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UN Forum on Forests Secretariat
Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs
UN Secretariat Building (26th Floor)
405 E 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dear Sir/Madam,

**UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF) QUESTIONNAIRE
ON THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ARRANGEMENT ON FORESTS**

I respectfully refer to the above matter.

Pursuant to the letter from the UNFF18 Chair dated 9 August 2022, I enclosed herewith a copy of the completed UNFF Questionnaire on the Mid-Term Review of the International Arrangement on Forests for your kind perusal.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

(NORSHAM BINTI ABDUL LATIP)

UNFF National Focal Points
Biodiversity and Forestry Management Subsector
for the Secretary General
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change

Questionnaire on the Mid-Term Review of the International Arrangement on Forests

Introduction

In accordance with its programme of work, the UN Forum on Forests at its seventeenth session (UNFF17) adopted an [omnibus resolution](#). The annex to this resolution contains the actions to be taken in preparation for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF). The resolution calls for these actions to be implemented in a transparent and independent manner, and in close consultation with Members of the Forum, as well as the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) member organisations and other relevant stakeholders. To facilitate the process, the UNFF Secretariat has hired several consultants to assist in the preparation of background papers and assessments. This questionnaire is prepared by the consultants to solicit views from UNFF national focal points and representatives of relevant stakeholders, for use in their assessments. You are kindly invited to send your responses to the UNFF Secretariat at: unff@un.org, with copy to yan.lang@un.org by **6 December 2022**.

Name of the Respondent: Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change

Name of country/organization: _Malaysia

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A. Questions related to the United Nations Forum on Forests and its members

Question A-1: Considering the objectives of the [IAF](#), what progress has been made by the UNFF and its Members towards:

a. Implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests?

Malaysia practices Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) aligned with the country's commitments to the various international conventions and treaties, namely the United Nations Convention of Biological Diversity (UNCBD); United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In terms of biodiversity management, Malaysia is guided by the National Policy on Biological Diversity 2016-2025 (NPBD). Nonetheless, this policy is currently being reviewed and aligned accordingly, based on the upcoming Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

In response to the new challenges in the forestry sector, Malaysia has reviewed and formulated its forestry policies and introduced a Malaysia Policy on Forestry in 2021. In addition, the existing forestry law, namely National Forestry Act 1984 [Act 313], has recently been reviewed and obtained approval from Parliament and was gazetted on 20 September 2022 to enhance forest enforcement and curb illegal logging activities.

The Social Forestry Strategic Plan of Malaysia 2021-2025 has been formulated to provide a holistic social forestry approach to enhance the agenda of reducing vulnerability, building resilience, and

enhancing rural livelihoods by empowering communities and recognising the multiple values and functions of forests.

Malaysia is fully committed to achieving the Global Forest Goals (GFGs) targets based on our national circumstances. Thus, in supporting GFGs and targets, especially GFG 1 and GFG 2, several initiatives and programmes are being implemented throughout the country as follows:

- (i) Central Forest Spine (CFS) and Heart of Borneo (HoB);
- (ii) Greening Malaysia Programme through the 100 million tree-planting campaign (2021-2025);
- (iii) Tree Planting Programme with Mangroves and Other Suitable Species along National Coastlines;
- (iv) Forest Management Certification; and
- (v) Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR).

b. Enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels?

Malaysia actively participates in various regional cooperation and platforms. Among them are ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF), Heart of Borneo (HoB), Asia Ministerial Conference (AMC) on Tiger Conservation, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). Besides that, private sectors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), universities and multi-stakeholders are involved in implementing various forest-related programs such as forest rehabilitation and restoration, forest conservation through tree planting activities and Biodiversity Protection and Patrolling Programme (BP3).

c. Promoting North-South, South-South, triangular cooperation, public-private partnerships, and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels?

The National Policy on Biological Diversity (2016-2025) and Malaysia Policy on Forestry set targets to increase contributions and encourage the private sector to get involved in the conservation and preservation of biodiversity resources. In this context, the responsibility of preserving and conserving natural resources and the diversity of flora and fauna in this country is the responsibility of all parties and not only the government/public sector.

Malaysia has launched the Greening Malaysia Programme through the 100 million tree-planting campaign on 5 January 2021. This campaign aims to plant 100 million trees by 2025 with a target of 20 million tree planting to be achieved each year. This campaign encourages the participation and involvement of the private sector and corporate bodies to jointly make the national greening agenda a success through financial contributions, sponsorships and planting activities. Individuals or private companies who channel financial donations through Yayasan Hijau Malaysia (YHM) have the opportunity to get tax deductions offered by YHM under Section 44 (11 C), Income Tax Act 1967, where a deduction of 10 percent for individuals and tax deductions as much as 10 percent of the total annual aggregate income for the company.

For further outreach and implementation of this campaign throughout the country, several plans are being actively implemented through engagement and strategic collaboration with various parties, including other government departments/agencies, local authorities, universities, NGOs, civil society organisations (CSOs), private companies including participation from any individual or individual.

In order to encourage participation from NGOs and CSOs in coastal restoration and rehabilitation, Malaysia sets aside around 5 to 10 percent of its annual allocation under the Tree Planting Programme with Mangroves and Other Suitable Species along National Coastlines, specifically for NGOs and CSOs. To date, an allocation of RM3.57 million has been distributed to 15 NGOs and CSOs under this programme since 2007 to organize awareness campaigns and tree-planting programmes with the communities.

In addition, corporate companies and individuals can also contribute funds to the National Conservation Trust Fund (NCTF), created under the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (KeTSA). The purpose of the establishment of NCTF is to finance the implementation of research, development, management, protection, mitigation to climate change, adaptation, awareness and conservation activities in the country. As of 31 July 2022, an allocation of RM6.9 million has been channelled through the NCTF for implementing projects and studies related to natural resource conservation throughout the country.

Other than that, wildlife conservation efforts is intensified through the collective involvement of all parties, including the public, NGOs and corporate bodies. In this regard, The Department of Wildlife and National Parks of Peninsular Malaysia (PERHILITAN) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in wildlife conservation with corporate bodies, universities and NGOs such as TNB Research Sdn. Bhd., Malaysian Palm Oil Green Conservation Foundation (MPOGCF) and Bursa Malaysia.

Apart from the main initiatives highlighted, existing Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) programs with other government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and communities have been organised to increase public awareness and promote the preservation of natural resources in this country.

d. Strengthening forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI)

Under the Malaysian Constitution, forestry falls under the jurisdiction of the state governments. As such, each state is empowered to enact forestry laws and formulate forest policy independently. The executive authority of the Federal Government only extends to providing advice and technical assistance to the states, training, execution of the research agenda and maintenance of experimental and demonstration stations.

In order to facilitate the adoption of a coordinated and common approach to forestry, as well as to reconcile cross-sectoral policies that interface with the forest sector, the National Land Council, which is chaired by the Right Honorable Prime Minister of Malaysia, was established to enable the federal and the state governments to discuss and resolve common problems and issues relating to forestry policy, administration and management, as well as to enhance cooperation among the federal and state governments; this ensures a coordinated approach to the implementation of policies and programmes related to forestry.

In order to maintain the existing forest cover, the Malaysian Government have put in place a long-term commitment to keep at least 50 percent of its land area under forests and tree cover in line with its commitment made at the Earth Summit in 1992. This commitment is further enhance through:

- Fourth National Physical Plan (RFN4) approved in 2021 targets 50% of forested areas in the Peninsular by 2040;
- Sabah, under its Sabah Forest Policy, committed to ensuring that at least 50% of Sabah's land mass is designated and protected for sustainable forest use and tree cover for environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and socioeconomic well-being;
- Under its land use policy, Sarawak has targeted 6.0 million hectares of State land mass to be gazetted as Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) and another 1.0 million hectares as Totally Protected Areas (TPA), including national parks, nature reserves, and wildlife sanctuaries.
- Malaysia's National Policy on Biological Diversity outlined that at least 20% of terrestrial areas are conserved by 2025
- In 2019, the Government committed to limit the expansion of oil palm plantations to protect biodiversity and in support of efforts to retain 50% of forest cover through the implementation of four policies towards improving the sustainability of the palm oil industry:
 - Oil palm planted area will be limited to 6.5 million ha nationwide;
 - No new plantations allowed on peat soil;
 - No conversion of permanent reserved forests (PRF) for oil palm plantations, or for any other agricultural activity; and
 - Official maps showing oil palm planted area will be made public

In addition, Malaysia introduced Ecological Fiscal Transfer for Biodiversity Conservation (EFT) in 2019 as an additional incentive for all the states to protect and conserve biodiversity. RM60 million was allocated to the states for their conservation projects. The implementation was managed by the Ministry of Finance (MoF). EFT was then continued in 2021 with the allocation of RM70 million, an additional RM10 million from 2019. During the 2022 National Finance Council on 26 April 2022, it was announced that an additional RM30 million will be allocated for 2023 for the states that have gazetted new protected areas.

e. Strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives?

In line with its commitment at the Earth Summit in 1992, the Malaysian Government is committed to keeping at least 50 percent of its land area under forest and tree cover. National forest cover in 2018 is at 55.3 percent or 18.27 million hectares of the total land area. From this forested area, approximately 10.92 million hectares have been designated as permanent reserve forest (PRF).

In this regard, Malaysia has taken several measure as below to ensure Malaysia uphold this commitment:

- The fourth National Physical Plan (RFN4) was approved on 2021, which targets 50% of forested areas in the Peninsular by 2040. Through RFN4, all State Governments in the Peninsular are urged to take action to increase the existing forested area from 43.41% to 50% by the year 2040 for Peninsular Malaysia
- Sabah, under its Sabah Forest Policy committed to ensuring that at least 50% of Sabah's land mass is designated and protected for sustainable forest use and tree cover for environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and socioeconomic well-being;

- Under its land use policy, Sarawak has targeted 6.0 million hectares of State land mass to be gazetted as PFE and another 1.0 million hectares as TPA, including national parks, nature reserves, and wildlife sanctuaries.
- Malaysia's National Policy on Biological Diversity outlined that at least 20% of terrestrial areas are conserved by 2025
- In 2019, the Government committed to limit the expansion of oil palm plantations to protect biodiversity and in support of efforts to retain 50% of forest cover through the implementation of four policies towards improving the sustainability of the palm oil industry:
 - Oil palm planted area will be limited to 6.5 million ha nationwide;
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 - Official maps showing oil palm planted area will be made public

Other than that, the 40th National Physical Planning Council on 20 July 2022 has approved the Central Forest Spine Ecological Network Master Plan (PIRECFS) as a guide for the planning and physical development of forests for the whole of Peninsular Malaysia. This master plan has identified 39 ecological networks to connect forest areas or islands that are not connected due to forest fragmentation. This master plan also aims to reduce conflicts between humans and wildlife by ensuring that development activities do not obstruct the natural passage of wildlife from one forest area to another.

The National Forestry (Amendment) Act 2022 [Act A1667] was gazetted on 20 September 2022 with the main amendments to provide provisions regarding the compulsion to hold a public inquiry before an area of Permanent Forest Reserve (HSK) is gazetted out and the need for simultaneous replacement of the gazetted HSK. This amendment aims to tighten the process of degazettment of HSK while reducing development pressure on existing HSK areas.

In addition, Sarawak recently passed the Forests (Amendment) Bill 2022 in May 2022, which, among others, will regulate the licensing of forest carbon projects that will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions.

Question A-2: Could you list the objectives that have not been achieved, and how can this be improved?

- **Enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues**
- **Fostering international cooperation, public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation**

In general, all GFGs are implemented by members, but they are not achieved because of insufficient financial, technical and technological support.

Financial and technological support is the key to achieving the long-term global forest goals. However, each country has different starting positions and circumstances as well as different opportunities to contribute to achieving the above goals. Therefore, developed countries, business sectors, financial institutions and key stakeholders need to accelerate their support to developing and least-developed countries through scaled-up financial resources to achieve GFGs. This support is in line with the Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) enshrined in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration.

In this regard, Malaysia would like to propose that:

- (i) Developed countries, business sector, financial institutions and key stakeholders shall increase resource mobilisation and access to finance in assisting members especially those from developing countries to help 'build back better' and meet the above actions and improve best practices for protection, conservation and sustainable use of forests; and
- (ii) the world community is encouraged to intensify reforestation and afforestation activities to increase global forest cover, restoring forest and other ecosystems in delivering benefits for climate adaptation and mitigation, while ensuring social and environmental safeguards.

Questions A-3: Has the IAF beyond 2015 been operating in a transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable manner?

Yes.

Other than that, Malaysia welcomes the publication of the Global Forest Goals Report 2021 and the proposal to consider making it a recurrent publication in conjunction with future cycles of national reporting. Pertaining to the implementation of reporting format and requirements, Malaysia would like to suggest that technical and financial implications and the impact on countries' reporting burden should be considered.

Question A-4: Considering the functions of the UNFF in paragraph 3 of resolution [2015/33](#), what has been the progress made by UNFF towards:

- a. Providing a coherent, open, transparent, and participatory global platform for policy development, dialogue, cooperation, and coordination on issues related to all types of forests, including emerging issues, in an integrated and holistic manner through cross-sectoral approaches?
Yes
- b. Promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM, in particular, the UNFI?
Yes, UNFF has published the "Global Forest Goals Report 2021" as its flagship publication to provide an overview of progress towards achieving the Global Forest Goals and associated targets of the Strategic Plan.
- c. Mobilising, catalysing, and facilitating access to financial, technical, and scientific resources?
Yes – UNFF has established the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) clearinghouse to facilitate access to and effective use of funding for forests, to share data and best practices on forest financing and ultimately, to contribute to the achievement of the Global Forest Goals of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030.
- d. Promoting governance frameworks, enabling conditions at all levels to achieve SFM?
Yes – the Bureau of the UNFF16 has decided that one of the thematic priorities for the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Forum would be focusing on promoting governance frameworks to advance the implementation of GFGs and UNSPF. Technical and policy discussions of UNFF will be further discussed on the thematic priorities.
- e. Strengthening high-level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, in support of SFM?
Yes – UNFF has discussed the interlinkages between the global forest goals and targets and the Sustainable Development Goals and transmitted the input to the 2022 session of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Question A-5: Are you satisfied with the current level of engagement of Members and stakeholders in the Forum's intersessional activities, and what are your suggestions to improve the use of the UNFF's annual sessions, including intersessional activities?

Yes. Malaysia is of the opinion that the current intersessional activities are sufficient and any additional activities should be undertaken on a need basis.

Question A-6: What do you suggest could be done to encourage more Members of the UNFF to submit voluntary national reports and voluntary national contributions?

Malaysia welcomes initiatives taken by the UNFF Secretariat to refine the format for national reporting, taking into account the suggestions and proposals from member states. In this regard, Malaysia is of the opinion that the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) reporting has been providing sufficient data for analysis. Thus, Malaysia is of the view that the existing format provided by FRA can be used as the format for voluntary national reports.

B. Questions related to the Forum secretariat

Question B-1: What are the achievements of the Secretariat in carrying out its functions and in making progress towards the objectives of the international arrangement on forests, as defined in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33?

UNFF Secretariat actively provides regular updates to the member states on the progress report of GFG achievement and activities/celebrations on forest-related programs such as the International Day of Forests (IDF) and International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB). UNFF Secretariat also manages to carry out UNFF and several coordinating meetings, such as the UNFF Expert Group Meeting (EGM) Reporting on progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan on Forests 2030 (UNSPF) and EGM on the Impact of COVID-19 on Sustainable Forest Management.

Question B-2: What are the gaps in and the existing capacity of the secretariat with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations, strengthening its capacities, gaining a better understanding of its decision-making processes and procedures, and amplifying the impact of its activities?

Malaysia views that the collaboration between the UNFF secretariat and CPF members is important to enhance the capacity of developing countries to prepare Voluntary national reports and facilitate their access to available funding for technology development and transfer in the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 and the United Nations Forest Instrument.

Question B-3: What are your suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of the UNFF Secretariat in carrying out its functions and in making progress towards the objectives of the international arrangement on forests, and enhance collaboration and synergies, and reduce duplication?

UNFF Secretariat works closely with the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to make progress towards the objectives of the international arrangement on forests.

C. Questions related to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Question C-1: Since 2015 what is your assessment of the extent of progress on CPF's contribution to the IAF objectives as defined in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33?

CPF members shall proactively provide information and advice on scientific and technological matters to the UNFF and The Committee on Forestry (COFO) as they are co-related to the IAF and GFGs.

Question C-2: In the table below kindly indicate your assessment of the effectiveness, impact and added value of the activities, in particular, Joint Initiatives of the CPF as outlined in its workplan (2017-2020).

Item	Key CPF activities as outlined in its 2017-2020 Workplan	In your view what has been the effectiveness of CPF in the following areas (please explain)	In your view what has been the Impact and value-added of the CPF in the following areas (please explain)
1	Contributions to UNFF documents & sessions	-na-	-na-
2	Streamlining forest reporting	-na-	-na-
3	Global Forest Expert Panel	-na-	-na-
4	Global Forest Information Service	-na-	-na-
5	CPF meetings, side events & OLI	-na-	-na-
7	CPF Communicators network	-na-	-na-
8	Forest Landscape Restoration	-na-	-na-
10	Forest Finance Facilitation	-na-	-na-

Question C-3: The CPF Policy Document recognises the need for periodic review of its membership given the evolving nature of its mandate. In your view what should be:

- the key elements in setting criteria for membership of the CPF (take into account CPF rules of procedure as annexed to the CPF policy document¹)
- the frequency for review of the criteria (e.g., below 5 years; 6-10 years; etc.)
- the process for triggering a review of the CPF membership

Question C-4: In your view, how can the CPF provide greater support for policy development and implementation of UNFF resolutions/decisions and in particular assist countries in the implementation of the UNSPF.

-na-

¹ CPF Policy Document: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/cpf-policy-document/index.html>

D. Questions related to the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

Question D-1: Have you requested assistance from the GFFFN for mobilising forest financing? If yes, how long did it take to receive a response and what was the outcome of your request?

No

Question D-2: If you participated in GFFFN capacity building/training workshops, did forest financing improve for your country as a result? If yes, how did it improve?

No

Question D-3: Was your country able to develop or update its forest financing strategy with the support of the GFFFN?

-na-

Question D-4: What funding sources have you targeted for forest financing with the support of the GFFFN and how successful were your efforts?

-na-

E. Questions related to the trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests

Question E-1: What are the contributions of your country /organisation to the UNFF trust fund?

No

Question E-2: What is the impact of voluntary contributions to the UNFF trust fund on supporting the core activities of the UNFF?

-na-

Question E-3: What are the options to encourage sustained and adequate contributions to the trust fund?

-na-

Question E-4: What are the key challenges and constraints with regard to mobilising adequate resources for the trust fund?

-na-

F. Questions related to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

Question F-1: What significant actions has your country or organisation undertaken since 2020 to implement the UNSPF?² What are the main challenges and constraints your country or organisation is facing in implementing the UNSPF?

Malaysia is committed to the implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM). While focusing on economic growth and development, the Government gives equal emphasis on promoting conservation of its natural resources and addressing social and environmental aspects. As the Malaysia Policy on Forestry (MPF) and the National Policy on Biological Diversity 2016 – 2025 (NPBD) are particularly pertinent to achieving SFM, the Policy Statement, Rationale and Objectives in MPF are general in nature and serves as a reference and guidance for the three regions (Peninsular, Sabah and

² There is no need to repeat information which has already been supplied to UNFF, notably in your country's voluntary national report.

Sarawak) to formulate their respective forestry policies and strategies. The Policy Statement of MPF stated that Malaysia recognises forests as a strategic national heritage and is committed to securing sufficient forest areas for their ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, environmental protection and sustainable utilisation of resources towards the socioeconomic development and well-being of the present and future generations. This policy statement provides direction for the implementation of SFM through good governance and practices to ensure the forestry sector continues to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development of the nation. The objectives of MPF are to:

1. ensure sufficient forest areas are retained and managed through good governance and practices for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
2. manage, conserve and rehabilitate the permanent reserved forests of forest reserves or permanent forests based on the principle of sustainable forest management;
3. ensure continuous supply of raw materials from natural forests and forests plantations to sustain development of wood-based and non-timber forests industries;
4. encourage the participation of indigenous, native and local communities in the protection, conservation and rehabilitation of forests; and
5. strengthen capacity building; research, development and commercialisation; innovation including providing adequate human financial resources to improve forest management and utilisation of forest resources.

Under the SFM, Malaysia has practiced the Selective Management System (SMS) approach. The SMS were adopted since 1978 and involves the selection of a management regime to optimise economic harvesting, utilisation, reforestation and sustained yield. The SMS was evolved from time to time to meet the requirements that have the flexibility to manage highly variable forests conditions and changes in the socioeconomic environment.

To ensure forests are sustainably managed in Malaysia, forest resources are controlled and regulated via forest management plans at the targeted areas to be harvested and volumes to be extracted. In this regard, the allocation of annual felling coupes is implemented to balance the production and extraction of timber based on the net area of production forest within the PRF. Compliance to the allocated annual felling coupe by each state is reported to the National Land Council, which is chaired by the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Forest certification

SFM is pursued through various national strategies and programmes such as the forest certification initiative; enhancement of forest law, enforcement and governance; research and development projects as well as the implementation of best agricultural practices. There has also been a successful thrust for certifying the forest area under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS), operated by the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC).

The management of the forest sector has stringent forest laws and regulations to monitor, enforce and prosecute acts of illegal deforestation. The forest laws impose heavy fines and penalties on violators. The forest sector also realises that current management of forests needs to address emerging issues such as climate change impacts, ensuring food security and sustaining livelihoods. In these contexts, Malaysia introduced Malaysia Policy on Forestry in 2021 and is currently reviewing NPBD 2016 - 2025 and forestry laws to incorporate these new developments.

The forest sector is also applying advanced technological tools to facilitate forest management and Forest Monitoring using Remote Sensing (FMRS) such as remote sensing, Geographic Information System (GIS), radio frequency identification (RFID), hyperspectral airborne sensing and Global Positioning System (GPS).

Social forestry

Various Social Forestry (SF) programmes have also been implemented over the years to benefit local communities living within or nearby forest areas. The SF Programmes comprises of five main pillars: (1) pursuing Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) programmes; (2) increasing income and uplifting livelihoods of local communities; (3) human capital development; (4) social work and community services; and (5) restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forest areas. Concomitantly, forestry managers and personnel are also trained in new skills to ensure that they can adapt to changes in forest management.

Question F-2: What challenges and constraints did your country face in the preparation of its voluntary national report? If it did not prepare a report, what were the reasons?

Malaysia has its challenges in compiling data related to the socioeconomic aspects of forests and forestry. Hence, data collection capabilities among the member states are important to improve the information systems and to make full use of such indicators to ensure the data is transparent and precise. Because of the legal framework of Malaysia, the forestry sector is to a certain level managed differently by each region and by each state within the region. Therefore, there lies complexity in its management and consultations in every decision is a need. Thus, in upholding this spirit of democracy and the federal constitution of the country, decision-making in matters pertaining to forestry matters are often lengthy and time-consuming.

Question F-3: Do you agree with the submission of voluntary national reports to UNFF, 6 to 12 months after the publication of the next Global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) in order to reduce reporting burdens and take full advantage of FAO's data?

Yes, Malaysia is one of the countries that have raised the reporting burden issue and would like the converged reports and the data, if any to be more impactful in quality, rather than in quantity.

Question F-4: What, in your view, are the main "regional and global issues of concern with regard to forests" in the early 2020s?

The challenge for many tropical forests lies in the maintenance of forested areas; the land is a premium commodity and other types of land use are able to provide a better return on investment. Moreover, the cost of forest management is increasing.

Forests are continuously at risk of being cleared for other land-use purposes. Some areas, which have been designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, are still earmarked for development. Lower priority is considered to be the root cause of competing for land use. Due to habitat conversion and infrastructure development, the remaining pristine forests have become highly fragmented. This has resulted in the destruction of wildlife corridors that prevents or impedes animal migration and reduces the resources available to them, creating genetic isolation in these ecological islands.

G. Questions related to the contributions of the Forum to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Question G-1: In your view, how well on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being very well) have the Forum's annual inputs to the HLPF on forest benefits and interlinkages with other SDGs been reflected in the HLPF declarations:

_____ HLPF ministerial declarations in 2018 and 2022 (SDG15 theme years)³

³ See para 27 of HLPF 2018 declaration and paras 66, 67, 69 and 71 of HLPF 2020 declaration.

_____ HLPF ministerial declarations in 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (non-SDG15 theme years)⁴

Question G-2: In your view, which of the following should be considered to enhance the visibility of forest contributions at HLPF sessions and better reflect the interlinkages between forests and the SDGs in HLPF declarations (check all that may be useful):

_____ Earlier input into relevant aspects of the HLPF preparatory process⁵ by the UNFF, its members, secretariat and partners (CPF, Major Groups, regional/subregional organisations).

_____ Increased role for the UNFF Bureau in representing the Forum and promoting forest/SDG interlinkages at HLPF regional and global preparatory meetings.

_____ Enhanced coordination in capitals between UNFF focal points and those responsible for the HLPF and preparation of Voluntary National Reviews.

_____ Enhanced consultations between the UNFF and its secretariat and UN Regional Economic Commissions, particularly their Forums on Sustainable Development.

_____ Enhanced coordination between the UNFF Secretariat and DESA's Office for Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, which supports the HLPF process.

_____ Other: _____

Question G-3: In your view, which of the following should UNFF pursue to increase the political relevance of forests to the broader sustainable development agenda (check all that may be useful)?

_____ Preparation of a report and associated targeted communication products on the multiple contributions of forests/SFM to the SDGs, including in the context of COVID-19 recovery.

_____ Building on the momentum of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, foster enhanced coordination among forestry, agricultural and other sectors at all levels (GFG 6.3).

_____ Enhanced coordination in capitals between focal points for UNFF and the Rio conventions.

_____ Increased role for the UNFF Bureau in representing the UNFF and promoting forest/SDG interlinkages at key meetings of the Rio conventions.

_____ Enhanced coordination in capitals on the preparation of Nationally Determined Contributions (UNFCCC), Voluntary National Contributions (UNFF) and Voluntary National Reviews (HLPF).

_____ Other: _____

⁴ No forest-related references in HLPF 2017 declaration. See para 34 of HLPF 2019 declaration; paras 7 and 19 of HLPF 2020 declaration; para 36 of HLPF 2021 declaration.

⁵ The annual HLPF preparatory process is launched in March of each year with significant regional and global activities: <http://hlpf.un.org/2022>

H. Questions related to the communication and outreach strategy of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

Question H-1: What progress has your Government/organisation made since 2015 in implementing the UNSPF communication and outreach strategy, as contained in Annex 1 of UNFF Resolution 13/1 (see [E/2018/42](#))? How could any challenges, including achieving greater visibility of the UNSPF and the global forest goals, be addressed?

Malaysia recognised the important role of communication and outreach strategy in promoting sustainable development and sustainable forest management. On that note, Malaysia celebrates all major forestry and biodiversity related events including the International Day of Forests (IDF) even before the Resolution came in place. Besides that, there also some additional initiatives such as:

- i. Planted 48,227,458 (as of 6 December 2022) trees in Greening Malaysia Campaign: planting of 100 million trees 2021-2025;
- ii. Established Central Forest Spine (CFS) to form an interconnecting network of protection forest through establishment of ecological corridors as part of the integrated landscape management approaches to land-use planning and decision-making since year 2006;
- iii. Recognised the involvement of multi-stakeholder, incorporate forest consideration into development decisions such as forest management planning (FMP) and policies, government allocations specifically for forest development and operations and international financial support (UNDP, GEF, IFAD).

Question H-2: When considering the overall impact of communication and outreach activities, including the International Day of Forests, undertaken since 2015 by members of the Forum, the secretariat, the CPF, regional organisations and relevant stakeholders, to promote the UNSPF and global forest goals, what do you regard as (i) the main successes and (ii) the main shortcomings?

The major successes of Malaysia are federal Government and states Government celebrate all major forestry and biodiversity related events, including the International Day of Forests (IDF) and International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB). Malaysia will continue to implement Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) of biodiversity and forestry.

Question H-3: What additional communication opportunities, platforms and channels, including those that have come into prominence in recent years, should be used more effectively to better reach target audiences and achieve greater impact?

Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) programmes are carried out to promote awareness on forest and biodiversity issues to the public. Such programmes are embedded in the annual plans of related government agencies and organized in partnership with the private sector and NGOs. Among the awareness activities implemented include environmental camps, nature walks, talks, exhibitions, quizzes, workshops, seminars, tree-planting, and radio shows especially in conjunction with commemorative events such as International Day of Forest (21 March), Earth Day (22 April), World Environment Day (5 June), World Wetlands Day (2 February), World Oceans' Day (8 June).

To complement these activities, key agencies maintain nature education and interpretation centres to educate the public. Several local NGOs have also taken initiative to create similar nature education centres. For example, Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) maintains a network of Environmental Education Centres across Peninsular Malaysia in both urban and natural settings to promote awareness and engage the public in environmental discussions. This includes the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) -MNS Nature Education Centre in Kepong, Ecocare Environmental Education

Centre in Kerteh, Environment Interpretive Centre in Sepang, Urban Environment Education Hub in Kuala Lumpur, the BOH Nature Study Centre in Cameron Highlands, and Belum Discovery Centre

Question H-4: What opportunities are there to make better use of the capacities of members of the Forum and other players and partners at the global, regional, and national levels to strengthen advocacy on the implementation of the UNSPF?

Other than organise capacity-building programs to increase the capacities of members of the Forum and other key players in implementation of the UNSPF, continue supporting of CPF members is very important in providing expertise, data and knowledge to the policy discussions of UNFF.

I. Questions related to the involvement of regional and subregional partners

Question I-1: In your view, what are the top three areas in which regional and subregional partners have made the most important contributions to SFM policy development and dialogue since the 15th session of the UNFF?

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Question I-2: What are prime examples of regional and subregional partners successfully contributing to the practical achievement of GFGs under the UNSPF 2017-2030? [*alone or in partnership with governments or business community*]

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Question I-3: Given the power for good of the business and philanthropic communities, what are the key efforts of regional and subregional partners to partner with them? [*both within and outside the Business Council for Sustainable Development (UN-BCSD)*]

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J. Questions related to the involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders

Question J-1: In your view, what are the top three areas in which major groups and other relevant stakeholders have made the most important contributions to SFM policy development and dialogue since the 15th session of the UNFF?

Malaysia views that forest rehabilitation and restoration of degraded areas, forest conservation through tree planting activities, Forest law enforcement, and the Biodiversity Protection and Patrolling Programme (BP3) most important contributions to SFM policy development and dialogue.

Question J-2: What are prime examples of major groups and other relevant stakeholders successfully contributing to the practical achievement of GFGs under the UNSPF 2017-2030? [*alone or in partnership with governments or business community*]

Tree planting programs involved all levels of major groups and stakeholders.

Question J-3: Given the power for the good of the business and philanthropic communities, what are the key efforts of major groups and other relevant stakeholders to partner with them [*both within and outside the Business Council for Sustainable Development (UN-BCSD)*]?

Incorporate Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategies and practices in the organisation's policies and create goals/targets to positively address the emerging issues related to environmental and social needs.

Question J-4: What degree of funding independence have you achieved for participation in (a) policy development and dialogue or (b) practical SFM contribution? What improvements would you prioritise?

The allocations for policy development and SFM is mostly contributed by governments (federal and state), therefore leveraging Innovative Finance by accelerating the mobilization of the private sector is urgently needed for realizing the targets of GFGs.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION
