

Preparations for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)

Assessment on actions related to the UN Forum on Forests and its members

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Assessment report prepared for the UN Forum on Forests

Through its resolution 2022/17, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), based on the outcome of the seventeenth session of the UN Forum on Forests, decided that the Forum would undertake extensive intersessional activities in preparation for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF). The resolution called 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 organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

To facilitate this process, the Forum Secretariat hired consultants to assist in the preparation of background papers and assessments. These assessments and outcomes of preparatory intersessional work related to the midterm review, will be submitted to the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group on the preparations for the IAF-MTR, which will be convened in late 2023.

The views and opinions expressed in the assessment reports are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Secretariat. The designations and terminology employed may not conform to United Nations practice and do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Organization.

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ACRONYMS

ACTO	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization
AHEG	Open-ended intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
DBP	Development Bank of the Philippines
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FIRM	Forest Investment Roadmap
FRA	Forest Resources Assessment
FRIN	Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GFEP	Global Forest Expert Panels
GFFFN	Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network
GFG	Global Forest Goal
HLPF	High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IAF	International Arrangement on Forests
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations
MGCY	Major Group for Children and Youth
MTR	Midterm Review
NAGGW	National Agency for the Great Green Wall
NCP	National Cooperation Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NVR	National Voluntary Report
PCIC	Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	UN Forum on Forests
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNSPF	UN Strategic Plan for Forests
VNC	Voluntary National Contribution
VNR	Voluntary National Reports
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report is one of the 10 assessment reports prepared by consultants as part of preparations for the UNFF's midterm review (MTR) in 2024 of the effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forest (IAF) in meeting its objectives, as set out in paragraphs 28-31 of ECOSOC resolution 2022/17¹. The report provides an assessment of the "Actions related to the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and its members", referred to Section A of the Annex to afore-mentioned resolution, and was prepared by Ivan Tomaselli.

2. This assessment focuses on the progress of the UNFF and its Members towards the objectives of the IAF, and is a result of the consolidation and analysis of the responses² to the questionnaires prepared by the consultants and circulated with a letter of UNFF18 Chair by the UNFF Secretariat to UNFF Member States, CPF (Collaborative Partnership on Forests) members and other relevant stakeholders on the range of actions contained in the Annex to the ECOSOC resolution 2022/17. A review of relevant documents and information available on UNFF websites were also considered in the preparation of this report.

3. This report offers analysis of actions taken by the Forum and its members since 2015, and the results, impacts and conclusions of these actions. The major progress made by UNFF has been the development of an agreement on the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) 2017-2030, and the platform provided by UNFF for forest policy discussions. UNFF has also been providing capacity-building and financial assistance to member states. The main factors that had negative impacts on the work of UNFF are the non-binding nature of the UNFI, which makes implementation of its decisions non-obligatory for its member countries, the COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of national inter-sectoral collaboration and gaps in international cooperation. Overall, there is a need to fully involve political leaders in the decision-making process on forestry agendas and to increase efforts to achieve the Global Forest Goals (GFGs).

4. As to the IAF objectives achievement, the assessment identified the main issues why some objectives have not yet been fully met and has suggested some improvements to be made, namely: i) increase stakeholder's involvement; ii) strengthening forest governance structures and means of implementation; iii) enhancing regional cooperation, and iv) continuously providing technical and financial support to member states to encourage the preparation and submission of their Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs) and Voluntary National Reports (VNRs).

5. Taking into account the analysis of major findings, and considering the suggestions and proposals received in response to the questionnaire, this report also offers recommendations on ways to enhance the effectiveness of work of UNFF and its Members. The recommendations address the achievement of the IAF goals in an overall way, and also present other components that contribute to the overall achievement of the IAF objectives.

6. In order to achieving IAFs Objectives, UNFF Member States need to: i) be more active in implementing the UNSPF and the GFGs; ii) raise the political status of the Forum highlighting the importance of forests in broader multilateral processes, such as more deep interaction with Rio

¹ https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2022/17

² The responses to questionnaires on the UNFF and Its Members are presented in Annex 3 of this report. The questionnaire contained six questions on Assessment A drawn from section A of the annex to ECOSOC Resolution 2022/17.

Conventions (CBD, UNFCCC, CCD), and continuously include inputs into HLPF sessions; iii) increase the visibility and the support for the submission of the VNCs and enhance the engagement of stakeholders, as a tool to achieve the objectives of IAF. Additionally, other components that can contribute to the overall achievement of the IAF objectives are as follows:

- Supporting countries: Members of the Forum should be more committed with the submission of their NVRs, strengthening the implementation of UNSPF; the Forum and its members should further strengthen forest governance structures and means of implementation; facilitate the monitoring indicators of the GFGs to engage the member countries on the submission of their VNCs; and support subnational and local institutions.
- Cooperation: Urge UNFF to work in synergy with other relevant initiatives dealing with SFM; involve local communities in global policy discussions; promote cross-sectoral cooperation and efforts to improve cooperation between developed and developing countries at all levels; use hybrid meeting formats for intersessional activities; and improve the communication among member states and the UNFF secretariat.

I. INTRODUCTION

7. The UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) is conducting a midterm review (MTR) of the effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) in achieving its objectives at UNFF19 to be held in 2024, according to the provisions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolutions 2015/33³ and 2021/6.

8. In the lead-up to the midterm review of the IAF, the UNFF through ECOSOC resolution 2022/17, decided to carry out the actions and tasks in ten (10) areas contained in the annex to the Resolution as part of intersessional activities on this matter leading up to UNFF19. Additionally, the UNFF, decided that the actions contained in the annex of the Resolution should be implemented in a transparent and independent manner, and in close consultation with Members of the Forum, and Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) member organizations and other relevant stakeholders, including through questionnaires, where appropriate.

9. This report refers to Section A: UNFF and its Members, one of 10 areas identified in the annex of IAF ECOSOC Resolution 2022/17 to be assessed, in preparations for the IAF mid-term review in 2024. This report addresses specific actions presented in Box 1.

**Box 1: Assessment A – Actions related to the UNFF and its members
(Annex to ECOSOC Resolution 2022/17)**

1. Assess the progress made by the UNFF and its members towards the objectives of the IAF, as defined in ECOSOC resolution 2015/33.
2. Analyze the performance of the Forum in carrying out its functions, as defined in paragraph 3 of Council resolution 2015/33, by identifying its impact on the global forest policy landscape and on the work of the HLPF, and the means to enable the Forum to broaden its impact.
3. Explore additional measures to improve the use of the annual sessions of the Forum and to engage members in the intersessional activities of the Forum to foster the achievement of the Global

³ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/259/77/PDF/N1525977.pdf?OpenElement>

Forest Goals (GFGs).

4. Identify further means to encourage the submission of more voluntary national reports (VNRs) and announcements of voluntary national contributions (VNCs) by members of the Forum, as well as identify means to encourage increased VNCs by members of the Forum and promote their effectiveness.

10. The main objective of the report is to present an assessment on section A referring to the UNFF and its Members, including progress made towards the objectives of the IAF, performance of the UNFF in carrying out its functions, gaps, strengths and weaknesses regarding the respective issues, to enhance the effectiveness of the work in the respective areas.

11. Besides the Background section, the report includes the following sections:

- Section II briefly describes the assessment methodology;
- Section III reviews relevant UN milestones since 2015 regarding “UNFF and its Members”;
- Section IV provides key findings of the Assessment A;
- Section V presents conclusions and recommendations relevant to Assessment A.

12. In accordance with paragraph 30 of the ECOSOC Resolution 2022/17, the results of the Assessment A should be submitted to the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on preparations for the midterm review of the IAF.

II. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

II.1 Geographic Coverage

13. This assessment has a global reach, including the UNFF and all its Members, in addition to the CPF and its members, and other stakeholders in the forum's range of actions.

II.2 Sources of Information

14. Information was gathered from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included the answers to the questionnaire prepared by the Consultant and circulated by the UNFF18 Bureau Chair, and direct contact (via e-mail and telephone) with the UNFF member state focal points. The questionnaires were addressed to:

- UNFF Members States;
- CPF members;
- Other relevant stakeholders

15. The secondary sources included a review of relevant UNFF documents and other publications publicly available, and consultations with the UNFF Secretariat and, other relevant individuals.

II.3 Approach used to carry out the study

16. As for gathering primary data and information, a questionnaire was prepared by the Consultant (Assessment A), and circulated by the UNFF18 Bureau Chair on 9 August 2022 to draw views from Members States, CPF members and other partners on the range of actions contained in the Annex to the

ECOSOC Resolution 2022/17 (see Annex 3). Later on, the consultant made direct contact (by e-mail and telephone contact) with UNFF National focal points of major countries that had not answered the questionnaire in the first instance. The responses received as of 22 December 2022, totaled 26 contributions, represented by 20 countries, 3 CPF members and 3 organizations. Analysis of the responses to the six questions on Assessment A is presented in Section IV of this report, and the detailed responses to the questionnaire are provided in Annex III.

17. It is important to note that:

- The information was obtained from a limited number of respondents, totaling 20 out of 197 member States;
- The quality of collected responses to the open-ended questions varied greatly, ranging from general statements to detailed answers. There were cases in that some questions were not answered and/or the countries did not take a position on the topic to be answered;
- All collected responses relevant to the topics covered are reported in this document;
- The Secretariat facilitated the consultants' work by providing administrative support, relevant documentation, and other information as requested. The views expressed in this report, including the conclusions and recommendations, are those of the consultant.

III. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

18. This section provides background and the context for Assessment A, including a number of UN milestones during the period of 2015-2022.

III.1 – ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33 on International Arrangement on Forests beyond 2015

19. The ECOSOC, in the first and second paragraph of the 2015/33 Resolution on the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) beyond 2015, decides that the international arrangement on forests is composed of the United Nations Forum on Forests and its Member States, the secretariat of the Forum, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) and the Trust Fund for the UNFF. This resolution also emphasizes that the objectives of the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015 should be achieved through the actions, individually and collectively, **of Member States**, international, regional and subregional organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders;

20. Paragraph 10 of this resolution *“Urges **Member States** to utilize the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests as an integrated framework for national action and international cooperation for implementing sustainable forest management and forest-related aspects of the post-2015 development agenda”*, inviting the Member States, on its 16th-paragraph, item (a) to monitor and assess the implementation of the sustainable forest management, and to submit on a voluntary basis national reports on the progress of achieving the global objectives on forests.

III.2 – UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030

21. On 20 April 2017, the ECOSOC adopted the 2017/4 Resolution on UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF).

22. The UNSPF resolution 2017/4⁴ in its paragraphs 30 – 33 and 40 set out the roles and responsibilities of the UNFF Members as follows:

30. Members may, on a voluntary basis, determine their contributions towards achieving the global forest goals and targets, taking into account their national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities, levels of development and forest conditions.

31. Members may include in their voluntary national contributions, as appropriate, the forest-related contributionsthey intend to make with regard to other international forest-related commitments and goals, such as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and actions to address climate change under the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

32. Members may, on a voluntary basis, communicate their progress on the voluntary national contributions to the UNFF at regular intervals determined by the Forum, in accordance with paragraph 67 of the strategic plan. In order to avoid any additional reporting burden, such voluntary communications on their voluntary national contributions may be part of their voluntary reporting on the strategic plan and the United Nations Forest Instrument.

33. Members of the Forum, as members of the governing bodies of forest-related international, regional and subregional organizations and processes, as appropriate, are encouraged to promote the integration of the global forest goals and targets into the strategies and programmes of these organizations, processes and instruments, consistent with their mandates and priorities.

23. Additionally, paragraph 58 (UNSPF, Resolution 2017/4) states that in advancing the global forest goals and targets, members are encouraged to: (a) Fostering regional and international cooperation and access to science, technology and innovation and improve knowledge sharing, in particular at the UN level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism; (b) Promoting the development, and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies for developing countries; and (c) Making full use of the financial resources available through the specialized programs, funds and agencies of the UN system, among others (e.g. national funds, private funding, multilateral development banks, bilateral and funding opportunities offered through foundations and philanthropic organizations); and also (d) Making full use of the potential of innovative funding mechanisms, including payment for ecosystem services schemes and existing mechanisms under the UNFCCC (Resolution 2017/4, paragraph 60).

24. According to paragraph 30 of the UNSPF (Resolution 2017/4), member states can register, through VNCs, their contributions to achieving global forest goals and targets. These contributions can include forest-related national and international actions and targets, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and actions to address climate change under the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC (Resolution 2017/4, paragraph 31).

25. The number of countries that have announced their VNCs to achieve the GFGs has been increasing since the adoption of the Strategic Plan in April 2017. Resolution adopted by ECOSOC on 17

⁴ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/184/62/PDF/N1718462.pdf?OpenElement>

July 2020 (ECOSOC/RES/2020/14) in its section “Monitoring, assessment and reporting”, item 5, mentions that the national reports have been submitted by 51 members of the Forum on progress towards implementing the UNSPF 2017–2030, and the reports submitted by regional and sub regional organizations and processes. In 2022, a total of 22 countries have submitted their respective VNCs as of July 2022.⁵

III.3 – UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030)

26. The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 73/284 in March 2019 with the aim of supporting and scaling up efforts to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide, contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other related multilateral environmental agreements (e.g., UNFCCC, Convention on Biological Diversity), among others.

27. The ecosystem restoration, recalling the UNSPF 2017–2030 also Global Forest Goal 1 of UNSPF, further serves as to reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through SFM, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort to address climate change.

28. The General Assembly encourages Member States to:

(a) Foster political will, the mobilization of resources, capacity-building, scientific research and cooperation and momentum for ecosystem restoration at the global, regional, national and local levels, as appropriate;

(b) Mainstream ecosystem restoration into policies and plans to address current national development priorities and challenges due to the degradation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, biodiversity loss and climate change vulnerability, thereby creating opportunities for ecosystems to increase their adaptive capacity and opportunities to maintain and improve livelihoods for all;

(c) Develop and implement policies and plans to prevent ecosystem degradation, in line with national laws and priorities, as appropriate;

(d) Build on and reinforce existing restoration initiatives in order to scale up good practices;

(e) Facilitate synergies and a holistic view of how to achieve international commitments and national priorities through the restoration of ecosystems;

(f) Promote the sharing of experiences and good practices in ecosystem conservation and restoration.

IV. ANALYSIS OF MAJOR FINDINGS

29. This section provides analysis of major findings based on the answers to the questionnaire, prepared by the Consultant (See Annex 3, Questions A-1 through A-6) on the UNFF and its members, which was submitted by the Chair of UNFF18, and circulated by the UNFF Secretariat on August 9, 2022, to the UNFF national focal points and other relevant stakeholders. The analyses include the effective

⁵ Australia, Canada, China, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Thailand, Ukraine, The United Kingdom and Uzbekistan.

answers of the respondents, and therefore, the member countries or stakeholders that did not respond/or did not take position on certain topics (questions), were not included. In addition, the analysis has also been supplemented by consultant reviewing the progress in implementation of relevant provisions of the UNSPF and UNFF resolutions related to Members of the Forum and UNFF itself.

30. As of December 22nd, 2022, responses have been received from 20 Member States, among 197 member countries, 3 CPF members, 2 regional/subregional partners and 1 Major Group (see Table 1). Additionally, direct attempts were made to contact the UNFF focal points in the respective member countries (major tropical countries)⁶. As a result of this contact, Guatemala and Thailand also contributed responding the questionnaire.

Table 1 – Consolidated questionnaire recipients and respondents

STAKEHOLDERS	RECIPIENTS	RESPONDENTS
Member States	197 UNFF National Focal Points	20
Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)	All 15 members of CPF	3
Regional/subregional Organizations	Contact points for 51 organizations and processes	2
UNFF Major Groups	9 Major Groups/Stakeholders	1
TOTAL		26

Source: Prepared by the Consultant (2022).

IV.1 - Progress made by the UNFF and its Members towards the objectives of the IAF

31. This section analyzes mainly the responses obtained from Members and other stakeholders, on the issues related to the IAF objectives described in paragraph 1 (d) of ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33. The main remarks made by the UNFF members are analyzed in the following items.

a. Implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests; progress by UNFF and its members

32. The development and adoption of the UNSPF by the UNGA was the main progress made by the UNFF to promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests. The Global Forests Goals Report (GFGR 2021) and the celebration of the International Day of Forests were cited by the countries as noteworthy tools towards the goals. On the other hand, while acknowledging UNFF's efforts and interest in advancing SFM implementation, the non-binding nature of UNFF is considered an obstacle to achieving desirable progress as it depends on input from all stakeholders.

33. The CPF, particularly in technical support, development and implementation of forestry projects has provided support to some countries. In general, UNFF has been supportive of the UNFF Secretariat

⁶ Contact made via e-mail with the focal points in the respective countries: Malaysia, Thailand, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Suriname, Venezuela, Ecuador and Guatemala.

to provide capacity building assistance on reporting on GFGs, and in the implementation of the UNFI (UN Forest Instrument) by member states.

34. The responses on the progress made by UNFF members to implement sustainable management of all types of forests were, in general, a bit vague. It is noteworthy ECOSOC Resolution 2017/4 presents in its paragraph 28 that “The *United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 provides a reference for ambitious and transformational actions by all actors, at all levels, to achieve its global forest goals and targets.*” Despite that, some countries responded that each country is uniquely organized and has different governmental and legal mechanisms for achieving the Global Forest Goals. The main agencies responsible for forests in those countries are the ministries and departments of environment.

35. A few examples of the work done by some of these governmental agencies in pursuit of the IAF's objectives include: the administration of the Environment Law and the protection, conservation and recovery of the environment; the legal norms regarding forest management, implementation of forest restoration programs, combating illegal logging, biodiversity protection, and implementation of national policies for forest protection; the adoption of REDD+ strategies; the revision of forest policy-related laws, adoption of strategies to combat wildlife and forest crimes, operationalization of investment funds for the forest sector, and collaboration with local and international governments and non-governmental organizations on forest governance; rehabilitation of degraded forests by promoting SFM; preparation of forest report as a forest management tool; dissemination of the multiple roles of forest beyond timber production such as biodiversity conservation, water regulation, recreation, land conservation, ecotourism into all responsible government agencies and civil groups; implementation of a timber certification program, with policies aligned with the UNSPF goals.

36. In sum, the analysis of the responses of this section indicate that UNFF and its members have made progress on the five IAF objectives listed on the paragraph 22 of ECOSOC resolution 2017/4, but with respect to the attainment of the SDGs and the Global Forest Goals (GFGs) by 2030, progress seems to be inadequate as indicated by organization such as FAO. Therefore, efforts should be increased and hastened (following a slowdown also caused by the COVID 19 pandemic), and the methodological issue to determine the level of impact of the UNFF on members' progress to implement SFM needs to be simplified and expanded. As feasible, actions in pursuit of IAF objectives may be adapted to local circumstances.

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

37. The third IAF objective, presented in paragraph 1 of ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33, is to enhance cooperation on forest-related issues at all levels. This topic has been addressed by member countries on the efforts at the global and regional levels, and the following findings were based on the answers provided by contributor countries.

38. On actions to enhance cooperation, UNFF has encouraged cooperation through its annual global working meetings, in addition to encouraging cooperation among other international agencies, such as UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), AFF (African Forest Forum), IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and FAO. Additionally, the possibility of promoting discussions on forestry issues in all UN international fora and conventions is important to disseminate and share relevant information on forest-related issues to member states and to promote voluntary reports submissions by member states.

39. The relevance of assistance from international organizations, such as the CPF joint statement on “Turning the Tide on Deforestation” released in 2021 during the UNFF16, is an important cooperation mechanism, although efforts are still needed to implement it and strengthen coordination, with greater support from member states for collaboration at the capital level. The need to enhance synergies and cooperation at the national level has been reiterated by the UNFF and its Members, but it is showing to be a slow process.

40. Cooperation for climate change mitigation could be a way forward as they have global relevance, mainly through REDD+ projects. Some actions at the regional level include strengthening participatory forest management from the private sectors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, multi-stakeholders and civil society, increasing synergy between sub-regional, regional, and international organizations in information sharing, forest restoration and rehabilitation, and management of forest ecosystems.

41.

42. Regional cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues have been promoted among the Amazon countries, including creation of a specialized team to deal with organized environmental crime in the region. However, the limitation of the UNFF mandate constrained performance of regional coordination.

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

43. Apparently, the UNFF Members pay little attention to North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation within the UNFF framework. In spite of the fact that the Objective (iv) of IAF sets out to foster international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, the cooperation processes are not within the framework of the initiatives promoted by the UNFF.

44. There is more interaction and cooperation on forest-related issues at the regional level than North-South and South-South cooperation. There is a case of a triangular cooperation program to develop alternatives for economic sustainability in priority areas of the Mesoamerican biological corridor for the period 2014-2016.

45. The South - South cooperation takes place in different areas such as political-diplomatic, strategic, and technical, building synergies between governments, multilateral organizations, cooperation agencies, organized civil society, social movements, the scientific community, production sectors, and society. It is vital to support such programs through the experiences sharing and lessons learned, and the involvement of academia for the success of the cooperation.

46. The numbers of responses made available on public-private partnerships were also limited, and their responses indicate different perceptions on the development of the public-private partnerships, involving UNFF.

47. The public-private partnerships are crucial, as the progress on private sector cooperation is also an important objective of the UNFF, but there is still much to be done to attract the private sector to the IAF's efforts to delivered tangible results. Some examples of public-private partnership, to support forest related initiatives include forest finance program, insurance packages for forest plantation holders,

agroforestry plantation program designed to attract new public-private investments, making available credit for property holders in forest areas.

48. On the cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels, only six member countries contributed. Their perception on the UNFF efforts to develop cross-sectoral cooperation varies significantly. Some countries mentioned that the intersectoral cooperation has been slow and that the UNFF and UNFFS should play a stronger role in this effort, considering that, so far, it has not delivered tangible results. On the other hand, some countries mentioned that 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 organizations (CSOs).

49. The common aspect is the importance to promote direct exchanges at the community level (local and indigenous communities) but in some cases, the cooperation actions are not connected with UNFF processes. Although the participation of Ministries of Finance is of vital importance in the UNFF discussion, none of the responding countries mentioned this need.

50. Regional/subregional organizations have concentrated efforts on cross-sectoral cooperation, where issues affecting SFM are addressed by promoting cross-sectoral commitments. As to cooperation in general, efforts have been made at all levels to support stakeholders and to finance initiatives (e.g., GFFFN). The UNFF is an opportunity to highlight cooperation efforts, considering stakeholder involvement, intersectoral cooperation, and means of implementation in areas where additional efforts are always needed. Annual UNFF forums, expert meetings, and collaborative partnerships also enable/provide member countries access to an improved cooperation.

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

51. Although some country mentioned that “Strengthening the forest governance structure has not been considered as a priority area at the UNFF, and there is room for improvement in promoting scientific research and financial support”, the UNFF has addressed this issue as a priority in the last two biennium UNFF16-17 and UNFF18-19. The public and private sectors should be engaged to lead the sustainability of forests, and public policies related to the forest sector should be developed and implemented in the member countries. Also, on resources and funding, communication with the secretariat could be improved. The GFFFN has been widely mentioned as an important tool for promoting means of implementation, and strategies for forest financing, member countries' visibility and access to funding; therefore, it should be given more prominence on the UNFF website as an example.

52. Among actions needed include the UNFF review on the reporting model of Voluntary National Contribution (VNC) and support its submissions to the forum, synergy across all spheres/sectors of the UN, in addition to supporting the empowerment of communities to access benefits for the protection and sustainable use of their forests.

53. In accordance with UNFI and GFGs, the member states are making efforts on many fronts, such as: the creation of a comprehensive and participatory forest administrations; development of national forest programs and action plans; efforts to dialogue with the government agencies to consider forestry as a priority; investments on forest tracking and monitoring technologies; more restrictive measures on forest harvesting to promote SFM; increase of countries forest cover; development of regional policy

guidelines to strengthen forest governance capacity; promotion of institutional interaction among national authorities involved in forestry; and provisions of additional income for families in rural regions affected by the pandemic to help eradicate poverty. It is important to make it clear that many initiatives are a result of actions fostered by other partnerships and organizations involved with the same causes.

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

54. As evidenced in paragraph 1 (e) of the ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33 the IAF decides “to strengthen long-term political commitment to the achievement of the objectives listed in paragraph 1 (d)...” outlined in the same document. In this regard, a couple of tools were cited by UNFF member countries in their responses to the questionnaire.

55. In order to strengthen long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives, the importance of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, and the role of the CPF in the discussions should be stressed. In addition, the commitment of member states should be measured, for example, by the submission of their Voluntary National Reports and Voluntary National Contributions. The suggestion is that countries that are more committed to submitting their reports should have more inputs/relevance in the forum's discussions.

56. The platform provided by the UNFF for discussions on forest policies is also a relevant room for growing recognition of forest-related commitments and contributions; the UNFF also supports the implementation of policies to protect forests and combat deforestation, and actions to restore forests and ecosystems.

57. On the other hand, the non-binding nature of the UNFI and UNSPF ends up hindering the progress to achieve the IAF objectives, limiting the IAF's role in fulfilling political commitments. Some actions of support for forests in member countries coincide with the IAF, but do not result from it, so UNSPF and GFGs remain lesser-known. Thus, UNSPF has not been sufficiently kept pace with emerging crises (deforestation, biodiversity loss and climate change).

Some countries have attempted to involve high political leaders in decision-making process on forest agendas and to develop and institutionalize forest policies through national programs, consolidation of appropriate legislation, strengthening political commitments, and discussions on policy commitments to improve forest management.

IV.2 – IAF Objectives with less or no progress

58. As to the objectives of the IAF in general, it was pointed out that progress was made on all objectives, but none of them have been effectively achieved due to insufficient financial, technical and technological support. IAF objectives⁷ (iii), (iv) and (v), were the ones that had the least advances.

59. The main issue regarding the objectives that have not been achieved refers to the inconsistency in participation and engagement of stakeholders in the work of the UNFF. Therefore, a greater

⁷ IAF objectives: (iii) To enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest related issues at all levels; (iv) To foster international cooperation, including North-South, South-South, North-North and triangular cooperation, as well as public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation, at all levels; (v) To support efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the United Nations forest instrument, in order to achieve sustainable forest management.

stakeholder engagement is an important objective of the IAF (specifically, greater progress in private sector cooperation is a stated goal of the IAF).

60. Among the responses of the 20 country members, 7 countries and 2 organizations provided suggestions and recommendations on how the objectives can be achieved and how this can be improved. The priorities are the need to strengthen the coordination mechanisms and working agendas of the UNSPF goals, other multilateral agreement/cooperation, bilateral cooperation initiatives that have an agenda on SF and the need for improvements in regional cooperation North-South, South-South, triangular cooperation at all levels. Additionally, other aspects for improvement of work of UNFF include to: increase efforts to support developing countries; strengthen political commitment to stop deforestation and forest degradation; improve public policies in which all actors are integrated, including small landowners; and generate profitability of forest products and sub products, valuing and/or recognizing the environmental services and benefits they generate; and generate attractive and reliable mechanisms to develop forest activities, to avoid irregularities in forest administration.

61. Expectations are that more progress will be made on the monitoring of forest degradation, to facilitate the mobilization towards solutions to this concern. This requires greater international and national cooperation of what is being accomplished, mapping what remains uncovered and make sure that there is no overlap, but rather incremental work and synergies. The UNFF needs to take the lead on the significant policy issues, to ensure the relevance of the forum compared to other global initiatives.

IV. 3 – The IAF beyond 2015 operating in a transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable manner

62. Overall, the IAF has been operating in a transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable manner, as indicated by majority of respondents to the questionnaire. The UNFF secretariat has made efforts to reach out to member states and provide support to the program in implementing UNSPF, offering opportunities to review the work done in discussions with stakeholders, sharing ideas, publication of reports related to the GFGs and lessons learned.

63. The communication among member states needs greater attention. Also, there is a lack of adequate means to follow up on the progress of the member states, mainly due to the financial capacity to develop actions.

IV. 4 – Progress made by UNFF considering its functions defined in para. 3 of Resolution 2015/33

64. This section analyzes issues related to the functions of the Forum decided by ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33, paragraph 3. The main remarks for each of the functions described in the resolution are addressed in item a. through e., as follows:

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

65. Overall, the contribution of the UNFF in this regard is seen positive. The UNFF is a global platform and important for policy dialogue and intergovernmental cooperation on forest management-related issues, creating a participatory and integrated environment. The annual meetings of the Forum provide a great opportunity for discussion and sharing of best practices. These are important steps forward towards the implementation of UNFF's functions.

66. Nevertheless, the platform needs to be more effective in promoting intersectoral cooperation, involving local communities in global policy discussions and in the implementation of actions and measures at national, subnational and local levels. The platform could also be used for more exchanges of experiences, and discussions on other emerging issues on forest policy and expert presentations, instead of focusing on discussions only in the political debate.

b. Promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM, in particular, the UNFI

67. A common strength observed was the submission of VNCs by member states. In general, the VNCs are considered as an opportunity to share and monitor progress made by member states. However, countries need to be further encouraged to submit their reports, and VNCs. The monitoring indicators of the GFGs need to be facilitated to support member states. As additional tools to promote monitoring in SFM implementation, countries can be guided by the Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA/FAO) and the GFGs Report 2021.

68. Meanwhile, the need to increase the political level of the UNFF so that the UNFF discussions on the forest sector reach other sectors (educational, economic and financial). This makes UNFF more relevant in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of SFM. There is also the need to increase regular workshops to monitor implementation of the UNFI, maximizing participation of member states and ensure continuity.

69. Many initiatives to implement SFM are carried out by other organizations such as WWF (World Wildlife Fund) with the support of ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization) and EU FAO FLEGT program. The Forum should lead those initiatives to enhance its relevance related to the implementation of SFM around the world.

c. Mobilizing, catalyzing, and facilitating access to financial, technical, and scientific resources

70. The GFFFN is considered as an important facilitator to assist countries to mobilize resources, and access to funds for forests but it needs become more efficient, expanding it to more countries. It is also important to call for efforts to improve cooperation between developed and developing countries to exchange knowledge and facilitate obtaining resources and environmentally friendly technologies. The CPF and the phase I of the UNFF Clearing House on Forest Financing was also named as a facilitator for access to financial, technical, and scientific resources.

For improvements on financial access, the creation of a participatory platform with the integration of universities and NGOs is fundamental. They were pointed as interested entities in terms of contribution on technical and scientific resources; translations of relevant documents related the financial matter; and facilitate access to existing funding mechanisms. Another request was that the UNFF should provide support not only to national, but also subnational and local institutions.

d. Promoting governance frameworks, enabling conditions at all levels to achieve SFM

71. The main efforts in this regard refer to fostering dialogue, knowledge exchange among countries, policy guidelines and promoting governance structures. It is also important to emphasize the role of the private sector to achieve SFM, contributing to management of natural and plantation forests, forest/ chain-of-custody certification, provision of forest products and services, and the forest financing.

72. The non-binding nature of the UNFF, allows Member States to work towards effective enabling conditions for SFM and to promote appropriate governance frameworks, although some countries consider the non-binding nature of UNFF to be an obstacle to the effective implementation of its decisions.

73. In conclusion, there is room for improvement in forest governance, including amending the forest-related legal framework and promoting the participation of all levels in forest governance discussion, such as local communities, small landholders and informal sector; and better access to forest-related education best suited to the reality of respective countries.

e. Strengthening high-level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, in support of SFM

74. The progress towards supporting SFM considering high-level political engagement has been made primarily through the UNFF. UNFF has taken positive steps to encourage and facilitate the participation of major groups and other stakeholders. The involvement of major groups is of utmost importance for an inclusive and transparent process. Moreover, the UNFF input into HLPF, ministerial statement, CPF and major groups input at the UNFF sessions are key to support SFM.

75. On the other hand, some members consider that the forest sector is still not so well-positioned in the national and international agendas and that UNFF could increase inputs into HLPF sessions making the progress in this area (political engagement) more strategic. For instance, participation of UNFF in international fora, such as in the UNFCCC to better promote the Forum's objectives, and the contribution of forests.

76. At the regional level, some countries are adopting measures, for strengthening high-level political engagement and promotion of SFM, such as environmental strategies, sustainable development and ecosystem restoration plans, systems to combat environmental crimes, among other actions.

IV. 5 – Level of engagement of Members and stakeholders in the Forum's intersessional activities and suggestions to improve UNFF's annual sessions including intersessional activities

77. The main perception is that there is currently a low engagement of member countries in the participation in Forum's sessions, and discussions of the Forum. The reasons vary from the difficulties in interactive dialogue and engagement on emerging policy issues in formal Forum settings to the lack of resources that affects the participation of developing countries. It is noteworthy that each member state has its own potential, possibilities, availability and individual particularities that should be taken into account.

78. At times, Forum discussions are restricted due to the program schedule constraints, hindering different groups with different perspectives (often the main actors related to SFM), to express themselves and contribute to the discussions. It is important to improve the management of the IAF's challenges and work to ensure that actions are being carried out, and review the follow-up actions related to the UNSPF, to increase collaboration among global forest-relevant government agencies.

79. The UNFF annual sessions should be used for discussing issues that are not, or cannot be, discussed elsewhere and use more innovative formats, with more interactive dialogues. It should be

considered to hold more intersessional activities (including UNFF sessions) in countries with forest resources, to a further understanding of the different conditions on the ground. Table 2 presents a summary of specific suggestions for improvements indicated by some Member Countries and organizations.

Table 2 – Suggestions to improve the use of the UNFF’s annual sessions and intersessional activities.

COUNTRY/ORG.	SUGGESTIONS
ACTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual participation gives an opportunity to facilitate multi-stakeholder participation in UNFF intersessional activities.
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In annual sessions, provide the opening statements in writing rather than in plenary, assuring that does not detract from substantive discussion.
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize more countries and regional organizations and processes to participate in the UNFF; • Carry out targeted thematic discussions in the form of typical case analysis and clustering of different regions; • Increase opportunities for exchange and sharing of experiences among countries in the same region.
El Salvador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote virtual meetings for the follow-up of annual sessions.
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out monitoring of compliance to encourage participation of stakeholders; • Create working groups for the implementation of actions, coordination and monitoring.
Forest Europe Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the annual session with a keynote by a renowned expert on an emerging issue in forestry, followed by a short panel discussion.
Jamaica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider annual sessions focused on supporting greater regional cooperation.
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote regional and sub-regional sessions and intersessions; • Encourage or assist Member Countries to develop or improve internet facilities to be able to participate in virtual meetings.
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of hybrid meeting formats for intersessional activities; • Submit some items in writing in advance and use the annual session for discussion of major issues; • Use intersessional activities to prepare submissions to HLPF and other high-level forums.
Panama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the stakeholders to present all the UNFF reports at each UNFF session.
Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider conducting UNFF sessions via teleconference format.
USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating ministerial statements from interactive high-level panel discussions may allow time for Member States to share their key national updates and voluntary national contributions and engage with guest panelists; • Suggest the time limits for interventions, and continue for all high-level ministerial statements; • Continue hybrid and/or virtual intersessional meetings to allow for participation from those unable to travel.

Source: Compiled by the Consultant (2022).

IV. 6 – Encourage more UNFF Members to submit Voluntary National Reports (VNR) and Voluntary National Contributions (VNC)

80. The UNFF support to member states and simplification of reporting format are fundamental to encourage more UNFF Members to submit voluntary national reports. The difficulty of assessing the key indicators in the reports can end up becoming a costly activity and eventually member countries need financial support to prepare their national reports. Similarly, support and technical capacity building for countries are needed to prepare their reports. An alternative to encourage member countries to prepare their reports would be the creation of a single platform allowing the online filling of the information in phases and with validation and approval by the responsible institutions. The results of the reports and the successful cases of SFM should be shared at the regional level, strengthening the synergy between national, subnational and local authorities. VNCs could be strongly related to political commitment of each Member State.

81. Communication between the UNFF and the focal points of the Member Countries plays an important role in collaboration and VNR submission success, but to some extent it is not clear. In order to have clear and effective communication, it would be ideal the designation of only one UNFF e-mail specifically assigned to this issue, be facilitating the receipt of the VNRs and the exchange of relevant information regarding VNRs and VNCs.

82. The deadline for submitting reports is also a sensitive issue. In general, the deadline should be more flexible, conciliating with the publication of other relevant documents such as the FRA/FAO on the state of the world's forests.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

83. The conclusions and recommendations took into consideration the review of the official UNFF documents, analysis of contribution of Member Countries to the questionnaire (section A - questions A1 to A6), and the Consultant's insights and suggestions. In order to facilitate the understanding the conclusions are grouped by the main themes identified in the assessment of UNFF and its Members.

V.1 – CONCLUSIONS

84. Overall, UNFF Members have paid little attention to relevant documents and decisions guiding the organization. One example is the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 (UNSPF), rarely mentioned or considered by the Members in their responses to the questionnaire. The main challenge refers to the non-binding nature of the UNFI that depends on the political will and engagement of the member states and stakeholders for enhancing the forest governance structures and means of implementation, and the gaps between intra-sectoral and international cooperation.

85. Overall, there is a need to involve senior political leaders in the decision-making process on forestry agendas and to increase efforts to achieve the GFGs objectives, improve regional cooperation and continuously provide technical and financial support to the member states. The main specific conclusions are as follows.

86. It is recognized that over the years, the UNFF provided capacity building to member states and developed the financial and technical assistances. On the other hand, the non-binding nature of UNFI is an obstacle to achieving progress, which depends on the political will of countries, limiting the IAF's role in meeting policy commitments, although some countries mentioned that it allows them to work

towards effective enabling conditions for SFM and to promote governance structures appropriate to their own reality. In the pursuit of the IAF's objectives, UNFF members have focused on the legal fields (revision of laws related to forest policy, and combat forest crimes). Additionally, forest governance structure, stakeholder involvement, intersectoral cooperation, and means of implementation are areas where additional efforts are needed to achieve progress on SDGs and GFGs by 2030; otherwise, it will not be possible to accomplish all the objectives.

87. Regarding interaction and cooperation, it is remarked that there is more interaction and cooperation on forest-related issues at the regional level than North-South and South-South cooperation, and the communication with the secretariat is sometimes not sufficient.

88. Noteworthy is the importance of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, on forest agendas to develop and institutionalize forest policies through national programs and consolidation of appropriate legislation. It is recognized that the growing recognition by the UNFF of forest-related commitments and contributions supports the implementation of policies.

89. The support for forests that coincides with the IAF sometimes does not effectively result from it. Soon the UNSPF and the GFGs remain lesser-known and have not been sufficient to keep up with emerging crises (deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change). Other initiatives that do not involve the UNFF directly end up being more relevant in actions directed at SFM and global climate concerns.

90. The main weakness on achieving the IAF goals is the inconsistent participation in stakeholders and member states engagement. It is suggested to strengthen forest governance structures, foster regional cooperation, increase efforts to support low-GDP countries in terms of direct financial and technical support, and guide public forest policies towards alternatives to sustainable management that integrates society's controllers.

91. The IAF's operation was recognized and described as transparent, effective, efficient and accountable. Efforts to reach out member states and provide support to the program in implementation are recognized.

92. In spite of that, there is a lack of adequate means to track the progress in achieving the IAF goals by member states involved, and there is a need to improve efficiency in communication among member states. It is important to make the organizational structure and the tasks done by the UNFF more transparent with its actions being frequently shared, including the work done during the annual sessions and the inter-sessional period.

93. The UNFF global platform, the Meetings and forums and the VNCs are undoubtedly fundamental tools for policy dialogue and intergovernmental cooperation on SFM, a space for sharing of experiences and monitoring progress made by countries.

94. On the other hand, there is room for improvements to raise the political level of the UNFF, reaching other related sectors and increase UNFF input into HLPF sessions, improve cooperation between developed and developing countries and support subnational and local institutions (e.g., by GFFFN).

95. The low level of engagement is a matter of concern, which can be attributed to the lack of resources (the ability of a country to fund participation of its delegation to UNFF) positioning of member states, such as their own potential, availability, and restriction of the Forum's discussions due to the scheduling constraints. The engagement of members and stakeholders could be increased if more forum discussions were transformed into more concrete actions. It should be considered the use of hybrid meeting formats for intersessional activities, more opportunities for exchange and sharing of experiences among same region-countries, and to increase the continuously follow-up of actions of collaboration by global forest-relevant government agencies.

96. UNFF member states need more support to submit their VNCs and VNRs. The format for reports should be continuously simplified, and the evaluation of key indicators should be facilitated, since it could become a multisectoral activity, and eventually need financial support. In addition, it is critical that the UNFFS keeps providing technical capacity building for countries to prepare their reports in general. The results of the reports and positive cases of SFM should have more visibility, and shared in the region.

V.2 – RECOMMENDATIONS

97. This section offers recommendations on ways to enhance the effectiveness of work of the UNFF and its Members in the respective areas, taking into account the analysis of major findings, considering also the suggestions and proposals received in response to the questionnaire, and views from the consultant's perspective.

- Urge UNFF Members to be more active in implementing the UNSPF and the GFGs in high-level political dialogues;
- Raise its political level to be more strategic, e.g., inputs into HLPF sessions, reaching other sectors and increasing relevance in promoting SFM;
- Increase VNCs visibility and sharing of successful SFM cases at the regional level through online platforms, social networks, and presentation during forum sessions;
- Improve stakeholder engagement as a tool for achieving IAF objectives by integrating decision-making processes as an engagement activity;
- Support efforts to strengthen forest governance structures and means of implementation;
- Establish a clearing house in an interactive platform for exchange of lessons learned and best practices;
- Some countries cited that monitoring indicators can become a costly activity. Therefore, one should consider the possibility to facilitate the monitoring indicators of the GFGs to encourage the member countries on the submission of their VNCs;
- Enhance technical and financial support to subnational and local institutions;
- Continuously keep simplifying the reporting format for VNCs;
- Reduce number of questions of VNRs, including open-ended questions to allow flexibility to answer the questions;
- Urge UNFF to work in synergy with other relevant initiatives, such as ITTO, UNFCCC, CBD, CCD, dealing with SFM and other emerging issues, e.g., development of joint capacity-building activities in implementation;

- Involve local communities in global policy discussions at national, subnational, and local levels;
- Promote cross-sectoral cooperation and efforts to improve cooperation between developed and developing countries at all levels (financial support, knowledge, technologies, capacity building);
- Use hybrid meeting formats for intersessional activities, thus increasing opportunities for sharing experiences among countries;
- Improve efficiency in communication among member states and with the UNFF secretariat by designating a focal point for communication.

VI. ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Consultant bio: Ivan Tomaselli

Ivan Tomaselli is the founder, and currently President of STCP Engenharia de Projetos Ltda. He is also President of MEPEN ENERGIA S.A. Has over 40 years of professional experience in developing projects related to the forest industry and forest products market, public policy and sectoral programs. He has worked as project coordinator and consultant of the company and international organizations such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Trade Center (ITC), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) and others. Tomaselli has published over 200 technical and scientific papers and has delivered hundreds of lectures and courses in events around the world. Coauthor of the book "Project Management", Kairós Edições, 2016 and published a book "Engineering projects applied to forest industries", in 2019. He was a Professor at the Federal University of Paraná from 1977 to 2010. He is currently the Vice President of Technology and Development of the Brazilian Association of Mechanically-Processed Timber Association (ABIMCI), member of DASOS (Finland) Investment Committee, and member of AMATA Company Administrative Board.

Tomaselli earned B.Sc. degree in Forest Engineering from the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), Brazil; M.Sc. degree in Timber Technology from UFPR, Brazil; PhD. degree from the University of Melbourne, Australia; and post-doctorate at the Bundesforschungsanstalt für Forest-und Holzwirtschaft, Hamburg, Germany.

Annex 2 – List of contributors: UNFF Member states and relevant Stakeholders

COUNTRY/ORG	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF THE RESPONDENT	CONTACT
MEMBER STATES			
Australia	-	Keiran Andrusko	keiran.andrusko@agriculture.gov.au
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Colombia	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	-	-
El Salvador	Ministry Of Agriculture And Livestock, General Directorate Of Forest Management, Watersheds And Irrigation	Lucia Gomez	lucia.gomez@mag.gob.sv
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Panama	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	-
Peru	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	-
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CPF MEMBERS			
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Forestry Division (NFO) under DDG-Semedo stream.	NFO-Director@fao.org cc DDG-Semedo@fao.org
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization	Sheam Shatikuru	itto@int.org-
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations	International Union of Forest Research Organizations	buck@iufro.org; purret@iufro.org
OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS			
ACTO	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization	Carlos Salinas Montes - Margarita Medina	carlos.salinas@otca.org ; margarita.medina@otca.org
FEO	Forest Europe Organization	Thomas Haufmann	thomas.haussmann@foresteurope.org
(MGCY)	Major Group for Children and Youth (IFSA)	Amaitum Joshua Elukut	joshua.amaitum@ifsa.net

Source: Compiled by Ivan Tomaselli (2022).

Annex 3 – Excerpt from consolidated questionnaire related to the Assessment of UNFF and its Members: Question A-1 through A-6

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? At the global level, SFM is far from universal and seems to be in decline in some places while on the rise elsewhere. At this rate, we are unlikely to reach our goals.

ACTO	<p>The Forum adopted in 2017 the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) 2017-2030. This Strategic Plan provides a global framework for actions at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests and halt deforestation and forest degradation. To comply with this, the Strategic Plan has six Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and 26 associated goals to be achieved by 2030, which are voluntary and universal. The fulfillment of these objectives is appreciated in the Report of the Global Forest Objectives 2021.</p> <p>As part of this process, it is important to highlight that multiple Member States of the United Nations, and the organizations that participate in the Forum, have developed processes to align their own plans and strategies with the International Agreement on Forests - IAF and the Strategic Plan Nations for Forests 2017-2030, thus seeking to contribute to the progress of the SDGs, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Paris Agreement adopted under the UNFCCC and other international instruments, processes and commitments related to forests.</p> <p>An example of this is the ACTO and its Member Countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela), all Member States of the United Nations, which have promoted the formulation and implementation of the <i>"Forest Program of the ACTO for the Basin and the Amazon Region"</i>. This Program promotes cooperation, knowledge, and exchange of experiences among its Member Countries, facilitating spaces for political and technical dialogue in favor of the conservation and sustainable use of the Amazonian ecosystem, especially those related to SFM/Comprehensive and Sustainable Management of the Forests; regional forest monitoring; and the development and strengthening of information systems.</p> <p>Additionally, all ACTO Member Countries have cooperated with the generation of information for the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020, and currently cooperate with information on the forests of their Amazon territories for the implementation of the Forest Module of the Amazon Regional Observatory.</p> <p>Despite the progress, there is an evident need to promote a greater number of actions in Latin America, especially in the Amazon, to mobilize, catalyze and facilitate access to financial, technical and scientific resources.</p>
Australia	<p>The promotion of principles and values of SFM are central to the UNFF's work, and we are pleased to see an increasing focus on forests globally, along with growing recognition and value placed on SFM principles. We are particularly pleased to see the growing recognition that SFM is broader than the forestry-sector, and there is an increasing drive to consider it through a climate and biodiversity lens.</p> <p>We are a strong supporter of the UNFF Flagship Publication, and we consider the GFGs report to be a positive example of SFM progress globally. Further, it is particularly pleasing to see that the steps for improving the reporting process in the next cycle are being considered, to continue to hone this important process going forward.</p> <p>It is good to see that several extensive SFM C&I frameworks have been adopted by separate countries and regions, which provide a good basis to build upon.</p>
Canada	<p>At the global level, SFM is far from universal and seems to be in decline in some places while on the rise elsewhere. At this rate, we are unlikely to reach our goals.</p>
China	<p>The rate of forest loss has declined, but threats to forests are still on the rise, including climate change, poverty, energy market instability, increasing food shortages in developing countries, and rising food prices etc. UNFF provides a platform for discussion and exchange on the implementation of SFM for all types of forests. It has developed a global forest strategic plan--the UNSPF-- and Global Core Set of forest-related indicators, which provide guidance for countries to implement and monitor SFM, and has assessed the progress made by member states on the implementation of UNSPF through the flagship publication of 2020 GFGs Report.</p>
Colombia	<p>Initially, it should be mentioned that, to assess progress in the global objectives of SFM, it is necessary to have systematic, periodic and reliable consolidated information at a global level, and standard indicators to determine progress in SFM. In this regard, there is a source of information that has been used as a reference for information on forests and corresponds to the Global Forest Resources Assessment prepared by FAO.</p> <p>Recognizing the effort made by FAO and the countries in terms of providing information, which identifies a decreasing trend in forest loss and an increase in areas under sustainable management, it is necessary to have a</p>

	<p>systematic methodology or analysis to determine the level of impact of the UNFF on these advances. Considering the above, in the case of Colombia, progress in SFM has been associated with the REDD+ Payment for Results Program signed with Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom and other cooperating countries, such as the USA and France, which has allowed progress through the Community Forestry Program in implementing forest management actions in territories with a high threat of deforestation. While it is true that the UNFF has become a space to discuss and align the purposes of sustainable development related to forests at a global level, the implementation of conservation, restoration and deforestation reduction actions has been materialized through the commitments defined in the UNFCCC, CBD, the International Tropical Timber Agreement, among others, and through the support of international cooperation.</p>
El Salvador	<p>El Salvador has public institutions to manage forests. The MARN is in charge of protection, conservation, preservation and other related aspects, and the MAG is in charge of SFM, which integrates the timber industry and other aspects of the productive forest chain, distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) administers the Forestry Law, with the objective of attending to the increase, management and sustainable use of forest resources for productive purposes. Protected natural areas and salt forests are excluded. • The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) is responsible for the administration of the Environmental Law, and is in charge of the protection, conservation and recovery of the environment, integrating fragile areas, which include the following: environmentally degraded coastal-marine zone, protected wild areas and buffer zones, aquifer recharge zones and slopes of more than thirty degrees without vegetation cover or conservation measures, and others that have been decreed as such by law.
Forest Europe ORG	<p>UNFF and its Members made in our view considerable progress towards the implementation of sustainable management of their various forests. This positive trend could be underpinned for the pan-European region by the results of the report "State on Europe's forests" (2020) where the forests are getting older, more diverse with more biodiversity (e.g., deadwood). However, the climate change effects might endanger this positive trend.</p>
Guatemala	<p>Guatemala has implemented forest incentive programs, control and surveillance systems, a restoration strategy, REDD+ strategy, agreements to reduce illegal logging, aligned with international commitments such as the Paris Agreement (NDC).</p>
ITTO	<p>ITTO can only speak on behalf of its own members which make up a subset of UNFF members (while accounting for 80% of tropical forest area and over 90% of global tropical forest products trade). ITTO members continue to progress towards SFM in tropical forests. The most recent comprehensive assessment showed almost all countries with a rigorous process for approving and monitoring forest management plans in place. Conservative estimates still place the area of tropical forests in ITTO member countries under SFM at less around 20% of the total forest area in these countries so there is still plenty of work to be done.</p>
IUFRO	<p>IUFRO is not in a position to answer this question as it would require thorough scientific analysis. See answer for question b.</p>
Jamaica	<p>Progress is detailed in UNFF reports which show progress of member states.</p>
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good progress has been made which include - Development of the United Nations strategic plan of Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF) which has been instrumental in establishing clear linkages between the various UN conventions, SDG and other instruments to sustainable management of forest by providing a common platform for their implementation through the targets for each of the six GFGs. • Development and dissemination of the Forest Instrument (FI) containing the GFGs. The FI was well disseminated and has been a good reference document. Before the development and adoption of the UNSPF, the FI played the positive role of guiding member countries in generating a clear focus on the goals for sustainable management of forests against which member countries could draw their goals and objectives in the development of national forest policy frameworks. • Declaration for implementation by member states the International Day of Forests 21st March every year. IDF in Kenya has been celebrated every year without break since 2012, save for 2019 when it was not possible due to the restrictions brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. The celebrations have been at the national level and sub national- in all the 47 counties with extremely high turnout by government, private sector, communities and other stakeholders. This has been very successful and a good platform for raising awareness on the importance of all types of forests. • Establishment of the CPF (CPF) an innovative interagency partnership on forests comprising 14 international organizations, institutions and secretariats that have substantial programmes on forests Kenya has benefited a lot from the activities of CPF particularly on technical support, development and implementation of forestry projects. Project level support has been delivered by GEF, FAO, CIFOR, UNFCCC, UNCCD, and CBD among others and this has created national capacity for sustainable management of forests at the level of government and

	among communities.
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several member states have continuously submitted voluntary national reports through which actions towards achieving SFM & GFGs are assessed. • The forum discussed impacts, challenges faced, and recovery strategies for coping with the disruptions attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic on the forest sector as an emerging issue. • Countries recognize the importance of forests in combating climate change (as a carbon dioxide sink) and emphasize the need for further actions adapted to local circumstances. • Various organizations have incorporated the strategic plan, GFGs and targets within their work plans and have combined this with awareness and capacity building initiatives.
Malaysia	<p>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 2 enhancing rural livelihoods by empowering communities and recognizing 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).</p>
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UNFF has assisted countries in mobilizing resources for implementing SFM • It has provided capacity building to member states on development of National Action Plans • Financing Clearing House/Mechanism has been developed for members to get information on financing opportunities • The forum has assisted countries on reporting on GFGs which touch on all aspects of SFM • Most member states have been implementing the UNFI e.g. landscape restoration activities
Mexico	<p>Information presented in FAO's most recent Global Forest Resources Assessment shows a gradual reduction in the rate of deforestation from 1990 to 2020, the date of the latest report; however, the rate of loss remains high (around 10 million hectares annually). On the other hand, this report indicates that the area of forests with management programs increased significantly to reach 2.05 billion hectares in 2020. In this sense, subject to the results of the FRA 2025, it would be foreseeable to observe a decrease in the rate of forest loss and an increase in the area of forests with management plans, although not enough to meet the targets established in the UNSPF. Thus, the effort and interest of the UNFF to advance the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests is recognized; however, given its non-binding nature, it is not considered that the progress that would be desirable has been achieved. Furthermore, it is recognized that the effective implementation of SFM depends on the contributions of all relevant stakeholders.</p>
Nigeria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening of policy and legal framework including operationalization of the National Forest Policy, the revised Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) Act, the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) Act, and National Strategy to Combat Wildlife and Forest Crime, Development of Timber Legality Standards for effective control and regulation of trade in timber and allied products, and on-going efforts towards the development of National Forestry Act. Increased support and collaborative partnership with local and international government and non-government organizations on forest governance, trade, community livelihood and public education and awareness creation. Establishment and operationalization of Natural Forest Trust Fund for increased funding of the forestry sector. The Trust Fund has so far assisted in bridging funding gaps which has contributed to forest cover increase, provision of alternative livelihoods and reduced community dependence on forests.
Panama	<p>The Ministry of the Environment, through the National Forestry Directorate and the Regional Units, is the guarantor of compliance with legal regulations on the management of private or community forests under concession through</p>

	<p>the approval of Management Plans, Reforestation Plans, Annual Operating Plans, and citizen consultation. This forest management is based on Law No. 1 of February 3, 1994.</p> <p>Regarding mangrove forests: decrees and laws for their protection, such as the ARAP Resolution No. 1 of January 29, 2008, conservation for this purpose Resolution No. 58 of July 22, 2009 and use for tourism purposes, the latter regulated by Law No. 2 of January 7, 2006.</p> <p>Aware of the problems at the national level and the pressure that exists on mangrove forests, the Ministry of Environment has established the national wetlands policy, in the medium and long term with well-defined goals, aligned with the fulfillment of the SDGs. Based on this commitment, Executive Decree No. 127 of December 18, 2018 was established, where the National Policy of Wetlands of the State in the Republic of Panama is established.</p> <p>Nowadays, the National Forestry Directorate, through FIDEICOMISO funds, is currently implementing the project "Equipping the Regional Offices to Combat Illegal Logging and Protect Biodiversity", with a national scope of action for institutional strengthening. Along the same lines, it is working on the Manglares de Chame project together with the local civil community, which is joining forces to raise awareness and recover the mangrove forests. The National Forest Restoration Program is also being implemented with the objective of restoring the country's forests, achieving to date a 3% increase in the country's forest cover, which means more than 200,000 hectares.</p>
Peru	<p>Despite progress and actions under the UNSPF 2017-2030, given the impacts of COVID-19 and the slowdown in member country economies, the scale and speed to generate the transformation to SFM to mitigate and adapt to climate change by 2030 and achieve GFGs is still limited. However, strategies, plans and programs for the restoration of forests and forest ecosystems, the development of deforestation-free global commodity value chains, traceability of the legal origin of timber and monitoring, among other means and efforts by countries to curb deforestation are important, but still insufficient.</p>
Philippines	<p>The Philippines continuously promotes SFM and implement considerable efforts in achieving the six (6) shared Global Goals on Forests by rehabilitating unproductive, denuded, and degraded forestlands through the implementation of the country's Enhanced National Greening Program, Intensified Forest Protection Program, and existing projects, programs, and initiatives. The country pursues SFM through the following key strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Placing all forestlands under SFM to meet demands for forest goods and ecosystem services; 2. Collaborative partnership with stakeholders to sustainably manage watersheds; 3. Strengthening the resilience of forest-dependent communities to climate change hazards; 4. Enhancing decision-making through improved systems on information management and monitoring and evaluation; and 5. Placing forestlands under an appropriate management arrangement. <p>To ensure that forests and forestlands are sustainably managed, the Philippine government, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR), issues forest tenurial instruments to place forestlands under appropriate management arrangements. As of 2022, a total of 3,684 tenure instruments/permits are issued to put around 2.4 million hectares under management arrangement in the Philippines.</p> <p>Since 2011, the country has been implementing the Expanded National Greening Program (eNGP) and was able to rehabilitate 2.18 million hectares of degraded forestlands with a total of 1.83 billion seedlings planted nationwide. The eNGP along with other existing projects and initiatives has contributed to the approximately 5.65% increase in the Philippine Forest Cover in 2020.</p>
Switzerland	<p>It was interesting to have the reports on the impact on SFM of the COVID pandemic as we all had to reflect how to do a better job by signaling some issues we might not have seen before. The collective inputs from the countries into a document and through a seminar were a progress in our way of working together. It showed that under a common threat we could provide information and have a fruitful discussion about it. For example, the need for digitalization for forests data came out as a very positive outcome of the crisis.</p>
Thailand	<p>Thailand has implemented many schemes to ensure the SFM and multiple benefits. Recognition of the multiple roles of forest beyond timber production such as biodiversity conservation, water regulation, recreation, land conservation, ecotourism, etc. have been nationwide spreading into all responsible government bodies and civil groups. Moreover, timber certification program has also been implemented in align with law enforcement conduction. All initiatives will follow the guidance from 20-Year National Strategic Plan (2018-2037).</p>
USA	<p>We commend the UNFF for its efforts to be a visible player in the forest sector and value the intergovernmental GFGs and 26 associated targets, the GFG Report 2021, International Day of Forests, and Phase I of the GFFFN Clearing House are good examples of the Forum's and Member States' progress toward.</p>

Note: New Zealand and Romania Did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

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

ACTO	<p>Having as a framework the UNSPF 2017-2030, facilitates cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels by promoting Member States to align their strategic actions in issues related to forests with this framework and by recognizing in different spaces the importance of the Plan.</p> <p>In addition, the Forum has developed measures to make better use of the annual sessions of the Forum and to involve members in activities such as pre-meetings or workshops held by the Forum between sessions to promote the achievement of GFGs.</p> <p>Forum sessions are now annual with a new Forum format, with odd-numbered years sessions focusing on implementation discussions, technical advice and experience sharing, while even-numbered years sessions focusing on policy, dialogue, development and decision-making.</p> <p>As far as ACTO is concerned, it promotes regional cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on issues related to forests among the Amazonian countries.</p>
Canada	There is growing awareness of the need to cooperate and coordinate at across levels but progress is painfully slow, despite many years of calling for landscape approaches.
China	Some progress has been made in this regard; however, due to the limitation of UNFF's mandate, the role of coordination and consistency was not fully played and needs to be strengthened.
Colombia	<p>Despite the progress identified, there are still gaps in terms of consolidating coordination, coherence and synergy between international agreements and conventions on forest-related issues.</p> <p>As mentioned above, the processes associated with the contribution or role of forests in climate change mitigation, specifically through REDD+, have taken on enormous force and have had an impact on SFM. This circumstance can also be seen at the global level.</p>
El Salvador	<p>The 2002 Forestry Law encourages the participation of all social, environmental and economic stakeholders related to SFM through the Forestry Commission of El Salvador, which promotes sustainable forest development and harmonizes and integrates political, legal and institutional frameworks, linking financial and technological aspects integrated into production chains as development strategies.</p> <p>El Salvador's Forestry Policy 2016-2036 integrates aspects related to strengthening the organizational and management capacities of the private sector and civil society to achieve participatory and democratic forest management.</p>
Guatemala	<p>Internally, INAB has agreements with strategic allies in the forest sector, both governmental and non-governmental organizations.</p> <p>Internationally, participation in forums, ILO, convention, UNFF, coordination and cooperation of climate finance for the forestry sector, among others.</p>
Forest Europe ORG	FOREST EUROPE has increased for the pan-European region its cooperation with various partners for example with FAO, UNECE and many observer organizations such as the certification systems FSC and PEFC. We have no information is this is also true for other regions.
ITTO	Not clear. There is still a significant amount of incoherence in international forest policy and while the ITTO aims to promote coherence amongst its members at the national, regional and international level, also through the CPF members through Joint Initiatives with select partners, much work remains to be done.
IUFRO	<p>The Global Forest Expert Panels (GFEP) assessment report on "Embracing complexity: Meeting the challenges of international forest governance"¹, published in 2010, noted the fragmented nature of international forest governance and the need for the new or adapted institutional arrangements to strengthen and coordinate forest policy learning at the global level and to support engagement and problem-solving among diverse stakeholders.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the outcomes of the assessment were not adequately taken into account in the development of the IAF beyond 2015, thus most of the findings are still relevant. IUFRO is starting an update study of the 2010 assessment on international forest governance. The study can provide contributions to IAF mid-term review and questions A-1.</p> <p>Subsequent assessments carried out in the frame of the GFEP programme note the continued proliferation of global commitments and initiatives and lack of coordination and collaboration across scales and actors (see e.g. the most recent global report and associated policy brief on "Forests, Climate, Biodiversity and People: Assessing a Decade of REDD+").</p>
Jamaica	Annual UNFF forums, Expert and Collaborative partnership meetings allow/provide access to member countries for enhanced corporation.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting Discussions of forestry related matters at all UN international fora and or conventions. Kenya has been an active member of the Forum participating in both the intersessional activities and in the sessions of the Forum and in the other processes of the UN particularly UNCCD, UNFCCC, UNCBD, COFO, FAO's regional Forestry and Wildlife Commission meetings. Kenya has also been submitting relevant voluntary national reports and taking up roles where appropriate during meetings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination and or Circulation to member states of relevant information on forestry related matters. Kenya has regularly submitted her reports to UNFF, FAO, UNFCCC and UNCBD among others making it easy for member states to access such information once uploaded in the relevant websites. Forest related information on Kenya is also posted to the websites of key government ministries and those of specialized forest agencies including the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Forestry Research Institute, National Environment Management Authority among others. A lot of information is also routinely shared in social media outlets for these entities and in the form of publications in scientific platforms (such as research gate; google scholar). • Promoting voluntary reporting from member states for experience sharing. • Kenya is active in submitting voluntary national reports to UNFF, FAO, UNFCCC, UNCCD, and UNCBD.
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members have committed to participation in global policy discussions and awareness-raising programmes regarding forests. • Member states have called for the recognition in national and international policies of the potential contribution of forests to inclusive and sustainable economic growth for example through forest bio-economy. • UNFF and members have reiterated the need to enhance synergies at the national level in approaches to achieve internationally agreed goals together with complementarities across voluntary national contributions, nationally determined contributions, and land degradation neutrality targets. • The forum has embraced collaboration with other United Nations international days and international decades, and cultural events on topics relevant to forestry. These are viewed as opportunities for coordinated communication and outreach.
Malaysia	<p>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), FAO and The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). Besides that, private sectors, 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).</p>
Malawi	<p>The Forum has encouraged coordination and cooperation with and among member states and other forest related agencies such as UNCCD, UNFCCC, AFF, IUCN, FAO etc.</p>
Mexico	<p>A major component of the IAF has been the CPF (CPF), whose main functions include improving coherence, cooperation and coordination of policies and programs at all levels. Its joint initiatives with other organizations on various issues and achievements to date are recognized. While it is felt that in recent years there is better coordination to promote synergies between different forest-related collaborative mechanisms, further efforts are needed to improve it, to move towards a low-carbon economy, by promoting appropriate mechanisms to promote effective and co-responsible participation, ensuring access to environmental justice, and promoting environmental education and culture.</p>
Nigeria	<p>As mentioned above, there has been increased support, collaborative partnership, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues as evidential in the willingness and participation of private sector and NGOs in forest-related activities while more than ever before, the country has witnessed involvement of government and non-government stakeholders including agencies in charge of anti-corruption, investigation, intelligence, and prosecution in the fight against forest and wildlife crime. This is being enhanced by the National Strategy with well spelt out institutional arrangements detailing roles and responsibilities. Besides, there have also been increased synergies with sub-regional, regional and international organizations in the area of information sharing, forest ecosystem restoration and management, biodiversity conservation, and equitable resource use.</p>
Panama	<p>Broadleaf forests constitute the forest cover of the Republic of Panama, which is represented by 12 life zones according to Holdridge's classification.</p> <p>Most of the altitudinal forests, Talamanca montane forests, cloud forests, mangrove forests and very humid tropical forests are within national protected areas.</p> <p>The pressure exerted by different productive actors in the country on natural resources, with emphasis on forests, has led us to take transcendental decisions, such as the suspension of logging permits throughout the country, the creation of a specialized multidisciplinary environmental team (part of the environmental police), in close communication with the environmental prosecutor's office to deal with organized crime.</p> <p>It is vital and important the performance and close communication of the various actors such as our ethnic communities or native peoples who live and interact with the forests every day, for which the ministry created the office of indigenous affairs, led by staff of the native peoples, so that in this way a greater synergy and joint work is created in the same language.</p> <p>The Ministry of the Environment has the most experience in forest management in the province of Darien, both private and community-based, where the Embera people live.</p>

Philippines	The UNFF provides a platform for Member States, development partners, and other stakeholders to engage in policy dialogues, high-level discussions, and collaborations in addressing concerns and issues relative with all types of forests. The annual meetings of the UNFF have contributed in strengthening collective action of its Member States to achieve SFM with the participation and assistance of relevant international organizations and bodies such as the CPF (CPF).
Switzerland	There are still initiatives that do not take UNFF into account /or use it as a platform. The CPF is very important to this end for coherence but it seems challenging to get support from members (i.e. Member States) of these organizations (that are actually the same countries as under UNFF). There is still a great lack of coordination at capital level.
Thailand	Legality and good governance are promoted to improve forest governance through all levels of collaboration and coordination for both national and international levels. For example, increase cross-border collaboration and information-sharing with neighboring countries; provide forest users with adequate access to information to ensure transparency and governance. Furthermore, international cooperation has been strengthened by following the commitment on global governance initiatives such as UNSPF 2017-2030, New York Declaration on Forest, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Glasgow Declaration on Forests and Land use, etc. Indeed, achieving those global objectives will be a priority for Thailand's global cooperation.
USA	The creation and continued relevance of the CPF (CPF), its Joint Initiatives, global meetings, and communication and outreach work through Communicators Network and the Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award are significant achievements in enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels.

Note: Australia, Peru, New Zealand and Romania did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

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

ACTO	The restructuring of sessions allows for better use of intersessional work to maximize the impact and relevance of its work, including by promoting an exchange of experiences and lessons learned among countries, regional, subregional and regional partners. Non-governmental organizations and the CPF. The space that the Forum facilitates promotes a dialogue between the different participants that strengthens the rapprochement for the eventual development of cooperation actions. ACTO, for its part, with a broad vision of the South-South Cooperation process, works in turn in different dimensions: political-diplomatic, strategic and technical, building synergies between governments, multilateral organizations, cooperation agencies, organized civil society, movements social, scientific community, productive sectors and society as a whole, within the framework of the implementation of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty. On the subject of forests, specific actions can be seen in this framework in the answer to Question F-1 of this same document.
Canada	Cross sectoral cooperation has been slow. Agriculture sector in some countries is unwilling to accept the sector as the leading cause of deforestation. More is needed to halt deforestation and the UNFF and UNFFS should be playing a stronger role in this effort.
China	It has played a certain role in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation. Further efforts are needed to promote North-South cooperation, public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels, which have not yet generated tangible results so far.
Colombia	The processes that Colombia has advanced or participated in in terms of North-South, South-South or triangular cooperation in relation to forests have not been within the framework of initiatives promoted by the UNFF. For this reason, the available information has not identified any progress made by the UNFF.
El Salvador	Initiatives are being promoted to strengthen these opportunities.
Guatemala	South - South cooperation projects consult to cooperation, projects in forest fire management and implementation of SFM. I. Technical Training for the Institutional Strengthening of INAB, In Forest Fire Prevention with Brazil. II. Knowledge Exchange for the Control and Monitoring of the Forest Resources Management Production Chain.
Forest Europe ORG	The cooperation with public-private partnerships has not been in the focus of the FOREST EUROPE process. Instead, we concentrate our efforts on cross-sectoral cooperation. For various work streams of the FOREST EUROPE process, we have enlarged our cooperation with partners e.g., in Africa for the topic on forest education. Also, at the World Forest Congress in the Republic of Korea, we have cooperation for the Criteria and Indicator work with the Montreal Process and others.
ITTO	UNFF and others (FAO, ITTO, etc.) continue to promote and strengthen such cooperation.

IUFRO	IUFRO is not in a position to answer this question as it would require thorough scientific analysis. See answer for question b.
Jamaica	Annual UNFF forums, Expert and Collaborative partnership meetings allow/provide access to member countries for enhanced corporation.
Kenya	Through capacity building, forest education, and technological transfer
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular formal discussions have been held between member states, organizations, major groups, and other stakeholders at intersessional events thereby yielding multi stakeholder inputs into resolutions. There has been vivid participation in the reporting cycles through voluntary national contributions by member states to identify avenues for collaborative actions towards achievement of GFGs. UNFF has provided inputs into frameworks/ work plans of various member organizations for example through written submissions and participation in thematic and working group meetings. International, regional, subregional and national organizations have made commitments to support the work of stakeholders such as major groups and committed to financing initiatives such as the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network.
Malaysia	<p>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 treeplanting 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. 3 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.</p>
Mexico	It is considered that the UNFF, mainly through the organizations that make up the CPF, has facilitated cooperation, through its different schemes, and intersectoral cooperation, mainly at the international level. However, it would be suggested that there should be more rapprochement with the countries to provide more support and promote greater cooperation at all levels. It would be of interest to promote direct exchanges at the community level, with local and indigenous communities being the main participants and beneficiaries of the cooperation actions organized by the UNFF and the organizations that make up the CPF.
Nigeria	Appreciable progress has been recorded in the area of forestry development and innovations, experience and information sharing, and capacity building. Most of the development agenda of the National Government such as SDGs are being driven partly by public-private partnership while cross-sectoral issues affecting SFM are being addressed through promotion of cross-sectoral engagements.

<p>Panama</p>	<p>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented and launched the National Cooperation Plan of the Republic of Panama (PNC). It is made up of elements of strategies, operations and instruments, aimed at maximizing the results of cooperation, and to guide the development of multi-year action plans. It is of utmost importance to achieve the SDGs by 2030.</p> <p>In regional matters, the Ministry of Environment took the initiative to promote university scholarships with the help of the Institute for the Training and Development of Human Resources (IFARHU), where ten (10) young people from the Emberá, Wounaan and Guna ethnic groups received scholarships to study forestry engineering at the National University of Forestry Sciences (UNACIFOR) in the Republic of Honduras, for the period 2021 to 2024. These young people come from the areas with the richest forests in the country and the greatest biodiversity of species.</p> <p>This commitment was re-emphasized with twenty (20) more scholarships for young people from the Ngäbe Buglé, Naso Tjër Di and Bribri ethnic groups, for the period 2022 to 2025, at UNACIFOR. The mission of these beneficiaries will be to protect the eastern and western wealth of the country, working to reforest deforested areas and regenerate areas altered by human activity.</p> <p>By Law No. 125 of February 4, 2020, the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) was approved by the Republic of Panama. The Escazú Agreement aims to guarantee the full and effective implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making processes and access to justice in environmental matters, and the creation and strengthening of capacities and cooperation, contributing to the protection of the right of each person, of present and future generations, to live in a healthy environment and to sustainable development. It is the only binding agreement emanating from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the first regional environmental agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the first in the world to contain specific provisions on human rights defenders in environmental matters.</p> <p>In February of this year, the German ambassador in Panama Martina Klumpp, held a meeting with the former deputy minister and national directors of MIAMBIENTE, to strengthen the cooperation issues of this European country in the Central American region and especially Panama, in turn, know firsthand the plans, policies and programs being developed in the country. In this context, Dr. Ligia Castro (Director of Climate Change) presented the degree of progress in the operation of Panama's national carbon market, in compliance with Executive Decree No. 142 of December 9, 2021.</p> <p>In terms of triangular cooperation, Germany, through the GIZ, promoted cooperation with Nicaragua, Mexico and Panama to support the development of economic sustainability alternatives in priority areas of the Mesoamerican biological corridor for the period 2014-2016. In summary, there is greater interaction and cooperation at the regional level than from North-South and South-South to Panama on forest issues.</p>
<p>Philippines</p>	<p>In 2019, the Philippines, through the DENR, issued DENR Administrative Order No. 2019-22 which adopted the Forestry Investment Roadmap (FIRM) outlining plans and proposal, in line with the Country's Master Plan for Climate Resilient Forestry Development, intended to attract new investments and to strengthen public-private partnerships. The FIRM is the country's blueprint to encourage private sector investments in forestry. It provides an avenue to hasten the country's progress, and socio-economic development through the optimization and wise use of forest lands under the purview of SFM. It aims to revitalize forestry investments through local and foreign direct investments in an environmentally sound, economically viable and socially-responsible manner towards inclusive growth and sustainable development. It will also prescribe guidelines on how industrial-level partnerships can be strengthened to transform the production forests into a significant contributor to the national economy. DENR continues to cultivate its positive and complementary partnerships with Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations both locally and internationally. These partnerships resulted in significant alliances, joint, and collaborative efforts in pursuing and advancing different forestry and environmental initiatives. They also resulted in stronger institutional arrangements including financing for the implementation forestry-related projects.</p> <p>In 2019, the DENR and the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) executed a Memorandum of Agreement which established the Agroforestry Plantation Program (APP) which ushered the provision of credit facility for tenure holders in forestlands. The loan to be provided by the Bank shall be used for the development, expansion, harvesting, processing, maintenance and protection of industrial forest-based plantations in qualified private and public lands.</p> <p>Moreover, in 2021, a Memorandum of Agreement between the DENR and the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) was also executed to develop the LBP-DENR Forestry Financing Program which aims to hasten economic development, promote environmental stability, and enhance climate change mitigation and adaptation, and foster ease of doing business. In line with the commitment to boost the Philippine wood-based industry, LBP commits to provide credit assistance for the development, maintenance, protection and expansion of existing tree plantations. The DENR and LBP are currently developing the implementing rules and regulations for the LBP-DENR Forestry Financing Program.</p>

	Recently this year (February 2022), DENR executed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) to extend innovative and client-responsive insurance packages to People's Organizations/ Indigenous People's Organizations, Cooperatives, Individual, and Corporations and to ensure the welfare of insured plantation holders/farmers and help stabilize production and income in the event of after loss or mortality of trees from natural calamities and other perils.
Switzerland	There is still much to do to attract the private sector into the work of the IAF.
Thailand	Thailand has supported many country-led capacity development programs for neighboring countries within the region and other parts of the world. Best practices in Thailand which are considered to appropriate to those southern countries are introduced and shared. Furthermore, Thailand commits to support the design and implementation of country-led capacity development plans to scale-up the effectiveness of South-South and Triangular programs and initiatives. The supports through the adaptation of experiences sharing and lessons learned, and the involvement of Southern academia will be key for the success of these programs.
USA	UNFF is not an implementation body but can promote information-sharing and networking in support of cooperation. UNFF is an opportunity to highlight cooperative efforts such as the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use. The GFFFN is also facilitating cooperation on forest financing and governance. Public-private partnerships are crucial, such as the Bezos Earth Fund, but further progress on private sector cooperation is an important goal of the Forum. An example of cross-sectoral cooperation is the examination by CPF members of commodity-driven deforestation.

Note: Australia, Malawi, New Zealand, Peru and Romania did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

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

ACTO	<p>Through the Global Network for the Facilitation of Forest Financing, the formulation of national forest financing strategies aimed at mobilizing resources for SFM has been promoted in several countries, especially in Asia and Africa; thereby helping countries to mobilize and improve the effective use of and access to existing financial resources from all sources for SFM. For the development of a financing strategy, national forest plans are required, which implies an effort for the Member States to improve their forest governance instruments.</p> <p>Likewise, tools have been provided for the exchange of information and databases on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities, and tools for sharing lessons learned and best practices from projects that have been successful.</p> <p>ACTO, following the global forest objectives, as an organization that favors spaces for regional dialogue on various issues of interest to its MPs, promotes the development of regional policy guidelines with a view to strengthening the capacity of forest governance in the region on issues as deforestation; degradation; forest fires; illegal extraction of timber and non-timber resources; and others. Currently, through the "Forest Program of the ACTO for the Basin and the Amazon Region" it seeks to promote the institutional interaction of the national authorities related to forestry.</p> <p>For the execution of the Program, it is supported by the existing national institutional structures that allow actions to be carried out at the regional level, generating a continuous interaction between the Member Countries for the discussion of local policies and strategies on forestry issues, designating by the countries the Points focal, ensuring governance.</p>
Canada	Need improvement
China	Global forest governance is an important part of global governance. The strengthening of the forest governance framework was not regarded as a priority area in the UNFF, with little valuable support and limited discussion on the subject. There is also much room for improvement in promoting the means of implementation, particularly in scientific research and financial support.
Colombia	<p>Colombia has made a strong commitment to the fight against deforestation, forest conservation and the restoration of degraded forest areas. These actions have been part of the government development plans for the periods 2010-2014, 2014-2018, 2018-2022 and in the period 2022-2026, measures aimed at strengthening forest governance are contemplated.</p> <p>It has also made progress in complying with the Warsaw REDD+ framework, such as formulating the National REDD+ Strategy, developing the forest and carbon monitoring system, developing the reference level of emissions due to deforestation, and structuring the national REDD+ safeguards system.</p> <p>Additionally, in terms of restoration, within the framework of the United Nations declarations on the decade of ecosystem restoration, 2021 - 2030, and the "World Economic Forum of Davos 2020: 50 years and a new manifesto for sustainability", Colombia committed and has been making progress in the planting of 153 million trees to</p>

	<p>contribute to the global effort to restore 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested forests by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030.</p> <p>In this way, the United Nations Instrument on Forests in Colombia has become a reference for forest-related measures; however, forest governance frameworks and means of implementation have been implemented as part of commitments assumed in legally binding instruments and through processes promoted by partners in other initiatives.</p>
El Salvador	El Salvador's Forestry Policy 2016-2036 includes the need to create articulated spaces that promote the participation of institutions, municipalities and communities in forest management tasks, in addition to creating a comprehensive, equitable and inclusive Forest Administration that guarantees effective forest management.
Guatemala	<p>Classification of land by capacity of use:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Practical guide for timber cubing II. Technical considerations and proposal for forest management standards III. CITES Identification Guide - Tropical Timber IV. Pinabete Regulations V. Mangrove Regulations VI. Forestry Company Control Regulations VII. Regulation for Family Consumption Forest Harvesting. VIII. Guide of good manufacturing practices in the forestry industry, among others.
Forest Europe ORG	This is one of the important topics of the FOREST EUROPE signatories to translate the commitments signed by Ministers by the Ministerial Conferences (last was 2021 in Bratislava) into national policy.
ITTO	Unclear how UNFF does this since it implies field level interventions, especially to strengthen implementation.
IUFRO	IUFRO is not in a position to answer this question as it would require thorough scientific analysis. See answer for question b.
Jamaica	Work to revise reporting template and support national reporting to forum.
Kenya	While developing policy documents e.g., National Forest program and strategic documents in the country substantive reference was made to the UNSPF and FI.
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous support through the GFFN for expanded funding sources and development of national financing strategies for SFM & achievement of GFGs. • Some members have made voluntary contributions to the Forum trust fund to support activities of the secretariat • The forum adopted a communication and outreach strategy for the strategic plan
Malaysia	<p>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. 4 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities on implementation of UNFI. • Development of National Action Plans. • Holding meetings with high profile people such as politicians to consider forestry as a priority.
Mexico	The fragmentation of global forest governance continues to be a major challenge. It is suggested to continue fostering synergies throughout the UN system to influence other sectors. It is also considered that UNFF could support the empowerment of local communities and indigenous groups so that they have clear and complete information to access fair benefit schemes for the protection and sustainable use of their forests.
Nigeria	Strengthening of policy and legal framework including operationalization of the National Forest Policy, the revised Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) Act, the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) Act, and National Strategy to Combat Wildlife and Forest Crime, Development of Timber Legality Standards for effective control and regulation of trade in timber and allied products, and on-going efforts towards the development of National Forestry Act which will give legal backing to the National Forest Policy. The Policy is anchored on thirty elements spread across the seven globally accepted elements for SFM and on increasing forest cover from the present 6% to 25% by 2030. The Act establishing FRIN was amended to strengthen its role in providing products and services to increase forest cover while the NAGGW Act provides for increasing forest cover in the drylands of the country, establishment of a Carbon Sink, implementing livelihood empowerment programmes and improving resilience to climate change.
Panama	<p>In terms of forest governance, impactful decisions have been made such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension of logging permits in the country. • Implementation of forest traceability. • The National Forest Restoration Program. • Implementation of the Monitoring and Restoration System (SMR). <p>Each of these elements described above helps us to control the process of forestry activities from the field to export, joining efforts for the recovery of degraded areas nationwide. In the legal framework, Panama created Law No. 69 of October 30, 2017, which creates an incentive program for forest cover and conservation of natural forests and dictates other provisions. The creation of this law obeys in protecting, recovering and conserving forest cover, in compliance with the country's CRC and the SDGs2030.</p>
Philippines	In line with the key element of the UNFI to enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the SDGs, in particular with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability, the Philippines successfully managed to implement several policy improvements with regards to the implementation of eNGP. In 2020, the country shifted to family implementation approach to support the Philippine government's objective to provide additional income to upland and rural families affected by the pandemic, and to focus on planting bamboo as priority commodity, as it plays important role in soil stabilization, air quality improvement, erosion control, and carbon sequestration.
Switzerland	The means of implementation have been reinforced through partners such as UNFCCC through the Glasgow conference for example. Nevertheless, the communication from the secretariat should be improved. The GFFFN should be visible when you open the UNFF page.
Thailand	Thailand has put forward to mobilize forest governance by evolving and engaging public and private actors at many levels to make and enforce decisions that are clear, transparent, just, and lead to the sustainability of forests and the fair distribution of the benefits derived from forest resource utilization. Meanwhile, forest governance and means of implementation also conducts to the amendment and reformation of institutional, policy and legal dimensions addressing both direct and indirect drivers of forest loss and degradation. Several of relevant policies, laws and regulations have been formulated and amended to ensure good governance applying to the forest sector of the country.

USA	<p>The UN Forest Instrument (UNFI) and the UNSPF have strengthened the commitment to achieving SFM through good governance at all levels. Examples include UNFI principle (2e), global objective 4, national policies and measures (6n), and international cooperation and means of implementation (7h), which addresses cooperation on illicit international trafficking in forest products through the promotion of forest law enforcement and good governance at all levels.</p> <p>In the UNSPF SFM is critically dependent upon good governance at all levels (15). An objective of the IAF (22e) is to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the UNFI, to achieve SFM. And GFG5 (5.2) focuses on forest law enforcement and governance through strengthening national and subnational forest authorities, and reducing illegal logging and associated trade.</p> <p>The GFFFN Clearinghouse Phase I and its online user-friendly video explanation showcase progress on means of implementation. The Forest Financing Quarterly Highlight summarizes well financing opportunities and recent achievements to help Members access existing financing from all sectors.</p>
<p>Note: Australia, New Zealand, Peru and Romania did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.</p>	
<p>e. Strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives?</p>	
ACTO	<p>Through the participation of the Member States and regional organizations in the Forum, the political interest for the achievement of the objectives of the IAF is reinforced. On the other hand, the continuity of the Forum has promoted the development of the Voluntary National Reports, and the Voluntary National Contributions. All this is a reflection of the commitment of the Member States and, in turn, a Source of information for the generation of Global Forest Resources Assessments.</p>
Canada	<p>There seems to be a groundswell of support for forests in the context of climate change and biodiversity, which is positive. Our sense is that this support coincides with the IAF but does not result from it. UNSPF and GFGs remain lesser known and UNSPF is not yet the guiding document on forests across the UN system.</p> <p>While there has been progress in addressing global forest issues since the development of the UNSPF and IAF renewal, it has not been enough keep pace with emerging crises such as deforestation, biodiversity loss and climate change. The result is that other initiatives have emerged to do just that. The recent efforts from the United Kingdom have resulted in leader level conversations on forests that should have been able to take place throughout the UNFF.</p> <p>Ministerial segments during policy sessions rarely attract Ministers. And, in the philanthropic world, there are many organizations poised to address both the challenges and opportunities that forests are facing but they've not been cultivated enough to join UNFF discussions (Bezos Foundation being the exception. That was excellent).</p>
China	<p>The non-legally binding nature of the United Nations Forests Instrument (UNFI) and the United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests determines the limitations of the status and role of IAF in achieving political commitments, which is reflected in the limited number of member countries submitting VNC and the need to strengthen the implementation of UNSPF.</p>
El Salvador	<p>Policy instruments have been designed for the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry Policy 2011 to 2030. • Forestry Strategy 2016 to 2036. • A process is currently underway to update the Forestry Law and create a Forestry Incentives Law.
Guatemala	<p>I. PROBOSQUE Law II. Forestry Law III. Protected Areas Law IV. Urban and Rural Development Councils Law V. Law Regulating the Registration, Authorization and Use of Chainsaws VI. PINPEP Law VII. Law for the Use and Trading of Chicle and for the Protection of Chicozapote Tree VIII. Law for the Protection and Improvement of the MARN Environment.</p>
Forest Europe ORG	<p>Within the FOREST EUROPE process we are currently discussing a long-term political commitment to support this process.</p>
ITTO	<p>Unclear on how these long-term political commitments are strengthened towards the achievements of the IAF. For example, the ITTO encourages political commitment amongst its membership but can this be said to contribute towards the achievements of the IAF objectives?</p>
IUFRO	<p>IUFRO is not in a position to answer this question as it would require thorough scientific analysis. See answer for question b.</p>
Jamaica	<p>Engagement of political leaders at HLPF.</p>

Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenya has in place a Ministry responsible for Environment and Forestry headed by a Cabinet Secretary which underscores the level of interest by Government in profiling the importance of forestry. • In all sessions of the UNFF Kenya, has always constituted national delegations led by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry with the coordination and participation by Kenya Permanent Mission to UN based in New York; • Kenya has also developed the requisite policies and legislations for forest management which are processed at the technical level by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry / Kenya Forest Service and other relevant stakeholders, the executive arm of Government and Parliament. • The Ministry of Environment and Forestry /Kenya Forest Service regularly engages Parliament on matters of forest conservation and management and the working relationships have been good and very productive. • Organization of high-level round table discussion of key forest related subjects during meetings of member states.
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forum adopted the United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests, a global framework that supports SFM and aims to enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. • Adoption of and support for the implementation of international forest-related commitments like the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use Seoul Forest declaration by delegations from members of the forum.
Malaysia	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil palm planted area will be limited to 6.5 million ha nationwide; • No new plantations allowed on peat soil; • No conversion of permanent protected forests for oil palm plantations, or for any other agricultural activity; and • Official maps showing oil palm planted area will be made public <p>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.</p>
Malawi	The Forum holds High Level Political Forum every year which includes ministers of Forestry, Environment, and Natural Resources etc.
Mexico	Given that much depends on the political will of the countries, it is not considered that as much progress has been made as would be desirable.

Nigeria	Our major approach in strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives includes involvement of top-level decision and policy makers and influencers across the national and sub-national levels of governance. It also includes Institutionalization of forestry programmes, plans and long-term initiatives through appropriate legislation and process documentation.
Panama	<p>In this context, MiAmbiente, through the national forestry department, continues to monitor and strengthen the commitments acquired at the regional and international levels.</p> <p>Within the framework of our responsibilities, we have the National Forest Restoration Program, in agreement with more investment programs through the FIDEICOMISO, of which we can mention that nine (09) projects are being executed with nationwide work action.</p> <p>I would like to list our projects such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction and habilitation of 2 control posts in the municipality of Chame and updating of the management and sanitation plan for the protected area. 2. Strengthening of the alliance for the million hectares. 3. Survey of INFC plots. 4. Combat illegal logging and protect biodiversity. 5. Increased capacity for the management of non-timber products of Tagua and Chunga in the Darien. 6. Establishment of semi-permanent nurseries in 45 villages in the country. 7. Conservation of mangroves in Chame Bay. 8. Preparation for the national REDD strategy. 9. Identification of forest vocation lands. <p>These projects meet direct SDGs such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Quality education 5. Gender equality 6. Clean water and sanitation 8. Decent work and economic growth 10. Reduction of inequalities 13. Climate action 15. Lives of terrestrial ecosystems <p>In turn with indirect SDGs such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End poverty 2. Zero hunger 5. Gender equality 6. Clean water and sanitation 10. Reduction of inequalities 12. Responsible production and consumption 14. Underwater life 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
Peru	The growing recognition by the UNFF of the forest-related commitments and contributions of the "Glasgow Declaration on Forests and Land Use" at COP26 and the adoption of the Seoul Forestry Declaration at the 15th World Forestry Congress, gives UNFF support to countries and their national development programs for the implementation of policies to defend forests and combat deforestation, and forest and ecosystem restoration actions.
Philippines	<p>In terms of strengthening long-term political commitment to the achievement of IAF objectives, the UNFF continues to monitor and assess progress made in other forest-related multilateral fora and agreements, such as the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, and the Alliance for the Conservation of Rainforests. During the 17th Session of the UNFF (UNFF17) a High-Level Roundtable, these multilateral developments related to forests were discussed.</p> <p>The Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use (Glasgow Declaration) is a commitment supported by 145 countries to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation while, the Alliance for the Conservation of Rainforests (Alliance), with 32 members, embodies the shared goal of governments and civil society members to reinforce synergies and systems in place to combat deforestation. The Philippines is one of the countries who supported the Glasgow Declaration and the Alliance.</p> <p>Moreover, the Philippines also push for the enactment of the SFM Bill and the Final Forest Limits Bill to strengthen. The SFM Bill will update the existing Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines or Presidential Decree No. 705, series of 1975. SFM Bill aims to institutionalize the development of an effective and SFM strategy and highlights sustainability, ecological integrity and participatory development. The Final Forest Limits Bill will define the specific forest limits in the country which shall enhance the development, administration and protection of forestlands. Defining the specific limits of forestlands is one way of mitigating the occurrences of forest degradation caused by unlawful occupancy, unlawful and illegal titling, land use conversion and illegal logging.</p> <p>Further, in support of the IAF objective, the Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is currently implementing a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-supported Project entitled "Integrated Approach in the Management of Major Biodiversity Corridors in the Philippines." Part of its outcomes is to implement a sustainable use and management systems for land and forest resources that are compatible with integrated ecosystem.</p>
Romania	Appropriate progress was registered on the implementation of the objectives of the IAF as a result of the activities carried out.
Thailand	<p>Achievement of the IAF objective implementation in Thailand could not be claimed in general. However, based on the endeavor and supports from all agencies in forestry sector, the following of some successes have been achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of stakeholders in forestry sector to recognize IAF and related activities has increased

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National consultation platforms related to IAF have established • Stronger stakeholders' involvement in the policy process has more evidence • Awareness raised and information shared through communication on best practices and forest policy issues have clearly seen • Forest policy, laws, and regulations have been revised or newly formulated
USA	The GFGs strengthen political commitment to the achievement of the IAF objectives and should influence other UN and forest-related agenda and regional bodies. Although not a substitute for the commitment of Member States, the CPF raises the political commitment of the IAF objectives by enhancing communication across distinct fora. UNFF strengthens commitment by providing a platform to bring all relevant bodies together to form a voice on forest policy issues.
Note: Australia, Colombia, New Zealand, and Switzerland did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.	

QUESTION A-2: COULD YOU LIST THE OBJECTIVES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED, AND HOW CAN THIS BE IMPROVED?

ACTO	<p>Objective (i): Despite the work carried out since 2007 with the creation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests, the persistence in many regions of the world of deforestation and forest degradation is a cause for concern. It is expected that with the strengthening of the International Agreement on Forests, the rates of forest loss can be slowed down, and actions aimed at SFM aimed at promoting regional, national and local development and contributing to the livelihoods of local populations.</p> <p>Objective (ii): The objectives of the International Agreement on Forests were updated after 2015 and additionally in 2017 the UNSPF 2017-2030 was adopted.</p> <p>Objective (iii): New ways to encourage Forum members to submit more voluntary national reports and announcements of voluntary national contributions should be identified, and ways to encourage higher voluntary national contributions from Forum members and promote their effectiveness.</p> <p>In view of the high turnover in governments, it would be important to develop easily accessible and understandable instructional material on the importance of the Forum and the ways in which Member States and organizations can act and take advantage of this space.</p> <p>Objective (iv): This global platform still needs to be strengthened so that it is coherent, open, transparent and participatory for policy formulation, dialogue, cooperation and coordination on issues related to all types of forests, including emerging issues, in an integrated and holistically, including through intersectoral approaches, as set out in the Forum's objectives.</p> <p>Despite the advances, it is important that greater joint work begins to be strengthened with the different regional organizations of which the countries are members to align and catalyze the development of activities of common interest, and the exchange of experiences and reduce duplication of efforts. Working with these organizations can support and complement national forest management in the face of needs that cannot be met individually by the countries and require regional cooperation.</p> <p>Objective (v): Specific actions are needed to support the countries according to their needs and priorities.</p>
Australia	<p>Noting the significant progress already made towards the implementation of SFM principles globally, we also highlight that SFM is a dynamic and evolving concept, and requires continual adaptation to find the most effective pathways to continue to promote and uphold its principles.</p> <p>This requires the continual assessment of major issues affecting forests, and a need to ensure robust global policy discussions on these key issues, as they arise. We strongly encourage the UNFF to take a leading role in tackling the significant policy questions, to ensure the organization remains relevant and responsive, in the face of competing international initiatives and forums. We think that this approach would help to promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, and strengthen forest governance frameworks.</p> <p>In regard to the IAF objectives to foster cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies at all levels, we encourage that existing platforms for collaboration are better utilised to enhance engagement and cooperation – this includes making better use of forum sessions by ensuring adequate timing and scheduling for significant discussions (including fulsome engagement with panels).</p> <p>Greater cooperation and contribution of all types of forests and trees data is an important objective of the IAF. Specifically, furthering progress on SFM. We believe there is room for improvement, particularly by encouraging more frequent and widespread C&I framework reporting that feeds in global reports and dialogue, and greater analysis into identified trends, which can both help guide the next steps on implementation of the UNSPF.</p> <p>Further, we encourage the inclusion of SFM success stories in voluntary national reporting that include identifying specific reasons for successes, which can greatly assist policy makers grappling with similar issues. We consider that this could catalyze more national reporting in future cycles and serve as a basis for greater interest and utilization of GFG reports.</p>

Canada	The UNFFS has been through a period of upheaval and, while things have stabilized, this is the time for bold leadership. Moving forward we recommend standing joint Bureau meetings between the Bureaus of the UNFF and COFO, and periodically the UNECE, as a starting point to better harmonize efforts.
China	Progress has been made on all objectives, but they have not been fully achieved. See the answers above for specific suggestions for improvement.
Colombia	Based on the information available, it is considered that the objectives that have made the least progress are: (iii) Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels; (iv) Promote international cooperation, including North-South and South-South and triangular cooperation, and public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels; (v) Support efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, to achieve SFM; In relation to the above, to improve implementation, it is suggested to strengthen coordination mechanisms and detailed work agendas between the UNFF Action Plan and the Biodiversity, Climate, CITES and Desertification agreements or conventions, and the International Tropical Timber Agreement, and also with Bilateral Cooperation initiatives that have an agenda on SFM.
El Salvador	Improve public policy that integrates all stakeholders, including small landowners and tenants, whose main objective is agricultural production for survival. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate the profitability of forest products and by-products, even if they are an additional income to the productive activity of the plot or property, valuing and/or recognizing the environmental services and benefits they generate. • Promote economic valuations to generate forestry incentives that can economically leverage the long periods of harvesting in forestry projects. • Generate attractive and trustworthy mechanisms to develop forestry activities, to avoid irregularities in the transparency of forest administration management. • Land tenure insecurity generally facilitates the extraction of forest resources and accelerated soil degradation; strategies should be focused on addressing this growing condition in the immediate term. • Lack of socioeconomic valuation of the economic impacts in the medium and long term due to the accelerated deterioration of forests, whose impact is perceived in health, food security, risk reduction and high investments in infrastructure due to damages and losses caused by extreme events (diseases, floods, droughts, pests, etc.). • Orient public forestry policies towards alternatives of a true sustainable management that integrates society's controllers, balancing the economic and environmental contributions of the forest.
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in line with the UNFI. • Coordination is achieved through CITES, but SFM still needs to be strengthened through other governance platforms to improve coordination.
Forest Europe ORG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to enhance efforts to support countries with low GDP to SFM. This should be done in terms of direct financial support, exchange of best practice example and latest research. • The political commitment should be enhanced to stop deforestation and forest degradation mainly due conversion into agricultural land. Forest deserves its own value and not just as a hinder for economic development. • Invite UNFF also to increase its efforts to make forests more resilient against climate change and to offer the platform for scientific and political exchange of best practice examples hereto.
ITTO	See above, work remains to achieve coherence in international policies (including those aimed at improving legality/governance) and strengthening political commitment (which means more than going to meetings).
IUFRO	See answer for question A-1: b.
Jamaica	It is believed that progress has been made towards all objectives. Promotion of corporations (North -South, Triangular etc.) could be improved/enhanced by leveraging greater opportunities for regional collaboration.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North - South cooperation - Although some progress has been made in the North - south cooperation, development support has however declined. This requires to be addressed with a view to increasing commitments to accelerate achievement of SFM in line with Global objectives of forests number four • South - South cooperation within the EAC is thriving and member states are developing the East African Community Forest policy and climate change strategy. A long term EAC climate change master plan is in place. However, this framework requires funding for its implementation
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	None.

Malaysia	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: 6 (i) Developed countries, business sector, financial institutions and key stakeholders shall increase resource mobilization 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.
Malawi	Promotion of North-South, South-South, triangular, PPPs at all levels.
Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the post-2015 development agenda; • Support efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, to achieve SFM; and • Strengthen long-term political commitment.
New Zealand	<p>We would like to see more progress on definitions of forest degradation and guidance on how it can be monitored and measured.</p> <p>We encourage the UNFF and its members to promote understanding of issues around deforestation. For example, FAO's Global Remote Sensing Survey 2021 showed that agricultural expansion drives almost 90 percent of global deforestation. It might be useful for the UNFF to leverage global knowledge of deforestation drivers to help increase understanding of deforestation and facilitate pathways for action and possible solutions.</p>
Nigeria	Our target is to fully achieve all the objectives and I think we are already embarking on actions that are driving progress in achieving all the objectives.
Panama	<p>The biggest and most complex objective is to put an end to poverty. Despite the fact that, in the last 4 state administrations, social assistance programs have been created and maintained, such as: Red De Oportunidades, Ángel Guardián, 120 a los 65 and the universal scholarship for elementary, basic and high school students, agricultural fund, Plan Colmena, among others, with the purpose of reducing poverty and closing the gap between poor people and access to basic services.</p> <p>This issue of ending poverty involves a series of cascading elements. How can this be improved? By focusing investments on the issue of forest restoration, which is a model that would help reduce poverty, but which would require greater international and national cooperation.</p>
Romania	I don't have thorough information to declare that one or more of the objectives of the international arrangement on forests is/are not achieved.
Thailand	<p>Notwithstanding the above successes, the following are among the areas for improvement in implementation of IAF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absolute need for a comprehensive governance framework for forest-related activities aimed at achieving SFM • More emphasis on implementation and monitoring to complement the effectiveness of IAF in developing policies and action plans • The need for capacity and authority for IAF to be country-owned and country-led • Adequate involvement of stakeholders, for legitimacy and effectiveness of IAF <p>In above-mentioned issues, they could be improved to achieve successful implementation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide continuous support mechanisms for all IAF implementation processes • Enhancing more stakeholder participation in national forest programmes
USA	We note there has not been consistent participation in engaging stakeholders. Greater stakeholder engagement is an important objective of the IAF. Specifically, further progress on private sector cooperation is a widely stated goal of the Forum.
Note: Peru, Philippines and Switzerland did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.	

QUESTIONS A-3: HAS THE IAF BEYOND 2015 BEEN OPERATING IN A TRANSPARENT, EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT, AND ACCOUNTABLE MANNER?

ACTO	Bearing in mind that the IAF international agreement on forests is made up of the UNFF and its Member States; the Forum secretariat; the CPF; the Global Network for the Facilitation of Forest Financing and the Trust Fund of the UNFF, it is possible to evidence through their multiple resolutions and reports the management of their activities, which indicates a transparent and responsible operation. Its effectiveness and efficiency, although good, have been limited to its operational capacity and especially to the financial capacity for the development of actions that generate a greater impact according to the specific needs of each Member State.
Australia	<p>Transparency of the IAF's work is an important factor in ensuring that goals are achieved, and duplication minimised. This is especially important given that forest issues are multifaceted and cross cutting. While the session papers are generally well-written and comprehensive, there is room to improve communications on the UNFF Secretariat and CPF partner's activities between sessions.</p> <p>We consider that stronger linkages between the UNFF and other bodies are necessary to promote cooperation of work across all levels, including public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral work. We also believe there is a need for CPF partners to incorporate UNSPF and UNFF priorities into their work plans. We note that we could not find a CPF member that appears to do this, and suggest this lack of integration gives rise to inefficiencies.</p>
Canada	It has improved. It remains difficult to understand which tasks are done by UNFFS and which are done by consultants. Trust Fund and GFFFN are much improved. CPF work planning is very helpful.
China	The IAF beyond 2015 was able to operate in a transparent, efficient and accountable manner. However, greater efforts are required to improve the efficiency.
Colombia	It is considered that the operation of the international arrangement on forests has had limitations in terms of efficiency, due to the lack of adequate means to accompany the countries in the processes involved in the dynamics of the implementation process. This is also due to the fact that other processes have concentrated greater institutional dynamics, as in the case of the forest and climate change agenda.
El Salvador	A recent policy is in place and SFM is underway.
Guatemala	As a result of this institutional effort, the policy of forest recovery and conservation continued through the implementation of forestry incentive programs, which have contributed significantly to prevent deforestation and guarantee the provision of goods and services that they provide to the population. Similarly, the training of forestry producers in forest recovery, management and conservation was carried out, continuing with the processes of previous years without neglecting the constant continuous improvement to promote the development of the forestry sector. With these efforts, the institution continued to promote the generation of economic income through the creation of jobs, which were a relief for the populations whose livelihoods depend on natural resources.
Forest Europe ORG	Yes, this can be supported. Also, the evaluation with this present questionnaire is a good way forward.
ITTO	For ITTO and other international organizations, probably yes, as evidenced by the progress made by these organizations in their fields of work, often reflecting elements of the IAF. For other stakeholders (especially at field level), probably no.
IUFRO	Based on our experience, the IAF has been operating in a transparent and accountable manner. We are not in a position to make statements about its effectiveness or efficiency, as this would require a thorough scientific analysis.
Jamaica	Yes.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, the IAF has been holding relevant meetings for the member states accordingly; including UNFF, Expert Group meetings (EGM), and sharing of information through National Focal Points. • The UNFF secretariat has been making efforts in reaching out to the member states and providing programme support in the implementation of UNSPF and capacity building.
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	Yes. The IAF has offered opportunities for the periodic review of work done in various initiatives thereby welcoming both criticism and new perspectives on how work should be done. There has been wide participation of forestry sector stakeholders, from countries, organizations, private sector, international observers, and local communities which ensured inclusivity. Furthermore, these stakeholders have continuously held interactive discussions through which they shared ideas and lessons learned with statements kept on record and shared publicly.
Malaysia	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.
Malawi	Yes, to some extent. Communication to and among member states has been a problem.

Mexico	Yes, periodic evaluations and reviews help to ensure that its operation is conducted in a transparent, effective, efficient and accountable manner.
Nigeria	Yes, but there is still the need for improvement.
Panama	It has indeed been operating transparently in the region.
Peru	Yes.
Romania	The IAF beyond 2015 is operating in a transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable manner.
Switzerland	UN Member States have little information on how many staff members work in the secretariat, their tasks, and further the on-going level of available finance. The yearly budget document (PBI Subprogramme 8) encloses items we do not discuss and gives a false account of what is being done; as it does not take into account the real work of the IAF. The website needs a proper and thorough reshuffle. The D1 post was decided against the will of the UN Member States.
Thailand	After 2015, Thailand has continued to implement IAF with moderate satisfaction in its implementation. However, there have some issues need to be careful considered such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectively measurable parameters for participatory forest governance need to be developed and established. Systematic documentation of existing experiences sharing regarding community empowerment and transformation of attitude of all stakeholders should be conducted. Promotion of gender and marginal groups should be enhanced to ensure increased participation of women and youth in participatory forest governance. Partnerships with development agencies, like NGOs/CBOs need to be strengthened.
USA	Transparency of the Forum's work, through reporting on the Trust Fund and budgets at the annual UNFF sessions, and throughout the intersession is important. This includes fundraising activities, independent MOU developments, and high-level UN System representations.

Note: New Zealand and Philippines did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

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?

ACTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Forum has managed to successfully hold 7 sessions after 2015 and an extraordinary session in 2017. (UNFF 12, FNUB13, FNUB14, FNUB15, FNUB16 and FNUB 17). However, its actions are limited by the financial resources available.
Australia	The organization of UNFF sessions provides a good opportunity for cross-sectoral dialogue and engagement with the CPF, major groups and observers representing other sectors. However, there is large breadth of issues covered by the mandate, and limited capacity to address them within sessions or expert groups. Considerable time is often lost to platitudes or national statements that could be better spent on policy dialogue. We encourage the Secretariat to consider other potential participants and contributors to UNFF sessions, in line with emerging key issues, and how their participation could be maximized. Expert presentations could be better utilized to stimulate dialogue on emerging issues.
Canada	Some progress in this area. Opening and prepared statements remain an issue detracting from substantive discussion.
China	UNFF basically fulfils these functions and provides a good opportunity for all parties to participate. However, it needs to be further explored in promoting cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation, and there is currently no effective mechanism to promote the participation of other sectors.
Colombia	According to available information, progress has been limited.
El Salvador	A long-term forestry policy is in place, as a result of a consultative process.

Forest Europe ORG	We agree, that UNFF offered this platform. However, the platform focused on the political debate. In addition, UNFF could offer this platform also to exchange best practice examples based on latest science on emerging topics of forest policy such as e.g. the increase of forest resilience against climate change or the loss of forest biodiversity.
ITTO	Definitely an effort has been made, but even the so-called “Major Groups” are often not representative of stakeholders living and working close to forests in the field. The coordination of emerging issues is also not very clear as it takes quite some time for any coordinated approach to be discussed, decided and materialized.
IUFRO	It is the only global policy-platform focused on forest policy that addresses the forest-related issues in a comprehensive manner. Improvement can be made in terms of cross-sectoral approaches, as this aspect is currently fairly weak.
Jamaica	UNFF annual meetings/forums provide opportunities for progress in this area.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced intersessional work to maximize the impact and relevance of its work • Fostered exchange of experiences and lessons learned among countries, regional, sub-regional and non-governmental partners and the CPF • Holding annual sessions of the Forum except during the COVID 19 Pandemic • Organized experience sharing forum for the emerging issue of COVID 19
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum sessions and intersessional activities have provided an opportunity through which stakeholders highlight issues unique to them and offer perspectives that can shape the global forest policy discourse. • UNFF has supported involvement in their processes and efforts of regional and sub-regional entities, women, children and youth, indigenous and local communities. This is geared towards promoting practices such as community-based SFM. • The forum encouraged integration of the GFGs and targets into regional and subregional forest-related programmes, plans and policies together with multi stakeholder dialogues which promote forest policy coherence by major groups. • UNFF major groups developed a joint Work Plan which highlighted the main types of interventions through which they could add value to efforts by other stakeholders in implementing the UNSPF. In addition, the Children and Youth Major Group developed a complementary work plan to accelerate the achievement of GFGs.
Malaysia	Yes
Malawi	Yes to a larger extent because forums at different levels on different issues have been held for discussions and some important information has been shared on the Forum’s website
Mexico	While the Forum has the necessary mechanisms to serve as a coherent, open, transparent and participatory platform for policy development, dialogue, cooperation and coordination on issues related to all types of forests, it is not considered to be sufficiently utilized, especially in an integrated and holistic manner through cross-sectoral approaches. Above all, it is felt that it should promote greater involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples, both in global policy discussions and in the implementation of actions and measures at national, subnational and local levels.
New Zealand	The UNFF contribution has been useful, in particular as it plays a unique role in the multilateral system as the global platform for policy dialogue, cooperation, and coordination on issues related to all types of forests. This highlights its important role as an advocate for well managed forests, and sustainable wood products, in sustainable development and addressing and meeting the key global challenges.
Panama	Undoubtedly, it provides a roadmap to guide forest management policy efforts, not only at the country level, but also at the regional level.
Thailand	<p>Thailand shows strongly support to UNFF especially Goal 1 through the establishment of UNSPF Mobilizing Committee including to make a linkage and integrate UNSPF into the new National Forest Policy. As it has already specified that Thailand has set up the National Commitment to increase forest cover of the country to achieve 55% of the total country area under the 20-Year National Strategic Plan (2018-2037). It means, forest area of the country will increase from 20.68 m h in 2018 to be 28.47 m ha in 2037. This will be needed more holistic manner and cross sectoral cooperation and to remove some matters that obstruct the progress of promotion of SFM for all types of forest. For examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Forest Bureau was established under Royal Forest Department (RFD) to promote economic forest plantation nationwide. 2. To reduce pressure on illegal forest land encroachment while providing agricultural lands for landless farmers, Thailand has launched the policy to allow landless farmers and poor families to subsistence their livelihoods in forest land. 196,217 ha of former natural reserve forest have been in the process to allocate to landless and poor farmers since the beginning of 2019.

USA	The universal membership of the UNFF provides a participatory intergovernmental platform for all types of forests. The Four-Year Programme of Work (4POW) allows room for thematic discussions and emerging issues at Forum sessions through planned alternate policy and technical-themed years. The creation and representation of CPF members helps ensure issues are discussed in a more integrated and holistic manner.
Note: Guatemala, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Romania and Switzerland did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.	
b. Promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM, in particular, the UNFI?	
Australia	We were pleased to support and participate in the development of the flagship report, including through submitting a voluntary national report. Australia believes these is an important step to ensure global progress towards the UNSPF and GFGs, and are also pleased that this process continues to be refined to improve reporting.
Canada	Monitoring and reporting on SFM via the GFGs and FRA is improved. The Flagship was a very good initiative that we would like to see continue. One improvement would be to include policy recommendations.
China	Considerable progress has been made. More than 50 countries submitted their voluntary national reports in 2019, laying a good foundation for the publication of the 2022 GFGs Report. However, more countries need to be encouraged to submit their implementation reports. UNSPF identified six global forest targets and 26 specific objectives, some of which are not operable or lack systematic data, making assessment and monitoring difficult. It is necessary for the CPF to better play its role to further improve the global core set of forest-related indicators, and encourage and support countries to carry out the evaluation and application of the GCS.
Colombia	According to available information, progress has been limited.
El Salvador	We do also agree the major efforts by UNFF here and would recommend continuing work on the key indicators for SFM.
Forest Europe ORG	We do also agree the major efforts by UNFF here and would recommend continuing work on the key indicators for SFM.
ITTO	UNFF does not promote implementation of SFM to my knowledge. Perhaps assisting countries to access funds for SFM work through the GFFFN might play this role, but I am unclear of the extent of funding mobilized through that mechanism and what has actually been funded.
Jamaica	Voluntary National Reports, reporting on commitments under VNCs provide opportunities for this. The development of the GFGs Flagship report 2021 was significant progress.
Kenya	Developed, shared and consolidated reports from Voluntary national reporting tool for implementation of activities
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNFF welcomes voluntary national reports from member states through which actions towards the attainment of various forest-related goals and targets are examined. • Launch of the GFGs Report 2021 at UNFF 16 which provided an evaluation of where the world stood in implementing the UNSPF 2030. • Intersessional activities have been planned to review the progress of various initiatives such as the effectiveness of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network. • Development and implementation of the communication and outreach strategy by integrating different communication strategies, targeting non-forestry audiences, integrating human interest stories, designing visually appealing products, and effectively utilizing social media.
Malaysia	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.
Malawi	The Forum encourages member states to voluntarily report on progress of implementation of GFGs which touches on most aspects of UNFI as a way of monitoring and assessing implementation of UNFI
Mexico	The UNFF is not conceived as a preponderant element to promote, monitor and evaluate the implementation of SFM. It is considered necessary to increase the political level of the UNFF and that the discussions on the forest sector go beyond the discussions in environmental forums, influencing other sectors, including the educational, economic and financial sectors.

New Zealand	We note that, according to the United Nations UNFI webpage (UNFF » UNFI Implementation), the last UNFI Implementation Workshop was held in January 2016, with five other workshops unconfirmed. We believe there should be a more regular schedule for these workshops to maximize attendance and ensure continuity. Or if members do not consider this a priority, it would be useful to understand why not. We also note the findings, Recommendations and Key Lessons Learned in the UN report “Monitoring Progress towards SFM (2016-2019)” (MAR-EvaluationReport_24Dec2019.pdf (un.org)). We recommend considering the learnings from this report when considering the functions of the UNFF related to promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM.
Panama	In the historical framework, transcendental changes occurred in 2015 at the institutional level, where the National Environmental Authority (ANAM) became the Ministry of Environment (MiAmbiente). By 2016, the forestry department, which was under the umbrella of the Watershed Directorate, moves up the hierarchical level from department to Forestry Directorate. Projects implemented by WWF with the support of ITTO and the EU FAO FLEGT program for the Darien area strengthened forest governance, initiating the first steps of forest culture.
Thailand	<p>So far, the Royal Forest Department of Thailand has promoted the monitoring and evaluation programs through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technology has been deployed to support small, medium, and large scale enterprise in forestry business. 2. Forest products have been standardized for getting ready for national and international trades 3. To promote food security, Royal Forest Department (RFD) has established 1.6 m ha of buffer zones for 15,000 community forests to ensure food security for forest dependents in 2019 4. Under the responsible of Marine and Coastal Resources Department, awareness rising campaigns of mangrove forest conservation for food security has been promoted 5. Under the Article 65 of the 2019 National Park Act, it would be the responsibility of Department of National Park Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) to provide list of collective species for allowing forest dependents around the protected areas to harvest during the certain period of the year. <p>Under the above-mentioned initiatives, descriptions of activities are listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Single Window System (NSW) has been implemented to link the information regarding forest product trading with other authorized agencies such as Customs Department, Transport Department, and Port Authority of Thailand to facilitate the business procedure for import and export. 2. Forest certification has been implemented by RFD to ensure standardization of forest products and trading 3. 1.6 m ha of 5-km strip of buffer zones between the national reserve forests and communities has established to secure food and non-timber forest products for 18,000 communities 4. Information technology has been applied to facilitate the accessibility of information regarding forestry information from the public. Some IT application could be accessed through mobile phone such as general information on forestry under the Royal Forest Department (RFD) such as (forest4thai), online-forest plantation registration for getting seedlings and tree planting (E-tree) while some applications such as DNP4Thai and NationalPark4Thai are also available for Department of National Park Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP). 5. More than 1,000 communities that are living inside and close to mangrove forests have been secure from food availability after joining the mangrove biodiversity conservation schemes. 6. Researches and inventory need to be conducted to in align with Article 65 of the 2019 National Park Act to provide list of collective species for allowing forest dependents around the protected areas to harvest during the certain period of the year. This initiative will include the investigation of biodiversity in some collective conservation areas to conserve rare and endangered plant species while develop some potential plant species fore economic value in the future.
USA	<p>Voluntary national reports and other resources, such as the FAO FRA and State of the World’s Forests, are an important part of monitoring and assessing the implementation of SFM. The UNFI is not the only resource to promote monitoring of SFM.</p> <p>The creation of the GFGs Report 2021 is another example of progress made by UNFF towards promoting, monitoring, and assessing the implementation of SFM. The timing of the report’s release during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic may.</p>

Note: ACTO, Guatemala, IUFRO, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Romania and Switzerland did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

c. Mobilizing, catalyzing, and facilitating access to financial, technical, and scientific resources?

ACTO	<p>Although with the creation of the "Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network" - GFFFN since 2015, the UNFF carries out forest financing activities, it is necessary to intensify efforts to facilitate countries' access to financial resources. Regarding the functions of the GFFFN, we highlight the following advances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On promoting the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for SFM (SFM): Training workshops on access to funds from multilateral financing mechanisms have focused on Asia and Africa, currently
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	<p>through the ACTO has requested the development of a workshop for countries with Amazonian territories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On facilitating access to existing and emerging financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund: To date, the Network has worked with 35 countries to help design national financing strategies, forestry financing, contributing to the development of project proposals for presentation to financing institutions, and providing capacity building and training to more than 1,000 forestry professionals worldwide. Of these 35 countries, only three are South American (Ecuador, Peru, Suriname). On serving as a clearinghouse for information on existing, new and emerging funding opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned from successful projects: The GFFN website (https://forest-finance.un.org/) which has a series of resources and information on financing opportunities, a document bank with learning material and good practices and lessons learned. However, it is necessary to make the material available in other languages such as Spanish, particularly documents such as the "Generic guide and modular training package to assist countries in developing national forest financing strategies". In general, mobilization, catalyzation and access to financial resources to technical and scientific resources has been limited to the activities of the ACB and the generation of reports and reports, but in particular to the agendas of each of the institutions and organizations that integrate it and that have within their own functions-oriented actions. UNFF should emphasize increasing access to and transfer of environmentally sustainable technology. The actions of the States are diversified between (1) the development of platforms; (2) national investigation; (3) formation of international networks; (4) collaborative research; and (5) education according to The GFGs Report 2021. <p>Clearinghouse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase I of the information exchange center is highlighted, which consists of the development of a website and three databases: one of financing opportunities, another of information and didactic material to access resources, and another of lessons learned and best practices (https://forest-finance.un.org/).
Canada	The GFFFN seems excellent and we encourage continuation of this mechanism.
China	Some progress has been made. The GFFFN has played important role in helping the developing countries to obtained financial resources. However, the capacity of GFFFN needs to be improved significantly to meet the request from more developing countries. There is also need to facilitate the cooperation between the developing and developed member states to make greater progress in facilitating the obtainment of technological and scientific resources, especially the transferring of environmentally sound technologies.
Colombia	According to available information, progress has been limited.
El Salvador	Not explored.
Forest Europe ORG	See above
ITTO	See above comment. Also, not clear how much technical and scientific resources an inter-governmental UN body like UNFF can bring to bear in the field.
IUFRO	Opportunities have been provided by the UNFF to present scientific information during UNFF sessions and share relevant information with Member States, e.g., by including presentations by scientists or involving scientists in discussion panels, etc. However, such opportunities have not been provided in a systematic manner (rather on case/theme by case/theme).
Jamaica	Collaborative meetings, forums held show progress towards this.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of Global Forest Financing Framework (GFFFN) a network of funding sources Assisted some countries (13 No.) in accessing the GFFN kitty and development of SFM activities
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNFF rolled out the GFFFN which aimed at increasing access to financial resources to support achievement of the GFGs and the design and redesign of national forest financing strategies. The forum has promoted the science-policy interface by participating in preparation of scientific studies and papers and inviting scientific experts to engage in panel discussions. Development of phase I of the UNFF Clearing House on Forest Financing online database, which provided access to financing opportunities and best practices to promote SFM.
Malaysia	Yes – UNFF has established the GFFFN clearinghouse to facilitate access to and effective use of funding for forests, to share data and best practices on forest financing and to contribute to the achievement of the GFGs of the UNSPF 2030.
Malawi	The Forum through GFFFN assisted some member states such as Malawi to develop Forest Financing Strategy and bankable project proposals to be submitted to bilateral and multilateral funding institutions such as GCF.

Mexico	While it is recognized that the UNFF has supported countries such as Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, South Africa and Thailand in accessing financial resources, it is felt that the UNFF could make a greater difference in the international green financing system. On the other hand, although the organizations that make up the CPF mainly promote collaboration and access to technical and scientific resources, these activities should continue to be strengthened and focus not only on national institutions but also on subnational and local institutions and, in particular, be aimed at encouraging local communities and/or indigenous populations to participate in scientific and technological innovation.
Panama	Let's remember that forestry and forest research issues require years of studies to provide answers and questions that arise not only in our countries, but also in the Central American region. In this context, all the ministries of environment and forestry in the region should have a liaison representative in each country in terms of research and the creation of a platform where the results can be shared, adding the integration of universities and NGOs, which are the most dedicated entities in terms of technical, scientific and financial resources.
Peru	To work on the means of implementation, operations and resources of the Global Network for the Facilitation of Forest Finance from the UNFF15 and to reflect in the Omnibus Resolution, points 13 and 15 the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RES. 13 Recalls the importance of the mobilization and effective use of financial resources, including new and additional resources from all sources and at all levels, and recalls that public policies and the mobilization and effective use of domestic resources, underscored by the principle of national ownership and leadership, are central to our common pursuit of sustainable development, and further recalls paragraphs 52-61 of ECOSOC resolution 2017/4 • RES. 15 Support provided by the Global Forest Finance Facilitation Network to countries to strengthen capacity to mobilize resources from all stakeholders and all sources to promote SFM and the achievement of global forest objectives, including through the development of national forest financing strategies.
Thailand	1. Investment and technical from the government itself are also accounted as major sources for mobilizing to achieve SFM including socio-economic and livelihood improvement of forest-dependents 2. Supplementary financial and technical supports have been allocated to retail farmers who have participated in economic forest plantations within their property areas under Forest Industry Organization (FIO) program Under the above-mentioned initiatives, descriptions of activities for financial supports are listed below: 1. The state-own organization such as Forest Industry Organization (FIO) received financial support from the government to establish economic forest within both state lands and private properties. Totally 2.6 m USD was supported from the government for managing sustainable forest plantation under FIO during 2015-2022. 2. During 2017-2022, more than 1.16 m USD was allocated to farmers to plant valuable trees within their farms. The program is managed by Forest Industry Organization (FIO).
USA	The CPF plays a key role in mobilizing and facilitating access to financial, technical, and scientific resources. For example, GEF participation is important source for financial resources and organizations such as FAO and IUFRO provide consistent technical and scientific input. GFFFN's achievements have also facilitated access to financial and technical resources. Phase II of the Clearinghouse and its focus on best practices should augment this work.

Note: Australia, Guatemala, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Romania, and Switzerland did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic

d. Promoting governance frameworks, enabling conditions at all levels to achieve SFM?

ACTO	The alignment of the National Plans and Strategies of the Member States with respect to the UNSPF 2017-2030, has an effect on governance frameworks.
China	Some progress has been made in improving the forest-related legal framework and promoting the participation of all levels in forest governance. However, the fragmentation of global forest governance has not been fundamentally reversed, and there is still much room for improvement to achieve the goal of good governance.
Colombia	According to available information, progress has been limited.
El Salvador	In process.
Forest Europe ORG	See above
ITTO	Progress in raising awareness of enabling conditions for SFM and country self-assessments of progress or lack of it. Organizations like the ITTO work with its members, most of whom also attend UNFF meetings, to further raise awareness and promote enabling conditions

IUFRO	See answer to question A-1: b.
Jamaica	Policy dialogue, work to revise/streamline reporting format for national reports demonstrate progress in this area.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate and share policy guiding documents e.g., themes and procedures for marking the IDF Strengthening high-level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, in support of SFM. • Convenes high-level segments for two days during sessions of the Forum, to accelerate action towards SFM and address forest-related global challenges
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forum recommended the following actions by member states to catalyze good governance: clear, secure, and consistent land tenure rights; removal of subsidies that harm forests; strengthening corporate zero deforestation commitments; and strengthening of forest sector laws. • Recognition by member states of the need for: inclusion of local people, small landholders, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and informal sector; strengthening of forest tenure and rights of use; improved understanding of the value of forest ecosystem services; better access to forest-related education; and addressing challenges unique to post conflict areas. • The forum highlighted the role the private sector can play in SFM by their contribution to plantation forests, chain of custody certification, provision of forest products and services, their key role in forest financing together with the need for safeguards.
Malaysia	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.
Mexico	The promotion efforts for countries and relevant parties to achieve SFM are recognized, and the workshops and exchanges that they support in different regions of the world are known.
Panama	<p>In effect, it promotes governance frameworks to achieve SFM, in terms of project formulation and implementation. Panama, during its pro tempore presidency of the CCAD, held the first Regional Congress on Forests and Sustainable Landscapes, involving several actors of the region in three (03) thematic tables such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forests and landscape management, conservation and restoration. 2. Forests and landscape, the contribution of indigenous communities 3. Forest governance. <p>This congress strengthened the ties of the regional actors that interact with forests and the contribution of their experiences in forest management and environmental justice. The efforts and decisions that have been made since day one in the current administration of MiAmbiente, have resulted in an increase of 3% of the forest cover of the national territory, which indicates that we are moving towards sustainable forest governance.</p>
Thailand	<p>Royal Forest Department of Thailand has implemented frameworks for enabling the achievement of SFM through some initiatives such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce pressure on illegal forest land encroachment while providing agricultural lands for landless farmers, Thailand has launched the policy to allow landless farmers and poor families to subsistence their livelihoods in forest land. 193,600 ha of former natural reserve forest has been in the process to allocate to landless and poor farmers since the beginning of 2019. 2. Amended of forest law and regulation which may consider to be an obstacle of forest rehabilitation and plantation. 3. According to Article 65 of the 2019 National Park Act, collective natural resources will be allowed to be harvested by forest dependents around the protected areas (i.e., national parks) <p>Description of actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Land Policy Committee was established in 2019 to allocate approximately 624,000 ha of national reserve forest to the landless and poor farmers within 2023. 2. The landless and poor farmers who join the program will have their duties to prevent illegal land encroachments into forested areas while planting forest trees within their allocated lands. 3. 2019 Forest Act has been amended by lifting Article 7 that was considered to be an obstacle to attract private forest plantation in private properties. The amended has been making positive impact to promote forest plantation within private and other types of land areas and enhance revenue of their livelihood. 4. Under the Article 65 of the 2019 National Park Act, it would be the responsibility of Department of National Park Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) to provide list of collective species for allowing forest dependents around the protected areas to harvest during the certain period of the year
USA	In the UNSPF SFM is critically dependent upon good governance at all levels. The universal and nonbinding nature of UNFF has allowed all Member States and all types of forests to productively work toward effective enabling conditions for SFM and to promote appropriate governance frameworks. The nonbinding nature allows Member States to take actions based on their national circumstances.

Note: Australia, Canada, Guatemala, Malawi, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Romania and Switzerland did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

e. Strengthening high-level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, in support of SFM?

ACTO	The Forum has served as a space for representatives of the major groups and other interested parties to be visible and heard, an example of this is the participation that took place in the opening of the "High-level round table on the response of the UNFF, the role and expectations of multilateral developments related to forests" during the past UNFF17.
Canada	High level engagement is often lacking. See Q A1e. UNFF tends to speak to the converted. Can improve high-level engagement through relevance
China	UNFF has taken positive steps to encourage and facilitate the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, and made efforts to strengthen high-level political participation. The participation of more regional processes should be encouraged and supported.
Colombia	According to available information, progress has been limited.
El Salvador	We believe that the involvement of the major groups and other stakeholders is of utmost importance for an inclusive and transparent process. However, we recognized the lack of financial support for the major groups.
ITTO	See above relevant comments.
IUFRO	There is potential to significantly increase UNFF's input to the HLPF sessions.
Jamaica	Progress made through High Level Political Forums
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	The forum called for empowering and strengthening the role of women, indigenous people and local communities to accelerate achievement of the GFGs.
Malaysia	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.
Malawi	High Level Political Forums are held where Ministers and other political authorities attend or participate to woe their support in SFM
Mexico	While recognizing the efforts to strengthen high-level political commitment, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, it is considered that the forest sector has not yet been positioned on the international and national agendas as desired. In addition, the participation of major groups such as local communities and indigenous groups, despite the efforts made, is still considered limited. In the territory, there is a great deal of ignorance and misinformation.
New Zealand	We consider that progress made in this area could be more strategic. For example, the UNFF could have a more embedded presence in the UNFCCC to better promote its objectives, and the contribution of forests. Also, it is important to take every opportunity to promote the role of forests, SFM, the UNFF, the UNSPF and the GFGs in high-level political dialogues.
Panama	In strengthening environmental policy, the Ministry of Environment promoted before the Ministry of the Presidency, Executive Decree No. 12 of September 12, 2022, which approves the national environmental strategy 2021-2031, called environmental management for the restoration of ecosystems and sustainable and inclusive development. We point out the ratification of the Escazú Agreement, the obtaining of the ISO 9001-2015 Certification for the Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Performance Verification processes, the launching of the National Environmental Information System (SINIA) and the Updating of the Forest Cover Map and the elaboration of the Green Recovery Plan as a result of the Post COVID-19 Environmental Management Consultative Table where more than 7,000 people participated. All these tools and elements help us to manage forest sustainability.
Romania	Considering its functions, UNFF has made all the progress potentially possible to achieve.
Switzerland	The UNSPF 2017-2030 and GFFFN for facilitating Finance were adopted. However, the project of an institutional set-up for GFFFN in 2 locations has slowed down the scale and effectiveness of the implementation of GFFFN. In the meantime, the construction of the clearinghouse (i.e. databases on finances) continues. For example: only 2 million USD have been facilitated in the period between 2015-2018

Thailand	Participatory of all stakeholders such as local communities, ethnic groups, government, and private sectors, etc. in Thai society in forest resource management has been strongly supported by the Government of Thailand. Communities could initiate their management plan to conserve and develop their livelihood through sustainable forest resource management plan. Moreover, some potential plant species will be taken into the research to make value-added into nationwide markets by responsible agencies and education institutes.
USA	UNFF Input into HLPF, ministerial statements and roundtables, and CPF and Major Groups input at UNFF sessions are key to support SFM. Input from stakeholders that are not often active in the UN system remains a challenge.

Note: Australia, Guatemala, Forest Europe ORG, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru and Philippines did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

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?

ACTO	COVID -19 brought to the world the need to develop mechanisms that would allow the development of non-face-to-face activities for the virtual discussion of certain issues. The adoption of these mechanisms facilitated the development of various activities between UNFF16 and UNFF17. Although in many spaces the importance of face-to-face attendance is recognized by facilitating the development of synergies parallel to the meetings between the participants, virtuality should be considered as an opportunity to facilitate the participation of multiple actors in the activities between UNFF sessions.
Australia	<p>Australia sees value in intersessional work of the UNFF, including Expert Group Meetings and welcomes further intersessional engagement. However, we note the repetition of messaging by Members across sessions, EGMs, and other avenues (including written feedback, surveys, etc.), and would like to see these messages better adopted at each level, to minimize repetition. We encourage that intersessional activities build on previous conversations, rather than repeating them, through better preparation and facilitation.</p> <p>We consider annual sessions to be highly valuable, but would like to see changes to the agenda format to better utilize the opening sessions. Panel discussions and opening country statements should be separated, to ensure time for critical engagement with panelists, and Members have clear guidelines around opening statements.</p> <p>We also emphasize the need to ensure the Chair of the session is adequately skilled to manage the session in the face of controversial subject matter. We underscore the importance of a strong Chair to manage plenary sessions, and to work behind the scenes as required.</p>
Canada	Yes, intersessional work seems ok. Improvement to annual sessions would include opening statements being provided in writing rather than in plenary. Also, the UNFF 17 panel was excellent – experts from non-traditional organizations were very welcome.
China	<p>Not satisfied. The overall participation is not high. The delegates who participated in the inter-sessional activities were basically members who were active in the annual sessions of the Forum. It is suggested that the following measures be taken to make better use of the annual sessions and inter-sessional activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mobilize more countries and regional organizations and processes to participate in UNFF; 2. Carry out targeted thematic discussions in the form of typical case analysis and grouping of different regions; 3. Increase opportunities for experience exchange and sharing among countries in the same region.

Colombia	<p>Eventually, the space between Forum sessions has affected the dynamics of the discussion of strategic issues, and once again the strength of other processes related to forests has had greater visibility due to the decisions that are adopted or the financing that is being mobilized.</p> <p>For example, the agenda of forests and climate change of the UNFCCC, and in particular that related to the Nationally Determined Contributions, although they are related to the global objectives of reducing deforestation, forest conservation and restoration of the UNEP, have been positioned in the internal agendas of the countries and in cooperation spaces, but it is not visible that they are contributing to the fulfillment of these global objectives.</p> <p>It is recommended to consider and have a greater synergy with the dynamics of the processes that are mobilizing efforts in the area of SFM, especially those related to climate change.</p> <p>In addition, it is recommended that the contribution of forests to the SDGs be further strengthened, especially the Land-based Ecosystem Life Goal, in terms of the importance of the contribution of forests to the development of local communities.</p> <p>In relation to the above, it is recommended to review the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030, which as a strategic framework can help to improve the synchronization of the challenges and work of the international arrangement on forests with respect to other processes that are advancing strongly in political, technical and financial aspects.</p>
El Salvador	Promote virtual spaces for follow-up.
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limitations in participation in the last two years have been virtual, which limits the fluidity of the topics. - A serious improvement would be that through compliance monitors, the interest and participation of stakeholders can be encouraged. - Formation of working groups for the implementation of actions, coordination and monitoring, among other issues.
Forest Europe ORG	In principle we are satisfied with the annual sessions including the intersessional activities. As a recommendation the UNFF session could start with a keynote of a renowned expert in a topic of emerging importance and a short panel discussion afterwards.
ITTO	Consider holding more intersessional activities (and even UNFF sessions) away from UN headquarters in countries/regions with forest resources – this will encourage further understanding of conditions on the ground in the different regions and potentially assist the UNFF in gauging the needs of members in pursuit of SFM etc.
IUFRO	Discussion on emerging issues needs more space in the annual sessions of the Forum, e.g., through more creative and innovative formats. In general, there is lack of interactive dialogues during sessions.
Jamaica	Overall Satisfied. Sessions focused on supporting greater regional cooperation could be considered.
Kenya	Am satisfied by the current level of engagement of members and stakeholders in the forum activities. But there is room for sufficient efforts in engagement with member states
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	Yes. Presently, UNFF offers the opportunity for various stakeholders to engage in intersessional activities thereby welcoming a broad spectrum of inputs. However, discussions are dominated by member states, with some stakeholders restricted to making joint statements or contributions to discussions. Although member states are key custodians of the means of implementation, it is important to allow for balanced contributions as other groups represent different perspectives from key members of the society, many of whom are frontline actors in forest management.
Malaysia	Yes. Malaysia is of the opinion that the current intersessional activities are sufficient and any additional activities should be undertaken on a need basis.
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somehow. Most member states especially in the developing countries have limitations in terms of resources. Therefore, participation at sessional and intersessional activities is a problem. Even with the coming in of virtual meetings, most member states have difficulties to participate due to poor internet coverage and strength and also time differences. As such most discussions are done by countries that are able to participate either through personal or virtual meetings and conclusions may not be representative enough. • As a possible solution, promotion of regional and sub-regional sessions and intersessions may assist. • Member states to be encouraged or assisted to develop or improve internet facilities
Mexico	It is considered that the level of participation of Members and stakeholders is still not desirable. It is perceived that the results of the Forum, and of other mechanisms, remain as ideas, discussions, documents and proposals, without these being translated into concrete and favorable actions for the people who live in and depend on forests, where they are the majority and direct beneficiaries of international initiatives.
New Zealand	We consider there is potential for more intersession activities. They lend themselves to more detailed “deep dives” and fulsome exchanges on topics of interest. At times, discussion in UNFF plenary on the most topical issues seems cut short due to scheduling constraints. We support the use of hybrid meeting formats for intersessional activities as it promotes broad participation and enables engagement without requiring travel.

	<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some items to have written responses submitted beforehand and session used for discussion of major sticking points. • Intersessional activities could be used to prepare submissions to HLPF and other high-level forums, similar to what was done earlier this year.
Panama	The participation of the forum members is excellent and as a suggestion, at each forum the stakeholders should present themselves with all the UNFF reports and questionnaires.
Peru	Yes.
Philippines	The Philippines recommends considering holding the UNFF Sessions via teleconferencing format. It shall be noted that travel expenses to the UN Headquarters in New York are costly for developing countries. In-person sessions are only recommended if the travel expenses for all members of the delegation are subsidized by the UNFF.
Romania	The level of involvement of members and interested parties in the intersessional activities of the Forum is proportional to their own potential, possibilities, availability and individual particularities
Switzerland	This answer concerns Question A-4 and A-5. We need to restart the region-country-organization-led initiatives. It allowed to analyze specific topics in more depth, given we do not have sufficient time during regular UNFF meetings.
Thailand	In my opinion, I have satisfied with the engagement of members and stakeholders in the Forum especially the supports from developed countries to developing countries through North-South Cooperation including among the developing countries through South-South Cooperation. However, strengthen cooperation between and among the North-South and South-South Cooperation is needed to ensure the achievement of UNFF's objectives.
USA	Interactive dialogue and engagement on emerging policy issues in formal Forum settings remains difficult. Separating the ministerial statements from interactive high level panel discussions may allow time for Member States to share their key national updates and voluntary national contributions and to engage with guest panelists. Time limits on interventions were strictly enforced in the Forum's virtual setting during the ministerial segment. We suggest that these limits continue in person for all high-level ministerial statements. We suggest continuing hybrid and/or virtual intersessional meetings to allow for participation from those unable to travel and to reduce costs.

Note: Nigeria did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

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?

ACTO	<p>Training for the completion of the format and development of capacities for articulation of the different national institutions that participate in the generation of the report, for the Member States that require a leveling of capacities. And the eventual support for the payment of consultancies that support the completion of the information in cases where there are insufficient human resources that can carry out the task. In this case, the work is facilitated by generating only a review process and not a total preparation of the document.</p> <p>Advice for the formulation of National Forest Programs or similar mechanisms that allow the Member States to have a base to be able to announce voluntary national contributions.</p> <p>Integrate in a single platform the information required from the Member States by the United Nations on forests, allowing the online completion of the information by stages and with validation and approval statuses by the institutions in charge, and that turn of alerts on the completion of the format, until having an approved version for use by the United Nations.</p>
Australia	The reporting process needs to be better streamlined, including more intuitive, clear and easy-to-use templates, and emphasizing the clear connection between FRA data and GFG reporting. We welcome the Secretariat's efforts in adjusting the reporting template and are interested to see the outcomes of the pilot process.
China	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge the members that have submitted national reports and VNCs in an appropriate manner to encourage the submission of reports by more member States; 2. Further simplify the format of the report and VNC; 3. Enhance experience sharing in submitting reports and VNCs by countries in the same region.
Colombia	The presentation of voluntary national reports and voluntary national contributions is an opportunity to make visible national efforts and the way in which the different processes of international agreements related to key forest issues are articulated. It would also allow showing in a comprehensive way the contribution of donor countries in the implementation of measures aimed at conserving, managing and restoring forests, and halting deforestation.
Guatemala	Develop a mechanism for planning and monitoring indicators for the fulfillment of the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030, including a permanent monitoring team.

Forest Europe ORG	No position as it is on Member issues
ITTO	Provide funding and consultant support for at least baseline reports which could then be updated more easily by countries.
Jamaica	Provide additional technical support to member states to complete reporting requirements. Expert meetings are a good mechanism to engage member states. A technical workshop/ element in these meetings focused on completing the report could be included.
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous engagement with member states for voluntary reporting and bridging any financial gaps experienced by the member states • Financial and capacity support to the countries to do reporting • Financial support to the member states to attend intersessional meetings
Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a standardized reporting toolkit which can serve as a template to encourage systematic reporting. • Conduct capacity building sessions to improve competencies of members in preparing reports to standards required by the UNFF. • Improve transparency in reporting the utilization of financial resources to encourage more voluntary contributions. • Identify particular projects and initiatives that require support and encourage members to channel contributions to directly support these.
Malaysia	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.
Malawi	Assist member states with finances for data collection and report writing. In most member states, data is available and kept by different sectors in different places which have to be collected and use for report writing. Most often, national reports require multisectoral gatherings to develop them and this requires resources. Some UN agencies such as UNCCD provides financial resources for report writing
Mexico	Allocate more specific support from the UNFF to countries to prepare reports and present their voluntary national contributions, the latter aligned with their national plans and programs. Regarding the presentation of voluntary reports, it is considered relevant to continue working on the simplification of report formats and the establishment of key indicators, in coordination with relevant CBA organizations, particularly with the collaboration of FAO (responsible for the FRA) and the three Rio conventions (UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC), which have established processes and report formats that can support the integration of voluntary reports.
New Zealand	Highlight the important role that positive stories and can play in demonstrating progress to towards SFM, as forests are forestry have an ongoing challenge regarding broader reputation of the sector. Survey members to identify interest in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building for preparation of national reports • Resource-sharing opportunities within and between regions to support member countries in preparing reports.
Nigeria	Efforts need to be made to strengthen synergy among national, subnational and local authorities to facilitate forest information sharing. Also, member countries should be encouraged to recognize VNC as an important component of the UNFF reporting system.
Panama	Suggestion is that, once the forum session is over, the forum members have 30 working days to submit their respective reports.
Peru	Greater dissemination of the UNFF Pilot Format and communications from the Secretariat to the focal points of the member countries.
Romania	Making more visible the encouraging success stories of achieving GFGs and their associated targets
Switzerland	There should be only one email name coming out of UNFF to the communication to UNFF focal points, i.e. "UNFF" so it is easily recognizable. This questionnaire was sent by Ms. Ninon Williams thermidor@un.org, so it was not seen on time. A reminder should be sent after 2 weeks. Sufficient time should be for the reporting, for example, this year (email from 11.10.22). A mere 3 weeks for the reporting are going to be too short.
Thailand	To simplify format of voluntary national report would encourage more submission of UNFF members. For examples, less questions but exactly to the point of core questions, less quantitative information to fill up the format, open-end question to allow flexibility to answer the question, etc.

USA

We view submitting the voluntary reports 6-12 months after the publication of the FRA as one way to reduce reporting burden and engage greater submissions. A future GFG Report could provide an incentive to document and credit achievements, and raise challenges in a high-profile UN report, if an examination finds significant outreach from the past publication and extra budgetary funds are available.

Note: Canada, IUFRO, El Salvador and Philippines did not respond or did not express a position regarding this topic.

FAO and Its RFCs uniquely answered the questions related to the United Nations Forum on Forests and its members:

According to the information gathered through the analytical work performed within the IAF and in particular through the related work of FAO (which includes but is not limited to, inter alia, the biennial State of the World's Forests reports, the Global Forest Resources Assessments, the information collected through the Global Core Set of forest-related indicators), it can be concluded that UNFF and its members have made progress on all five objectives⁸ of the IAF. It should be noted however that progress appears to be inadequate to achieve the objectives set out in the SDGs and the GFGs (GFGs) by 2030, and efforts must be increased considerably in the remaining period. It has also been observed that progress appears uneven across the globe. In the spirit of the "leave no one behind" principle the imbalances have to be eliminated, which creates an additional challenge for the international community, besides the urgent need for accelerating progress overall.

Another important observation is that progress is also uneven across the objectives, and while none can be labelled as "not achieved", stake-holder involvement, cross-sectoral cooperation and means of implementation are areas where further efforts would be always needed. On the latter, the progress in facilitating access to means of implementation should be noted with appreciation, but the mobilization function may be lagging behind the needed level. However, the timing of the mid-term review appears to be very supportive of identifying bottlenecks and priority areas, and for scaling up efforts in the remaining period.

It should be recalled that in delivering its functions UNFF is receiving strong support from the different components of the IAF. One important way of accelerating progress is increasing efficiency through a stronger coordination with other instruments and processes and their workplans, to ensure that no area remains uncovered and there are no repetitions or overlaps but rather incremental work and synergies. The Forum's sessions should be devoted to discussing issues that are not, or cannot be, discussed elsewhere and in particular the Forum's technical sessions should be coordinated strongly with other similar global technical discussions. It should be also noted that the follow up to many of the Forum's calls for synergies and support from other governing bodies appears to be inadequate. A systematic review of the follow-up actions may be helpful in this regard, allowing for the consideration of ways and means for increasing collaboration between global forest-relevant governing bodies. Further, stronger and broader stake-holder engagement may lead to stronger ownership and willingness to contribute to intersessional activities and to perform the monitoring function. In this function in particular, filling the existing capacity and information gaps appear to be a prerequisite of increased voluntary national reporting.

⁸ It should be noted that unlike the other 4 objectives, in case of objective 1 UNFF's role is supporting implementation while implementation itself is the prerogative of Member States. Q A-1 a. seems to be overseeing this, although it appears properly in Q A-4 b.

Annex 4 – List of background documents consulted

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