Building Blocks for the UNFF9 Ministerial Declaration
Proposed by the UNFF9 Bureau

Multiple Values of Forests/ Forests for People

- Forests have incredible potential to help the global community to address and diminish the impacts of major global challenges such as the energy, food, water, desertification, climate change, loss of biodiversity and financial crises. Forests are the intersection for all aspects of human life. Sustainably managed forests provide goods and services that are essential for civilizations and are crucial for sustainable development, and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals.

- A new paradigm on the interaction and linkages between people and precious natural resources is required. Forests are deeply entwined with other sectors of society and their management requires coordinated efforts and cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial approaches. The imperative for a people-centred approach to forests is for a close look at the interlinkages of forests and issues that have major impacts on the daily lives of people and their future.

Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests –Global Objectives on Forests

- The Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI), and the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs), therein, as the first comprehensive international agreement on forests addresses all aspects and functions of forests, and provides a framework for national action and international cooperation on forests. The NLBI and the GOFs are the important contribution of the UNFF and have played important roles in defining the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals. This instrument also contains valuable elaboration on “sustainable forest management” which can greatly help the ongoing debate on the definition of SFM to move forward. The world leaders, in September 2010, also called for strengthening political commitment and action at all levels to effectively implement the global objectives on forests and the sustainable forest management of all types of forests in order to reduce the loss of forest cover and improve the livelihoods of those that depend on forests through the development of a comprehensive and more effective approach to financing activities, involvement of local and indigenous communities and other relevant stakeholders, promoting good governance at the national and international levels, and enhancing international cooperation to address the threats posed by illicit activities.

- The implementation of this instrument and the achievement of the GOFs should be an important priority for all Member States and international organizations, and efforts of countries to implement them should be supported.

MOI, Governance

- Implementation of the NLBI and the GOFs are contingent upon the provision of necessary means. There is an urgent need to take effective steps at the national level to adopt policy, budgetary and administrative measures to facilitate the implementation of the instrument and the achievement of the GOFs. At the international level, it is also important to strengthen cooperation in the areas of finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technology and capacity-building, to ensure sustainable forest management in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
Accelerating cooperation in addressing financing needs of countries to sustainably manage their forests, in particular developing countries with special needs and circumstances including, Africa, least developed countries, low forest cover countries, high forest cover countries, and high forest cover low deforestation countries, medium forest cover countries and small island developing States.

Strengthening of the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit sharing, and preservation of their cultural and social values through SFM and enhancing the economic, social and environmental values of forests for the benefit of present and future generations.

Good governance at national and international levels is prerequisite for improving the contribution of the forests to the broader global development agenda and, therefore, should be improved.

Finance

UNFF has reiterated frequently that current funding for sustainable forest management is not adequate. UNFF has also called for mobilization of all resources from all sources at all levels to advance the implementation of NLBI and the achievement of the GOFs. Lack of financing is a critical impediment, in particular for developing countries. To find lasting solution to forest financing, it is vital to support the UNFF work on forest financing, as reflected in the resolution of the UNFF9 Special Session, and devising strong intersessional process based on the outcome of the AHEG1 and the proposals of the Co-Chairs for intersessional activities, aimed at providing concrete proposals on forest financing to the AHEG2, paving the way for concluding the process and taking a solid decision on forest financing by UNFF10 in 2013.

IYF

The International Year of Forests provides a unique opportunity to bring forests in closer connection to society and rise awareness of the multifunctional role of forests in meeting the diverse needs of society through giving emphasis to developing integrated approaches and promote active participation of a wide range of stakeholders. Countries, organizations, major groups and all other relevant stakeholders should seize this opportunity to actively engage in promoting comprehensive approach on forests that encompasses all functions and values of forests.

Climate Change, REDD+

Forests have major role in mitigating climate change, and increase adaptive capacity to climate change. However, SFM is a wider concept that can offer more than adaptation to and mitigation of climate change and their values cannot be reduced to carbon stocks.

REDD-plus financing offers significant opportunity for forest financing. Efforts of countries within the UNFCCC negotiation process on REDD+ should be supported, in order to reach agreement on the REDD+ mechanism. It is extremely important, however, to assess how to improve the effectiveness and transparency of existing REDD-plus initiatives, how to ensure broader application of REDD+ funding to the huge number of countries such as countries with dryland forests and low forest cover countries that are currently excluded from these funds, and how to make sure that policy advice, guidance
and recommendations of the UNFF are included in the operational programmes of the REDD-plus financing initiatives. It is also important to understand what are the potential gaps, obstacles and opportunities, and the additionality of REDD-plus funding.

**Rio+20**

- The Rio+20 Conference should recognize multiple values of forests and their contribution to sustainable development, and the two themes of the Conference. Forests have strong potential to contribute to green economies and more sustainable societies. The global economy should be re-focused towards investments in protecting and managing sustainably natural resources, such as forests, as well as green industries and technologies, taking into account that green economies and the associated policy implications will apply differently across countries, depending on their national circumstances, priorities and capacities.

- This Conference should also support the UNFF and its ongoing work on forest financing and provides a major political boost for solid conclusions on forest financing at the UNFF10 in 2013. The Conference should also recognize the added value provided by the UNFF, in particular the U.N. non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the global objective on forests, and invite the UNFF to provide its substantive input to the CSD 20-21 cycle on forests.

**Commitment**

- Advance multi-sectoral, cross-sectoral approach to forests and increase the contribution of forests to sustainable development and to the MDG through implementing sustainable forest management.

- Urge all governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to implement the NLBI and the achievement of the GOFs, and work globally, regionally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement.

- Invite all governments, international and regional organizations, major groups and other relevant stakeholders to take immediate steps towards implementing the outcome of the High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on MDGs, in particular, on forests.

- Recognize the added value of the UNFF and support its unique leading role within the UN system, in forest policy-setting and in the implementation of the NLBI and for the achievement of the GOFs, and urge the CPF to support the work of the UNFF.

- Strengthen cooperation in the areas of finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technology, capacity-building, forest governance and public participation, and renew its commitment to find a lasting solution to forest financing, as envisaged in the resolution of the special session of its ninth session on means of implementation, in its tenth session.

- Promote “people-centered approach on forests during the IYF and Rio+20, and work together to increase recognition of forests potential to the achievement of global development goals, in particular poverty eradication, and building green economies.
Urge taking more inclusive approach to multiple values of forests in the climate change negotiations, and invite REDD-plus initiatives to take full advantage of the UNFF policy recommendations, in their activities and programmes.