban development and forest fires, and large scale logging with little reforestation.

**Global objective 2: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people**

26. According to the *FRA 2010*, the annual value of wood removals remained unchanged from 1990-2000, rose by 5 percent annually from 2000-2005, then dropped sharply after 2005. They were valued at just over US$100 billion annually from 2003-2007. The reported value of non-wood forest removals was approximately US$18.5 billion for 2005, with food products accounting for the greatest share. However, due to limited reporting by countries, the value of non-forest products remains underestimated. Approximately 10 million people are employed in forest management and conservation but many more are directly dependent on forests for their livelihoods. *FRA 2010* also reports that the management of forests for social and cultural functions is increasing, but that the area is difficult to quantify. Eight percent of the world’s forests, approximately 330 million hectares, have soil and water conservation as their primary objective.

27. Following are examples of actions reported by countries to achieve global objective 2 and implement actions of the forest instrument [e.g. 6(d), 6(f), 6(j), 6(l), 6(s), 6(v), 6(w), 6(y) and 7(k)]. A number of the actions contribute to the achievement of other global objectives on forests.

- Promotion of a range of conservation, utilization, industrialization and marketing actions to generate economic benefits for local communities and support sustainable forest management. Several countries mentioned forest dependent local communities with the aim to also achieve poverty reduction.

- Promotion of indigenous peoples' rights and rights-bases approaches as well as activities related to Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) processes and the identification of safeguards. In this regard, the Philippines underscored the spiritual and cultural bonds to forest areas. Integration of indigenous community policies into local ordinances and legislation and the strengthening of indigenous communities’ representation in local development councils were also highlighted. Conflict management practices over natural resources and the establishment of community basic policies to increase the resiliency of indigenous communities in the defense of their territories to achieve peace and security were also cited.

- Brazil reported that (a) more than 10 million hectares of new Indigenous Areas were recognized, (b) 6 million hectares of territories dedicated to local communities to work on
sustainable management of forest products were established, as well as 3 million hectares of sustainable settlements.

- Adopting certification processes for wood products. Brazil reported that it is promoting national and international certification of forest products to enhance marketability. Brazil has also established a system to guarantee minimum prices for community based forest products. Similarly, the Philippines described the set up of a computer based Certification of Lumber/ Timber Origin monitoring system to track the transport of forest products. A system for non-timber forest products is also underway.

- Based on an assessment of forest recreation demands and needs, Cyprus identified important sites for forest recreation, providing financial support to those most suitable (i.e. camping, picnic sites, nature trails and botanical gardens) to both locals and visitors.

- Strengthening public awareness and education campaign on the economic benefits provided by forest goods and services the Philippines, for example, has been carrying out educational and communication campaigns amongst the general public and expanding capacity building activities on sustainable forest management, with active participation in the ASEAN Social Forestry Network.

- Several countries reported on mechanisms for promoting stakeholder participation, particularly with the private sector, local communities and women, in forestry development, including through the application of environmentally sound technologies. With the support of the European Union, Papua New Guinea has developed an eco-forestry programme that promotes community participation in the use and management of forest resources. Financing of this initiative has been assumed by the national government.

- In improving the competitiveness of forest products through improved quality measures. Gabon, Mexico and Papua New Guinea, for example, stressed the importance of transitioning from exporting logs to diversification and processing of wood products with added value. In the case of Gabon, Ghana, and Mozambique bans on log exportation have been implemented with the aim of stimulating local processing. Cameroun, as a Congo basin country, reported on the need to address the small contribution of forests to the national economy.

- Establishment of payment for ecosystem services programmes to support the protection of forests by local stakeholders was reported by a number of countries.

28. National forest programmes and strategies provided the framework for undertaking actions aimed at achieving this global objective in many countries. El Salvador is revising its national forest policy and forest legislation with the aim of balancing the country’s demand for forest goods and services with the conservation of ecosystems that allow for sustainable social and economic development. Rural development policies and plans in Cyprus, Mexico and Mozambique were useful to promote forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits that contributed to improving the livelihoods of local communities. Similarly, other countries, including Jamaica, were making use of local forest management committees. The Philippines also
noted the development of a Forestry Information System to monitor the performance of the forestry tenure holders *vis a vis* the terms and conditions of their forestry agreements with the government.

**Global objective 3: Increase 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**

29. *FRA 2010* reports that legally established protected areas account for 13 percent of the world’s forests. The area of forests within protected area systems has increased by nearly 63 million hectares since 2000. Twelve percent of the world’s forests, or more than 460 million hectares, have been designated for biodiversity conservation, with nearly 44 million hectares being set aside during 2000-2005. *FRA 2010* also reports that forest areas covered by management plans, an important tool for sustainable forest management, has been increasing, although information is available only for 80 percent of total forested areas. Currently 1.6 billion hectares of forests have management plans.

30. Following are examples of actions reported by countries to achieve global objective 3 and implement related actions of the forest instrument [e.g. 6(e), 6(p), 6(q), 6(x), 7(d) and 7(g)]. A number of the actions contribute to the achievement of other global objectives on forests.

- Establishment of protected areas, including national parks and reserves, contributed to the increase of protected forests in various countries. Brazil reported on the expansion of federal government protected areas from 67 to 74 million hectares. Finland reported that an additional 10,000 hectares of public lands will be protected by 2010 and 178,000-272,000 hectares of private forests by 2016. Cameroun stated that it plans to increase its permanent forest estate from 40 to 55 percent of all forested areas in the next few years. Ghana has re-designated forests into globally significant biodiversity areas.

- In prioritization of ensuring effective participation of local communities in implementing management plans for protected forested areas, Bangladesh plans to assess the performance of local communities and prepare case studies in this regard.

- Forest sector employment measures in the Philippines noted actions taken to hire more than 50,000 individuals as forest guards to implement forest protection activities to address untenured land.

- El Salvador is revising its national forest policy to promote the sustainable management of forests, particularly in key watersheds.

- Cyprus focused efforts on the rehabilitation of degraded protected areas and undertook revisions of management plans for both protected and other forested areas. Cyprus also developed monitoring plans for selected ecosystems, habitats and species.

- Mozambique conducted a survey of the status of forest reserves to identify priority needs to improve their management.

- Gabon reported that more than 3 million hectares of forests are protected, approximately 2 million hectares have Forest Stewardship Council certification and a total of 6 million
hectares are managed sustainably. Mexico is committed to increasing the total area of forests that are sustainably managed by 7.92 million hectares for the period 2007-2012. Similarly, Mozambique reported on plans to expand forest areas that are sustainably managed. Gabon and Mexico also cited their participation in forest certification processes.

- New Zealand has maintained a steady area of forests under conservation, including approximately 5 million hectares of indigenous forests, through measures including regulatory processes, voluntary criteria for sustainable plantation forest management, third party certification, voluntary industry approaches to source legal timber and wood products and prevent illegal logging, and raising community awareness of legality issues.

31. Finland and New Zealand are contributing to the achievement of this global objective by providing financial assistance to developing countries for projects that aim at protecting, conserving and sustainable managing forests; the development of plantation forests for easing pressure on protected areas; and the development of market-based mechanisms to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

32. Actions in support of this objective were implemented as part of national forest programmes in most countries. The existence of supportive national legislation on protected areas and wildlife provided the legal basis for increasing protected areas in Cyprus, El Salvador and Mexico and sustainably managed forests in Gabon.

Global objective 4: Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management

33. Following are examples of actions reported by countries to achieve global objective 4 and implement related actions of the forest instrument [e.g. 6(i), 7(a), 7(b), 7(c) and 7(e)]: A number of the actions contribute to the achievement of other global objectives on forests.

- In bilateral cooperation in support of sustainable forest management Finland reported on their support to neighboring countries such as the Russian Federation. New Zealand cited its financial and in-kind support to sustainable forest management in developing countries through its ministry of agriculture and forestry, primarily through core funding to international organizations. Switzerland highlighted its support through the implementation of REDD projects in Colombia, Indonesia, Ghana and Madagascar, as well as its active participation in the interim REDD+ partnership work program. Switzerland also mentioned its support through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to a number of forest projects in developing countries.

- Cyprus has evolved from being an aid recipient to an aid donor since 2006 and is increasing its official development assistance through 2015, at which time its ODA should reach 0.33% of its gross national income (GNI). Its ODA strategy for 2006-2010 identifies agriculture and environment, including forestry and environmental protection, as one of its three thematic areas.
Recipient countries such as Bangladesh, Gabon and Ghana are actively seeking funding from diverse sources, including the World Bank, ITTO, bilateral development agencies and regional development banks, among others. Mozambique has reached finance agreements with Finland to support the implementation of its national forest programme 2009-2013 with EUR 11.44 million, with Japan in 2010 to support its programme on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) for USD $7 million, as well as with others. From 2007-2010 Papua New Guinea mobilized resources from bilateral development agencies and international organizations and simultaneously committed its own resources to fund REDD+ pilot projects. In the case of the Philippines, its national REDD + strategy includes a component in sustainable financing to encourage and enforce significant reductions in forestry sector emissions.

Mexico established a programme for payment of forest ecosystem services and a forest fund for stimulating investments in sustainable forest management that supports production, conservation and rehabilitation activities in the forest sector. The Philippines also recognized payments for ecosystem services as a mechanism which could aid in financing sustainable forest management. The need for incentives for indigenous peoples in protecting watershed areas for water utilized by other communities was also mentioned.

Brazil established a number of funds which support the forest instrument, including the Amazonia Fund and the Forest Development Fund. Gabon established a national forest fund and a project on payment for forest ecosystem services. Ghana is also developing a forest investment programme.

El Salvador is working closely with the private sector to stimulate investments in sustainable forest management. The Philippines noted activities underway through the Forestry Investment Forum and actions to stimulate investments in natural forest management, forest products processing, and climate change in relation to forests and other environmental services. Corporate social responsibility and the importance of interagency cooperation and coordination in traditional forest management systems were also mentioned.

Several of the measures implemented by countries were developed with technical and financial support provided by international, regional and bilateral development agencies and organizations.

D. Progress from a cross-cutting perspective

At the time of its adoption by the General Assembly in September 2007, the forest instrument was available in all six United Nations official languages. Having it available in a country’s official language(s) is essential for it to be effectively implemented at the national level. Of the 16 countries that provided national reports to UNFF 9, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cyprus, Finland, the Philippines and Switzerland have official languages other than those of the UN. Of these, Finland and the Philippines have translated the instrument into their official language.
36. Paragraph 6 and 7 of the forest instrument contain a number of governance related national and international policies, measures and actions not explicit in the global objectives on forests. Some of these may be viewed as cross-cutting the four global objectives. A number of countries reported actions taken in the following areas, as well as under the global objectives. Since these actions are mentioned above in the context of a specific global objective, a brief summary has been provided for each.

i. National forest programmes, plans and strategies

37. In many countries, national forest programmes encase the political commitment to sustainable forest management. New Zealand reported on the adoption of a broader approach comprised of a matrix of policies, plans and industry initiatives that are periodically updated as required. Brazil and Ghana reported progress in promoting cross-sectoral coordination on forests in national development planning. National forest policies of many countries often times are also formulated and implemented in close cooperation with regional processes. Forest policies, plans and strategies were mentioned as being prepared or revised by several countries:

- Jamaica adopted a strategic forest management plan 2010-2014.
- Cameroun developed an industrialization plan for the forestry sector that incorporates the sustainable management of forests.
- Cyprus is currently preparing a new national forest policy and programme.
- The Philippines is currently revising its forest policy (Sustainable Forest Management Act).

ii. Forest legislation

38. Various countries have undertaken, or are undertaking, revisions or amendments to strengthen national forest legislation, particularly as regards governance and law enforcement. El Salvador mentioned special attention to illegal logging and commerce in forest products. Gabon and Papua New Guinea reported stringent forest law enforcement policies. Mexico reported opting in favor of a preventive rather than punitive strategy. A number of African countries cited the importance of signing the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade-Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT-VPA) with the European Union. Mozambique elaborated a manual on promoting law enforcement legislation for forestry and wildlife. Bangladesh and Brazil are assessing or will undertake an assessment of law enforcement performance, with Bangladesh preparing case studies. Mexico has encouraged private sector participation in certification programmes as an approach to supporting forest law enforcement. The Philippines has intensified forest protection and law enforcement activities in coordination with other law enforcement agencies, local government units, civil society and other stakeholders. In
iii. Stakeholder participation

39. A significant number of countries have continued to strengthen stakeholder participation through measures implemented since before the adoption of the forest instrument. Bangladesh, Cyprus, El Salvador, Ghana and Mexico reported that they have institutionalized stakeholder participation, with Bangladesh and the Philippines focusing on social forestry and co-management activities through reforms introduced to its national forest legislation. El Salvador is establishing a forest consultative board through new forest legislation, and the Philippines is revising its laws on SFM to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples and their rights.

40. El Salvador reported that it is working with the private sector and industry in creating a more favorable environment for forestry investments. Jamaica reported that a few forest reserves and forest management areas have been established on private lands. In the case of Bangladesh, dialogues with the private sector and industry have been organized to help address conflict resolution. Mexico has strengthened its strategic partnerships with both national and international financial institutions, while also developing new innovative funding mechanisms and strengthening partnerships with the private sector. For New Zealand, nearly 100 percent of the volume and value of timber production comes from plantation forests, most of which are privately owned. Cameroun is studying how to better utilize forest sector income for funding sustainable forest management. El Salvador is focusing on improving the investment environment for sustainable forest management, including through investment incentives.

41. Many countries reported on mechanisms, or the development of initiatives, for achieving greater involvement of indigenous local communities in sustainable forest management programmes, with the inclusion of capacity building initiatives. To achieve this effectively, Bangladesh and the Philippines have prioritized the identification of alternative income generation activities for indigenous and local communities. New Zealand has set up a fund for preserving indigenous knowledge linked to the use and management of natural resources, including forests. A number of countries are addressing the protection of indigenous peoples’ legal rights related to forest management, including intellectual property rights.

42. As a priority, Bangladesh and Cameroun are monitoring institutional performance regarding stakeholder participation, with Bangladesh including a cost-benefit analysis, with results being provided through case studies. Papua New Guinea noted that, despite increased stakeholder participation, there has been little improvement in the livelihoods of people in local communities.

iv. Capacity building

43. Greater emphasis has been placed on capacity-building, including stimulating the participation of country-level staff in training programmes. Among the examples given, El Salvador has supported more efficient use of fuelwood in rural homes; Gabon has
established a wood crafting school and Mozambique has conducted training in implementing forest and wildlife legislation directed at state and community law enforcement agents. Gabon and Mexico have linked their work more closely on capacity-building and technology transfer with academia and the Philippines through community knowledge sharing workshops and field guide manuals. Cyprus and Finland are reviewing and restructuring their forestry organizations to address new and emerging issues more effectively.

44. Several countries reported on strengthening collaboration with universities and research centers. Mexico, for example, established a fund for catalyzing forest research and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, particularly those that contribute to the added value of processed forest products, while Switzerland initiated a research programme on the impact of climate change on forests. Other developed countries reported on activities aimed at supporting capacity-building initiatives in developing countries, often through regional and sub regional initiatives.

v. **Public awareness and education**

45. Public awareness programmes have been launched in several countries. Bangladesh organized a tree fair and Cameroon initiated an information and awareness campaign on its FLEGT-VPA, with similar activities being carried out in the Philippines. Ghana developed communication strategies delivered in the country’s local languages. Mozambique conducted a public awareness and education campaign for preventing and combating forest fires, while Cyprus undertook a study on the planning and organization of an information campaign on forest fire prevention. Gabon and the Philippines are intensifying activities in this area.

46. Local forest management committees have been critical in promoting public awareness and education on sustainable forest management. However, there is still a need for greater resources and partnerships with stakeholders, including increased media involvement. Major challenges include reaching adult audiences more effectively and educating the public about the value of forests goods and services.

vi. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting**

47. A number of countries described activities linked to monitoring, assessment and reporting which are implemented through regional programmes or projects. Several other countries highlighted measures to implement national forestry inventories, while a few others reported on the development of forest information management systems. Ghana established a monitoring and evaluation unit within its forestry commission, including the development of a website for information sharing. Gabon and Jamaica reported on the lack of adequate monitoring, assessment and reporting capabilities.

48. The development of policy guidelines for the forest sector was cited by one country as a means to guide international support to sustainable forest management. Other countries like Cyprus and Mexico highlighted existing policy frameworks to address monitoring, assessment and reporting functions. In many cases, strengthening
expertise and capacity in project design was a high priority, in particular to improve access to global financing mechanisms such as GEF and proposed REDD mechanisms.

E. **Challenges encountered**

49. Similar to the challenges described in Ghana’s Pilot project, developing countries identified obstacles and impediments in implementing the instrument, especially financial constraints and greater impacts due to the unpredictable global economic situation. Finland for example, identified the current global economic situation and structural changes in its forestry industry as key challenges. Bangladesh, Cameroun, Gabon and Mozambique cited inadequate resources as a major restraint facing their achievement of sustainable forest management. Other key points included the need to:

   a. strengthen institutional capacities in the forestry sector;
   b. resolve contrasting interests between local, state and federal governments;
   c. revise and strengthen forest legislation;
   d. train forestry personnel;
   e. address inter-sectoral conflicts more effectively;
   f. improve and diversify economic benefits generated by forest goods and services for small forest owners and indigenous communities;
   g. develop accounting and valuation systems that take into account forest goods and services;
   h. resolve unsettled land tenure issues;
   i. strengthen forest monitoring capabilities;
   j. overcome inadequate means of implementation
   k. provide assistance to indigenous peoples.

F. **Lessons learned**

50. Among the lessons learned in implementing the forest instrument the following were highlighted:

   a. National forest plans supported by sound forestry legislation continue to serve as effective vehicles for the sustainable use of forest goods and services.
   b. Existing criteria and indicators on good forest management practices provide a coherent and useful reference framework for sustainable forest management.
   c. Positive results supporting sustainable forest management have been derived from meetings with local communities on the establishment and application of mechanisms for adequately valuing the costs and benefits derived from services provided by forests.
   d. National tree planting events have helped raise public consciousness on the importance of the management and protection of forest resources and their biological diversity.
e. Monitoring and analyzing the relationship between cross-cutting concerns on FLEG and trade processes vis-à-vis UNFF’s thematic issues and sustainable forest management objectives are essential tasks to ensure effective implementation of the forest instrument.

G. Support provided by regional and subregional organizations

51. Resolution 7/1 on the Forum’s multi-year work programme 2007-2015 invites relevant regional and subregional forest-related entities to address issues and agenda items planned for each Forum session, including progress in implementing the forest instrument and its four global objectives. Fifteen regional and subregional entities provided reports for consideration of the Forum’s Ninth Session. Most inputs noted the forest instrument as an important international achievement to promote sustainable forest management. Similarly, the four global objectives have been taken into account in regional policy decision making and implementation through various entities. Many entities reported on activities that contribute directly to the implementation of the forest instrument and the global objectives. The Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, for example, has elaborated a draft Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management that takes into account the forest instrument and the four global objectives. The draft protocol will be considered for adoption by the Parties to the Convention in 2011. A synthesis of these reports is provided in the Secretary-General’s Report on regional and subregional inputs.

V. Future reporting

52. The tasks for future Sessions of the Forum, as laid out in the Forum’s multi-year programme of work for the period 2007-2015, will require innovative approaches to prevent the reporting burden on Member States from growing. Future reporting opportunities of the Forum also include input to the Rio+20 process in 2012. In addition, the tenth session of the Forum in 2013 will focus on the overall theme of forests and economic development. At its eleventh session in 2015, the Forum will review, inter alia, progress in implementing the forest instrument and the contribution of forests to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. To assist the Forum in its 2015 review, the secretariat has been requested to prepare, in collaboration with FAO, analytical consolidated reports based on, inter alia, voluntary country reports.

53. Information provided by Member States in voluntary national reports is therefore an essential input to the Forum’s discussions in 2013 on forests and economic development and to its assessment and review in 2015, as well as other relevant processes such as Rio+20 and post 2010 MDG activities. In view of the fact that relatively few countries submitted reports for the ninth session of the Forum, the following activities are planned or underway, consistent with paragraph 2(b)(i) and 4(c) of UNFF resolution 8/1, to facilitate future reporting:

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6 E/CN.18/2010/2
a) Based on experience gained through voluntary national reports submitted in 2008 and 2010 using suggested formats, the current reporting format will be further streamlined and integrated, drawing on existing forest reporting formats and indicators, to reduce reporting burdens while still generating the information needed for consolidated analysis. The secretariat will prepare, in consultation with FAO and other CPF members, guidelines for streamlined national reporting for the Forum’s Tenth Session.

b) Germany is providing support, through FAO and the NFP Facility, for three additional pilot projects on implementation of the forest instrument in Liberia, Nicaragua and the Philippines, building on experience gained through the Ghana pilot project.

c) Japan has agreed to contribute up to US$1.59 million to assist interested countries in reporting progress in implementation of the forest instrument to the tenth and eleventh sessions of the Forum. The project is expected to begin in March 2011 and will be implemented by FAO, in close collaboration with the NFP Facility and the UNFF Secretariat.

d) The UNFF secretariat has a four-year (2012-2015) project through DESA in the United Nations Development Account for US$527,000 to help strengthen national reporting in support of the implementation of the forest instrument.

VI. Conclusions

54. The voluntary national reports submitted during the preparation of the report reflect the interconnections between the global objectives on forests and the forest instrument, as well as interlinkages among the global objectives. Actions reported as contributing to the achievement of a particular global objective are also relevant to implementing one or more aspects of paragraphs 6 and 7 of the instrument and often contribute to the achievement of other global objectives. Reporting also revealed a number of governance and related policies and actions which cross cut the four global objectives.

55. Most countries which have reported are introducing or strengthening measures and other actions to implement the forest instrument, including achieving the global objectives on forests, through, inter alia reforestation and forest restoration, addressing threats to forest health, improved governance and law enforcement and strengthened participation of stakeholders. These measures and actions often build on existing initiatives to implement the previous IPF/IFF proposals for action and more recent resolutions and decisions of the Forum. As such, elements of the forest instrument may already be reflected in forest-related legislative and policy frameworks for achieving sustainable forest management, such as national forest programmes, plans and related strategies.

56. The Ghana pilot project indicates that the forest instrument can provide a useful overarching framework for national actions and international cooperation for sustainable forest management and has shown promise for application in other countries as well. Three countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia will soon join the pilot effort. Donors are to be congratulated for supporting this comprehensive approach. Countries stand to
learn a great deal by such an in-depth and comprehensive systematic method for implementing the forest instrument and the four global objectives. Broadening these efforts to additional countries, however, depends on international support and funding availability.

57. Developing countries generally face a range of obstacles in implementing the forest instrument and achieving its purpose, including financial and human resource constraints, inadequate valuing of forest foods and services, as well as challenges linked to improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people, and increasing the economic benefits provided by forests through the added value of locally processing and manufacturing forest products. The fragmentation within governments of responsibility for forests is a major reason for some of the gaps in implementation.

58. Voluntary reporting from a significantly greater number of Member States is needed in 2013 and 2015 to enable an overall assessment of progress made. While a number of initiatives are planned or underway by donors and the UNFF Secretariat in this regard, significant additional financial support will be needed to respond to all requests.

59. In view of the scope of the assessment and review in 2015, additional voluntary contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund will be needed to support the Secretariat’s efforts to prepare analytical consolidated reports and other background materials requested by the Forum.

VII. Recommendations

60. The Forum may wish to:
   a) **Decide** that voluntary national reporting to the Forum at its tenth session will focus on the overall theme of forests and economic development.
   b) **Welcome** the initiatives by Germany, Ghana, Japan, Liberia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, FAO, the NFP Facility and the UNFF secretariat to pilot implementation of the forest instrument and assist countries in reporting progress.
   c) **Invite** CPF members and **request** the UNFF secretariat to enhance efforts to support, on request, the efforts of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to prepare voluntary their reports for the tenth and eleventh sessions of the Forum.
   d) **Invite** FAO to consider how it can further incorporate into its reporting of the SOFO and FRA the elements of the forest instrument and the global objectives on forests for efficiency in reporting by member states.
   e) **Encourage** donor governments and other countries in a position to do so, financial institutions and other organizations to make voluntary financial contributions to the UNFF Trust Fund to enable its secretariat to effectively assist, on request, developing countries and countries with economies in transition in preparing voluntary reports for the Forum’s assessment and review in 2015.
f) *Encourage* Member States and CPF members to initiate and support, as requested by Member States, additional pilot projects on implementation of the forest instrument.