



Summary of IUFRO's activities/initiatives analyzing how forests are linked to (and can contribute) to the SDGs, and the significance of forests to the 2030 Agenda in general

While it is acknowledged that forests contribute to most of the SDGs, the specific links and trade-offs are not fully understood. The scientific community is carrying out a variety of activities to understand these links, trade-offs and synergies. Among many IUFRO activities related to the SDGs, the WFSE and the GFEP initiative specifically focus on these links, trade-offs and synergies.

One of IUFRO's special projects named [World Forests, Society and Environment \(IUFRO-WFSE\)](#), supports sustainable forest-related development, livelihoods and inclusive growth as well as related policy processes through international collaboration in knowledge generation and exchange. WFSE focuses on synthesizing topics that have been recognized by the scientific community as important and with significant policy implications, but have not received adequate attention from the policy community. WFSE has recently started a comprehensive assessment of "Potential impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on forests and the goods and services they provide", to be published in 2019. The study will present new insights on the role of forests in sustainable development as well as synergies and trade-offs among the SDGs. Each of the 17 chapters addresses one SDG and shows the potential impacts of efforts, policies and measures to implement that SDG on forests and forestry. The aim is to support national and international policy and decision makers in addressing the inter-linkages between the forest-relevant goals and targets in a more integrated manner which balances environmental sustainability, social equity and economic growth.

The [Global Forest Expert Panels \(GFEP\)](#) initiative periodically assembles international Expert Panels on forest-related emerging issues and topics of high concern. Expert Panels synthesize existing available information on specific topics in interdisciplinary, comprehensive and transparent manner, and produce reports to support more informed global decision making on forest-related issues. For example, the previous [GFEP assessment on Forests, Food Security and Nutrition \(2015\)](#) provided scientific input to the global debate on forests and SDG 2 on food security. The study was taken as a basis for the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Additionally, IUFRO was invited to share the results of this study and inform the Member States during the Panel Discussion "Contributions of forests to the achievement of SDG 2" during UNFF 12 in May 2017. In January 2017, IUFRO started a new global scientific assessment on the interactions between forests and water. The ultimate goal of the [GFEP Expert Panel on Forests and Water](#) is to inform international policy processes about the interactions between forests and water, and to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by showing the links between SDG 6 and SDG 15, and more broadly the cross-sectoral contributions of forests to the different SDGs. The outcomes of the assessment will contribute to UNFF 13 and to the HLPF 2018, where the report will be officially launched.

Additionally, there are a number of other IUFRO activities addressing the contributions of forests to the various SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. Such activities include interdisciplinary [IUFRO Task Forces](#) that are established for a specific period of time with the aim to enhance collaboration of scientists from different fields and sectors in forest science (e.g. [IUFRO Task Force on Forests, Soil and Water Interactions](#)). In addition, numerous activities of research groups within [IUFRO divisions](#) are relevant for the implementation of the SDGs (e.g. work done on ["forest ecosystem services"](#) and ["urban forests"](#) in Division 6).