

Date of submission: 29.09.2014

Regional and Sub-Regional Inputs to UNFF11

Regional/Sub-regional Organization/Process:

Name:	Environment and Development Division (EDD)
Address:	UN Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue 10200 Bangkok, Thailand
Organization:	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Phone:	Tel.: +66-2-2881234
Fax:	Fax: +66-2-2881025
Email:	escap-esdd-evs@un.org

Person to contact concerning the submission:

Name:	Rae Kwon Chung
Title:	Director, Environment and Development Division (EDD)
Address:	UN Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue 10200 Bangkok, Thailand
Organization:	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Phone:	+66-2-288-1510
Fax:	Fax: +66-2-288-1025
Email:	escap-esdd-evs@un.org

General Information

The multi-year programme of work – MYPOW (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 sub-regional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes as an integral part of session deliberations.¹

¹ The 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

The eleventh session of the UNFF (UNFF11) will be held from 4 to 15 May 2015 in New York. In accordance with the Forum's MYPOW, the overall theme of UNFF11 is *Forests: progress, challenges and the way forward on the international arrangement on forests (IAF)*, with the following sub themes:

1. Reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consideration of all future options
2. Reviewing the progress towards the achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) and the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (hereinafter referred to as the "Forest Instrument")
3. Reviewing the contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

In completing this questionnaire, you may choose to extract the relevant information and include it in your submission, if information is already available in existing reports and/or documents. Otherwise, you may provide the reference or document itself to the UNFF Secretariat, indicating the relevant section. Please note that the Year 2007 – the year of the adoption of the Forest Instrument (2007), should be used as a baseline throughout the document.

Moreover, in view of the limitation of sizing of the pertinent Secretary-General's report, the Forum Secretariat suggests no more than 250 words of written input per answer. We would be most grateful if you could send your inputs to **unff@un.org**, fax: +1 917-367-3186, by **30 September 2014**. In light of time constraints and financial limitations, you are kindly asked to provide your input in English.

implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.”
(paragraph 2)

Section I: Progress towards the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the GOFs as well as the contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs

A. Progress towards implementation of the Forest Instrument

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

No action undertaken with direct reference to sustainable forest management. Policy advocacy work addresses the broader topic of "investment in natural capital"

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

Low priority in ESCAP agenda, due to ESCAP's programmatic focus on the greening of growth. In Asia and the Pacific, regional intergovernmental dialogues on forest-related issues are mainly conducted at the Asia Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) operated by FAO.

2. Briefly describe efforts taken at the regional level to foster economically, socially and environmentally sound measures that act as incentives for the sustainable management of forests.

The trend has been captured in APFC documentation, such as FO/APFC/2013/6.

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

FO/APFC/2013/6 defines "Undefined or overlapping property rights, weak governance and high demand for wood and non wood products have led to high levels of unsustainable logging. Agricultural, industrial and urban encroachment remains problems in many areas and excessive pressures on forest resources are causing extensive degradation. There are very few instances of balanced approaches where various forest management objectives are integrated and clear trade-offs established between divergent goals.

Inter-agency dialogue, coherence and communication could be further strengthened.

3. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to promote international trade in forest products from sustainably managed forests harvested.

FO/APFC/2013/6 describes 'progress continues to be made in the development and implementation of a wide range of innovative tools and mechanisms designed to promote and support the drive towards sustainable forest management. These include in the domain of international trade: Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) and chain-of-custody verification.'

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

Voluntary nature of the agreement. No legally-binding or weak incentive mechanisms.

4. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to address illicit international trafficking in forest products through the promotion of forest law enforcement and good governance.

FO/APFC/2013/7 describes the EU-FAO Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade programme (EU FAO FLEGT programme) is building a greater presence in the Asia-Pacific region, working with local stakeholders in countries negotiating or implementing Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) and other eligible timber-producing countries.

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

Voluntary nature of the agreement. No legally-binding or weak incentive mechanisms.

5. List and briefly describe activities aimed at mobilizing new and additional resources from all sources for SFM.

Earlier in 2014, UNFF Secretariat proposed to co-organize with ESCAP, a three-day subregional workshop "Harnessing Climate Change Financing for Forests: Experiences, Lessons Learned and Success Stories from Countries in Southeast Asia" targeting the ASEAN member countries. ESCAP supported the preparation for the workshop, aiming to provide the opportunity for no more than 25 participants from ASEAN Member States, regional and international organizations to exchange views and share experiences on how to harness climate change funding for forests. This workshop was cancelled.

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

UNFF Secretariat recently informed that, due to certain constraints and an unfortunate circumstance involving insufficient regional partnership with ASEAN, the workshop was cancelled.

On the question of mobilizing new and additional resources for SFM, organizational coherence should be strengthened, and UNREDD and other organisations with strong expertise (including non-governmental stakeholders) involved.

Policy advocacy on the links between appropriate/effective financing mechanisms, and sustainable development outcomes should be strengthened.

B. Progress towards the achievement of the GOFs

1. Please describe actions taken by your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process and/or by other major stakeholders in your region/sub-region to help achieve the following:

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”

No actions taken by ESCAP, or no systematic collection of information on actions taken by other stakeholders.

GOF2, “Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people”

Same as above

GOF3, “Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests”

Same as above

GOF4, “Reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM”

Same as above

2. Please provide additional information specific to your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process on progress towards the achievement of the GOFs.

Same as above

C. Contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs

1. Please describe studies or initiatives in your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process that capture the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

Progress towards the MDG targets, including forest cover is regularly assessed by a series of joint ESCAP/UNDP/ADB regional reports. These have, at times, highlighted forest issues, but no specific studies have been undertaken on this topic.

2. What indicators have been, or could be, used to assess the contribution of forests to the MDGs?

Site specific valuation studies could assess the contributions of forests to the provision of water.

3. Please provide additional information specific to your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process on MDGs forest-related work.

Annual editions of ESCAP's statistical yearbook regularly highlight the status and trends regarding forest cover, biodiversity and protected areas (marine and terrestrial).

Section II: Review of the effectiveness of the current IAF and the future options

1. From the **perspective** of your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process, please provide a general evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement of the current IAF.

As 2014 Report of the Team of Independent Consultants on IAF already describes, in the post-UNCED global forest policy dialogue process, there has been no systematic engagement in it by regional organizations, including the UN Regional Commissions. In Asia and the Pacific region, with strong presence of Asia Pacific Forestry Commission operated by FAO, member states see little value added by ESCAP in supporting intergovernmental dialogues on forest-related matters.

Inter-agency coherence/collaboration should be strengthened.

2. Has the input of your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process been adequately taken into account in the Forum's deliberations?

No input provided

3. What measures has your organization undertaken to strengthen the current IAF? Please list the most important measures (maximum five):

In the past, ESCAP assisted the strengthening of national institutional capacity for enhancing investment in natural capital, in particular through promotion of PES.

4. How would your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process envisage a strengthened regional/sub-regional component in a future IAF?

May support, upon request, strengthening of national institutional capacity for enhancing investment in natural capital. Planning to develop an online training course on investment in natural capital, to be made available through the ESCAP E-learning facility

5. Has your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process worked jointly with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)² and/or major stakeholders to support the work of UNFF? If yes, please evaluate the overall collaboration.

ESCAP participates selected events organized by CPF agencies on case-by-case basis.

6. How would your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process envisage a strengthened collaboration with CPF member organizations and/or major stakeholders in a revised IAF?

ESCAP, like other UN Regional Commissions, could support linking IAF debates to regional preparatory process for HLPF, e.g. monitoring/review of the progress in implementation, subject to priority set by member states.

² CPF member organizations: Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Secretariat of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFF), Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), The World Bank, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)