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## **Regional and Sub-Regional Inputs to UNFF10**

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### **General Information**

The multi-year programme of work (2007–2015) of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) sets a new focus on regional collaboration and partnerships. Since its eighth session in 2009 the Forum has solicited inputs from relevant regional and subregional forest related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes as an integral part of session deliberations.<sup>1</sup>

At its ninth session, the Forum invited regional and subregional organizations to strengthen their contributions to the work of the Forum and to provide input, in the context of the overall theme for UNFF10, on their efforts towards the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, (herein after referred to as the forest instrument) and its four Global Objectives on Forests, through sharing regional perspectives, approaches and experiences. Regional activities on North-South and South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation on SFM were also encouraged.

This questionnaire has been prepared by the Forum Secretariat to facilitate regional inputs for the tenth session of the Forum (UNFF10), to be held from 8 to 19 April 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey. In completing this questionnaire, you may choose to extract the relevant information and include it in your submission, if information is already available in an existing report or

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<sup>1</sup> Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the parent body of the Forum, through its resolution 2006/49, agreed to “Strengthen interaction between the Forum and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes , with participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.” (paragraph 2)

document. Otherwise, you may provide the reference or document itself to the UNFF Secretariat, indicating the relevant section.

The size of the report of the Secretary General will be a maximum of 8,500 words (approximately 16 pages). In view of this, the Forum Secretariat suggests no more than five pages of written input. We would be most grateful if you could send your inputs to [unff@un.org](mailto:unff@un.org), fax: 917-367-3186) by **30 September 2012**. In light of time constraints and financial limitations, you are kindly asked to provide your input in English.

## **Section I: Progress towards the implementation of the forest instrument in the context of the overall theme of UNFF10 on “Forests and Economic Development”**

### A. Progress towards implementation of the forest instrument

1. Briefly describe actions (e.g. regulatory, financial/economic and informational/educational) taken by your organization to foster political commitment for sustainable forest management (SFM).

Inter American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) -- Policy impact: Based on Member State consensus (i) agree on biodiversity informatics standards and protocols, (ii) priorities on ecosystem based management, (iii) value added products from GIS interoperability of species-specimen, invasives, pollinators, ecosystems and protected area data.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/ or lessons learned.

Although OAS is not specifically working in forest governance per se -- there needs to be more accurately and more evidence based monitoring the performance of reforms and interventions targeted at addressing poor forest governance. Addressing issues as complex as poor forest governance is challenging. Even estimating the level of illegal logging in any given situation is fraught with problems with the results frequently disputed by different interested parties. Poor forest governance is a multi-faceted problem that spans a number of sectors. Poor forest governance is more like an interconnected web of different factors each affecting how the different relationships have an impact on overall forest governance.

We have noted that interventions are unlikely to be undertaken in isolation and it will be difficult to attribute an improvement in governance to single specific interventions. Firstly, on its own illegal logging may or may not cause deforestation – it is what happens after the logging that causes the deforestation. After illegal logging, the forest is degraded, but usually there are under-sized and non-commercial species left, and if left untouched the forest will normally re-grow albeit with perhaps a different species and age structure. It is the grazing, fire, agriculture, development etc. that may follow the illegal logging (and may actually drive the illegal logging in the first place) that causes the deforestation and land use change. Increasing the policing effort in countries with weak governance in general frequently does little to reduce the incidence of illegal logging, but merely increases the opportunities for corruption and kick backs, even if the official statistics show an increase in the number of cases heard by the courts. Simply increasing the policing effort or for example passing moratoria on all forest harvesting in isolation may rarely work.

Many programs designed to improve poor forest governance start with trying to identify and then address the causes. These causes are frequently due to perverse incentives created through poor

policy and forest legislation and inappropriate forestry institutions. If then the intervention is to revise the policy or legislation, then this will apply to all the actors in a given country so comparing with and without scenarios would be difficult. If you were to try to compare before and after, there would be other extraneous factors influencing the situation such as the implementation of the EU Timber Regulation and the US Lacey Act, international buyers wanting certified products, improvements in the economy, village gasification etc, changing village demographics, which may mean that the improvements may only be partially (or even not at all) attributable to the policy/legislation change.

Voluntary Partnership Agreements developed between partner countries and the United States under the FLEG program may result in positive results. However comparing participant countries and non participant countries and trying to undertake some statistical analysis could be problematic in that you would not be starting from the same baseline, although it may be possible to monitor improvements from the different baselines. Certainly we need to understand better the impacts of improved forest governance with non-certified vs. comparing producers with certified.

2. Please provide additional information specific to your region/subregion on the implementation of the forest instrument and the impact made by the forest instrument on enhancing forest-based economic development.

## B. Progress towards GOFs

1. Please describe actions taken by your organization and/or by other public and private organizations (e.g., government, NGOs, private sector, etc.) in your region/subregion to help achieve the following :

Within the Biodiversity, Lands, and Sustainable Cities Section of the Organization of American States there has been a broad based agenda in 2012 promoting sustainable forest and ecosystem management that has included:2012

<http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/biodiversity/default.asp>

### **Biodiversity, Lands, and Sustainable Cities Section 2012**

<http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/biodiversity/default.asp>

1. Sustainable Cities Program -- Policy Impact: Highlight case studies and best practice on Housing, Transport, Pollution Prevention, Energy Efficiency, and Environmental Protection.
2. Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI) -- Policy Impact: Sets hemispheric Policy that governs how the Americas manages and interacts with the environment--the land, water, air, wildlife and all natural resources. Reviews with countries legislation and decision-making that impacts wildlife. WHMSI serves as a unified voice for wildlife, advocating for strong, scientifically sound legislation that protects habitat and natural resources.
3. ReefFix: Coral Reef and Watershed Management Project for the Caribbean Policy impact: Promotes conservation approaches based on economic incentives seek to make conservation a viable and attractive choice for resource users. Economic incentives encourage local resource users to adopt sustainable behavior that conserves biodiversity and natural habitat while enhancing livelihoods.

4. Inter American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) -- Policy impact: Based on Member State consensus (i) agree on biodiversity informatics standards and protocols, (ii) priorities on ecosystem based management, (iii) value added products from GIS interoperability of species-specimen, invasives, pollinators, ecosystems and protected area data.

GOF1, “Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation”

Better information thru IABIN allows for better env and social impact assessment as well as risk analysis of roads and pipelines, and better quantification of environmental services, and cost effective analysis of for example best route of corridor design to minimize impacts on say indigenous peoples and high biodiversity areas such as protected areas.

### C. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. Please describe studies or initiatives in your region that capture the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs?
2. What indicators have been, or could be, used to assess the contribution of forests to the MDGs?
3. Please provide additional information specific to your regional/subregional on MDG forest- related work.

Key actors and partners of IABIN met at the 7th IABIN Council meeting held at the OAS in September 2011. The meeting examined the progress, challenges, lessons learned from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project “Building the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network.” The participants included IABIN Focal Points from over 16 OAS member states, the Coordinating Institutions (CIs) of IABIN Thematic Networks, including NatureServe, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the National Institute for Biodiversity of Costa Rica (INBio), the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the Pollinator Partnership, and new partner organizations and experts in areas related to bioinformatics, conservation and sustainable development including and the Conservation Biology Institute and Encyclopedia of Life.

The final products which showcased the five thematic networks and their integration by the IABIN Data Integration and Analysis Gateway were presented, finalizing Phase I of the Building IABIN Project. Participants reviewed the value added tools for decision making and the data content developed under this hemispheric network. IABIN Focal Points and Coordinating Institutions (CIs) recognized the importance and achievements of the efforts made under the GEF-funded Building IABIN Project. Based on these achievements, the participants strategized on how to best utilize and plan future development of the tools and products under this network which has awarded over 120 seed funds grants to over 100 museums, universities, herbaria, government research institutes and civil society organizations to digitize biodiversity data following regionally accepted standards. The questions the participants discussed were: “What are our objectives for IABIN Phase II – What difference do we want to make?” There was a rich discussion over the key questions that IABIN can help answer by providing data and tools to decision-makers, the definition of the most important audiences for IABIN – users of the data – that the Network should be working closely with, what are the best opportunities,

environmental decision-making processes, and existing initiatives that we should become involved with to meet our objectives, and how should IABIN be structured and governed to be successful in Phase II.

**Next Steps:** At the conclusion of the meeting, the participants agreed to continue working for the second phase of IABIN to i) continue to advance objectives of Phase I, ii) contribute to sustainable development to have real impact of the ground, iii) ensure mechanism that will allow all countries to benefit from the data and tools, iv) build capacity, to communicate and market the utility of this network, and v) measure the successful implementation of the IABIN project.

IABIN, as a Hemispheric Network will continue to monitor progress utilizing the following CBD generated indicators:

<b>Table 1:</b> An initial list of variables/datasets/indicators for monitoring progress towards Target 19. <b>Observation dataset</b>	<b>Sources and Organisational Holder/s</b>	<b>Start year</b>  [end year if interrupted]	<b>Frequency of update</b>	<b>Geographical Coverage</b>	<b>Spatial Resolution</b>
National Biodiversity Information Facilities (BIFs)	Governments	Various	Various	National	Various, often <10 km
National and thematic CHM	National agencies; NGOs; Academics	Various	Various	National	Various
Regional networks	E.g. Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs) (e.g. Databasin) Important Bird Areas (IBA) and Endemic Bird Areas (EBA), Centres of Plant Diversity (CBD), Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA), Alliance for Zero Extinction Sites (AZE), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)	Various	Various	Multinational	Various
Global networks <sup>37</sup>	E.g. GEOSS; GBIF; IUCN (e.g. WDPA)	Various	From daily to long term	Global	Various
Thematic networks <sup>38</sup>	E.g. IABIN, GMBA; BirdLife International; OBIS; CBMP; CoML; Community Monitoring inventory	Various	Various	Multinational to global	Various
Assessment networks	MA; CAFF (Arctic Council)	Various	Various	Multinational to global	Various
Number of newly described species	Biodiversity NGOs, especially Species 2000; Encyclopedia of Life, GBIF National agencies; Academics; natural history museums and herbaria	2000	Irregular, could be annual	Global	Various
Transfers of biodiversity relevant technologies	ABS Clearing House; National agencies; NGOs; Academics; Private sector	No existing global database	Annual	Global	National
Number of technology transfer centres					

Education: Number of students from developing countries receiving education in developed countries; Number of people from developing countries trained on biodiversity related knowledge support by developed countries; Budget for biodiversity related research	National agencies; NGOs; Academics; Private sector	No global systematic database exists	Annual	Global	National
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## Section II: Characteristics of regional and sub-regional cooperation and partnerships Department of Sustainable Development

### Strategic Goals

In the context of the complex dimensions of the concept of sustainable development, the specific OAS mandates and the international commitments of the OAS member states, including the Millennium Development Goals, the DSD is focusing its work in the support of the countries towards the following strategic goals:

- **Assuring quality water** for human consumption and multiple uses and ensure its sustainable use for the current and future generations by improving water resources management practices;
- **Supporting access to energy** that is diverse, reliable, secure, and affordable through the development of sustainable energy policies and promotion of sustainable energy technologies and services;
- **Promoting sustainable use of land and biodiversity resources** through sustainable cities activities, land conservation, and sustainable use of land and biodiversity resources through fostering integrated approaches to land use that mainstream conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into the land-use planning and land management process;
- **Reducing environmental health risks and people's vulnerability** to natural and man-made hazards by supporting OAS member States in adapting to and managing the risk associated to environmental disasters and climate change and those associated to the management of hazardous chemicals, with the ultimate goal of mainstreaming risk management into development policy and planning;
- **Fostering good environmental governance**, by supporting the development and strengthening of environmental laws, policies and institutions, as the foundation for sustainable development in the region.

A key lesson of the sustainable development challenge is the pivotal role that institutions and governance plays in translating targets into concrete action. Given limited resources, efforts continue to examine how best-practices from one project or region can be transferred and replicated elsewhere. One of the comparative strengths of the OAS in identifying institutional and capacity-building needs is through a network of dedicated partnerships. Each network consists of a national representative from each OAS member states, as well as centers of excellence, research centers and universities. The networks concentrate on a

particular theme, and provide a platform to exchange technical, legal, financing and other information at a hemispheric-wide level. The current system of networks includes :

- Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN)
- Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making for Sustainable Development (ISP);
- Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA)
- Inter-American Forum on Environmental Law (FIDA).
- Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR);
- Inter-American Water Resources Network (IWRN)

### **Current initiative**

Consistent with the roles that the DSD has played in previous global conferences on environment and development, the Department is gearing up to play a pivotal role in the preparations for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) through the actions within its *Roadmap to Rio+20*, as well as in the High Level International Advisory Committee for the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability (World Congress), which is being co-sponsored by the OAS and which will be held in June 2012, also in Rio de Janeiro. The World Congress is aimed at supporting the Rio+20 process by promoting global consensus among relevant stakeholders and outlining the future actions required to promote the pursuit of sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century founded on the rule of law and governance.

In addition to its support for the World Congress, the General Secretariat of the OAS has been hosting a series of hemispheric dialogues in a variety of sustainable development themes, such as Energy and Climate Change, Integrated Water Resources Management, Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management, Risk Management and Environmental Law, Policy and Governance. The expected outcome of these dialogues is a set of recommendations towards strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development in the region through an upstream and practical approach. The results of these dialogues will feed into the Conference process through means such as policy papers and recommendations.

The following link contains the Department's "**Roadmap to Rio+20**," a document to support the Rio+20 process through analyzing the institutional framework for sustainable development. In addition, the link contains key messages and recommendations from the dialogues. This information is updated right after each dialogue is hosted. (Link: <http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/rio+20/default.asp>).

1. Please provide examples of how your region or sub-region is engaged in facilitating cooperation in sustainable forest management? These may include North-South, South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

2. What advances has your organization made in such areas of cooperation?
3. In which areas would your organization like to see stronger international cooperation?
4. Please describe any joint activity relevant to the Forum's work undertaken with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)<sup>2</sup> and/or involving major stakeholders?
5. Please provide additional information specific to your region/subregion on successful cooperation and partnerships, including those with the private sector and other civil society organizations (also known as major groups).
6. Please list (or, if available, provide link to the relevant webpage) the member countries and organizations with whom you work on sustainable forest management issues.

<http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd>

<http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/biodiversity/default.asp>




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<sup>2</sup> List the names of CPF member organizations