

EXPLANATORY NOTES FOR COUNTRY REPORTS TO THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF UNFF (UNFF 15)

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Foreword

These Explanatory Notes aim to help countries prepare their Country Reports for submission to UNFF15 in 2019. The Notes explain the purpose of the Country Reports and how the information from these Reports will be used. They should be read in conjunction with the “Format for reporting on progress towards the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions”.

A. Purpose and use of Country Reports

What is the purpose of these Country Reports?

1. The UN General Assembly has adopted a United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-30 (UNSPF). This UNSPF provides a global framework for action at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests and halt deforestation and forest degradation. The Country Reports are a vital source of information for assessing progress towards implementation of this UNSPF and the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI)¹, which provides countries with a framework for promoting sustainable forest management (SFM).
2. The UNSPF contains six Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and 26 associated targets, to be achieved by 2030. The GFGs and their associated targets lie at the heart of the UNSPF and are also aimed at contributing to progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
3. The Country Reports will be used in the preparation of a Report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the GFGs, for consideration by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in May 2020, at its 15th session. In addition, the Forum has requested its secretariat to prepare, based on the initial round of reporting and in consultation with countries, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)² and relevant stakeholders, a

¹ See <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/documents/un-forest-instrument/index.html>

² A full list of CPF members is included in the list of acronyms and abbreviations at the end of these Notes

concise “flagship” publication on progress towards achieving the GFGTs for release by the end of 2021.

4. UNFF adopted the Reporting Format³ for initial voluntary national reporting to the Forum on progress towards implementation of the UNSPF at its 13th session, in May 2018.

5. The Forum has invited countries to submit their Country Reports to the secretariat by mid-November 2019. These Explanatory Notes are intended to help national correspondents prepare their Country Reports in a consistent way.

Will the Country Reports themselves be in the public domain?

6. Yes, Country Reports will be published on the UNFF website in advance of UNFF15.

What has happened to previous Country Reports submitted to UNFF?

7. The previous round of voluntary reporting took place in advance of the 11th session of UNFF, in 2015. Countries were invited to submit reports on progress towards implementation of the UNFI and the contribution of forests towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Information from the 81 Country Reports that were submitted provided a wealth of information on action taken by countries to achieve SFM, related challenges and success stories. The information from Country Reports was summarised, along with information from other sources, including CPF members and relevant stakeholders, in a Report of the Secretary-General⁴ which was considered at UNFF11.

How will information from these Country Reports be analysed?

8. The Country Reports will be analysed by the UNFF secretariat. The UNFF secretariat will use the Country Reports, which provide the main source of information for UNFF, together with information from CPF members and other sources (see section B) to assess progress towards the GFGs. Several of the GFGs, and especially Goals 4, 5 and 6, refer to policy developments, some of which cannot be monitored through measurable outcomes; accordingly, it will not be possible to develop numerical indicators for every target. Further details of the proposed method for analysis are contained in section C.

9. The relationship between the questions in the Reporting Format and the targets is indicated in the Table below:

Reporting Format question number	Related targets
1 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e)	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
2 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f)	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5
3 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f)	3.1, 3.2, 3.3
4 (a), (b)	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5
4 (c)	4.1, 4.2

³ See Annex I to E/CN.18/2018/4

⁴ E/CN.18/2015/3

4 (d)	4.3
4 (e)	4.4
5 (a), (b)	5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4
5 (c)	5.1
5 (d)	5.2
5 (e)	5.3
5 (f)	5.3
5 (g)	5.4
6 (a), (b)	6.3, 6.4, 6.5
6 (c)	6.4
6 (d)	6.4
6 (e)	6.5
7 (a)	Relates to SDG 5 (gender equality)
7 (b)	Relates to International Day of Forests
8	Success stories

It is recognised that sometimes a single action (such as a new forest law) may address a number of different targets. Where this is the case, it will assist the analysis if, wherever possible, countries specify the particular targets addressed by such actions. The “tick-boxes” contained within questions 4(c), 4(d), 4(e), 5(c), 5(d), 5(g), 6(c), 6(d), 6(e), 7(a) and 7(b) are designed to facilitate the aggregation of country responses.

What about targets that cannot be achieved by actions at the national level?

10. Both Target 6.1 (which refers to forest-related programmes within the UN system) and Target 6.2 (which refers to the forest-related programmes of CPF members) are targets that cannot be achieved through actions at the national level. Accordingly, there are no questions about these targets in the Reporting Format for countries, and information will need to be requested from relevant CPF members.

How much detail is required in Country Reports?

11. There is a 250-word limit for the response to each sub-question. Web-links may be included to refer readers to more detailed information.

Is it possible for voluntary national contributions (VNCs) be included in Country Reports?

12. Yes. Where countries have announced voluntary national contributions (VNCs) aimed at making progress towards achieving the targets, this should be reported in response to questions 1(d), 2(e), 3(e), 4(b), 5(b) and 6(b).

Why is there a question on gender equality?

13. SDG 5 is to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” and its targets include:

“ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life” (target 5.5) and

“undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws” (target 5a).

*The State of the World’s Forests 2018 (SOFO 2018)*⁵ presents evidence to suggest that forests and trees can make significant contributions to these targets, but also highlights important data gaps. Responses to question 7(a) will help in developing a more comprehensive understanding of actions taken to promote gender equality in the forest sector.

Why is there a question on the International Day of Forests?

14. In 2012, the UN General Assembly designated 21 March as the International Day of Forests in order to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests⁶. Responses to question 7(b) will provide information about the ways in which the International Day of Forests is celebrated around the world.

How will the success stories be used?

15. Responses to question 8 will be used to illustrate ways in which countries have taken actions aimed at addressing particular GFGs in order to contribute towards implementation of the UNSPF. Examples of success stories will be used to help make the report to UNFF15 and the “flagship” publication more interesting to readers. In addition, all the success stories will be available on the website containing the Country Reports.

Why is 2015 the “baseline” year?

16. The baseline year of 2015 is consistent with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) *Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA)* process (the latest FRA was published in 2015) and the fact that the previous Report to UNFF on progress towards SFM was presented in 2015. Furthermore, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was adopted in 2015. Therefore, Country Reports should focus on action taken since the beginning of 2015.

B. Information from other sources

17. The Country Reports will be the main source of information for assessing progress towards the GFGs. The UNFF secretariat will supplement the information received from countries with quantitative FAO *FRA* data and information from other CPF members and sources, including:

⁵ See pages 19-24, 65 and 69 of FAO (2018) *State of the World’s Forests 2018*

⁶ A/RES/67/200

- FOREST EUROPE, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, International Tropical Timber Organization, CITES, Montreal Process and Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa;
- Reports on *The State of the World's Forests*, produced every two years by FAO;
- Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN Secretariat;
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD);
- Other data sources, including the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).

Country Reports do not need to repeat data that has already been supplied to these sources.

What is the relationship between the Country Reports and FRA 2020?

18. Some of the targets are qualitative in nature and the assessment of progress will rely upon qualitative information provided by Country Reports. The *FRA 2020* is the main source of quantitative data for assessment of progress towards the targets. It has been designed by FAO in collaboration with the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ) partners⁷ and other experts to respond to the stakeholder's latest information needs including those of GFG reporting⁸. All data published by FRA is endorsed by the authorities responsible for forests in the country to which they refer.

19. The Reporting Format for Country Reports only requests information that is not already provided to international databases such as *FRA 2020*.

20. In order to achieve consistency between the two reporting processes it is important that national correspondents preparing the Country Reports coordinate this activity with the *FRA 2020* national correspondent for their country. If necessary, contact details for *FRA 2020* national correspondents can be obtained by emailing the FAO *FRA 2020* secretariat at fra@fao.org.

What is the relationship with SDG targets and indicators?

21. The UNSPF explains that the GFGs aim to contribute to progress on the SDGs, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (ABTs), the Paris Agreement and other international forest-related instruments, processes, commitments and goals, and that the vision, principles and commitments set out in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* provide the context for the GFGs⁹.

22. As explained in *SOFO 2018*, sustainable management of forests and trees outside forests is vital to integrated implementation of the *2030 Agenda*, including achieving the SDGs. A number of SDG targets explicitly refer to forests, namely:

⁷ The CFRQ was created through cooperation between some of the regional Criteria and Indicator (C&I) processes, and introduced with *FRA 2015*, in order to reduce the reporting burden and increase data consistency. CFRQ partners are FAO, FOREST EUROPE, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, International Tropical Timber Organization, Montreal Process and Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa.

⁸ The *Guidelines and specifications* for *FRA 2020* are available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I8699EN/i8699en.pdf>.

⁹ It should be noted that, while most of these goals and targets are to be achieved by 2030, some are to be achieved by 2020.

- SDG target 6.6 - By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes
- SDG target 15.1 - By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements
- SDG target 15.2 - By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally
- SDG target 15.b - Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

However, at present there are only two SDG indicators that will be helpful in assessing progress towards the GFGs, namely SDG indicator 15.1.1 (increase forest area as a proportion of total land area) and SDG indicator 15.2.1, on progress towards SFM. As explained in section D certain other SDG indicators have the potential to provide information, but only if data relating to forests is disaggregated.

What is the relationship with the Global Core Set of forest-related indicators?

23. Country Reports do not need to provide input for the global core set of forest-related indicators (GCS) that are being developed by CPF, and this paragraph of the Explanatory Notes is for information only. The GCS are aligned with the seven thematic elements of SFM¹⁰ and the aim is that the GCS should address topics identified by high-level forums in an efficient manner that avoids duplicate reporting¹¹. UNFF has welcomed the progress made and has acknowledged the value of the GCS in assessing progress towards achieving the GFGs and other internationally-agreed forest-related goals and targets.

C. Assessing progress towards the GFGs

24. This section explains how information from Country Reports and from other sources will be used to assess progress towards the GFGs and their targets.

Global Forest Goal 1

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 of addressing climate change¹².

Target 1.1 Forest area is increased by 3 per cent worldwide

¹⁰ As set out in the UNFI, these elements are (i) extent of forest resources; (ii) forest biological diversity; (iii) forest health and vitality; (iv) productive functions of forest resources; (v) protective functions of forest resources; (vi) socio-economic functions of forests; and (vii) legal, policy and institutional framework.

¹¹ The latest list of GCS can be found in Annex II of E/CN.18/2018/4.

¹² Goal 1 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among others, Sustainable Development Goal targets 6.6, 12.2, 13.1, 13.3, 14.2, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4 and 15.8, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 7, 9, 11, 14 and 15.

25. FAO will use numerical information ('000 hectares) from *FRA 2020* Tables 1a (Extent of forest and other wooded land), 1b (Forest characteristics) and 1c (Annual forest expansion, deforestation and net change) to provide a global overview in quantitative terms.

26. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to promote an increase in forest area. For example, countries may explain how changes in forest area have been influenced by actions that have been taken in their response to questions 1(b); they may highlight any particular challenges, such as natural disasters, in response to question 1(c); and they may note the impact of any methodological changes of their figures for forest area in response to question 1(e).

Target 1.2 The world's forest carbon stocks are maintained or enhanced

27. *FRA 2015* revealed that the world's forests store an estimated 296 Gt of carbon in both above- and below-ground biomass, and stated that this represents almost half of the total carbon stored in forests¹³. The UNFF secretariat will use numerical information from *FRA 2020* Table 3d (forest carbon stock in tonnes per hectare) and Table 1a to total forest carbon stocks and their changes. For other stocks, such as harvested wood products, it will be necessary for the UNFF secretariat to ask FAO and the UNFCCC secretariat for any additional information that is available.

28. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, including methodological issues, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to maintain or enhance carbon stocks.

Target 1.3 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally

29. SDG indicator 15.2.1 will provide an overview on "the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests". This indicator measures progress towards SFM through five sub-indicators¹⁴ and, as an aid to interpretation, a dashboard of traffic lights is used, with green, yellow and red indicating the direction and rate of change in each of the sub-indicators at the global and regional level. These sub-indicators are: forest area annual net change rate, above-ground biomass stock in forest, proportion of forest area located within legally established protect areas, proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan and forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme.

30. The UNFF secretariat will use numerical information ('000 hectares) from *FRA 2020* Tables 1a (Extent of forest and other wooded land), 1b (Forest characteristics) and 1c (Annual forest expansion, deforestation and net change) to provide a global overview in quantitative terms for deforestation, afforestation and reforestation. It will not be possible to provide a global overview of progress on restoration of degraded forests in quantitative terms as there is no internationally agreed definition of degraded forest and no consensus on measurement methods. (*FRA 2020* Table 5c (degraded forest) does not require data input, although it does

¹³ FAO. 2016. *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015: how are the world's forests changing?* Second Edition. Rome, pages 30-31 (Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4793e.pdf>).

¹⁴ see <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/1521/en/>.

request information on any national definitions of "degraded forest" and about any monitoring process in place at the national level, including methodology and any results.)

31. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation. Countries may refer to, and provide, national definitions when describing progress in the restoration of degraded forests.

Target 1.4 The resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change is significantly strengthened worldwide

32. The main source of information for assessing progress will be information from Country Reports about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change.

33. Another potential indicator of progress is the number of countries that have developed national Disaster Risk Reduction strategies which include forest-related measures¹⁵.

Global Forest Goal 2

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people¹⁶.

Target 2.1 Extreme poverty for all forest-dependent people is eradicated

34. There is no internationally agreed definition of "forest dependent people". However, *SOF0 2018* provided an analysis to quantify the contribution of forests towards SDG target 1.1 (by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, measured as those living on less than USD 1.25 a day)¹⁷. Based on peer-reviewed studies and available rural poverty data published in 2016, this analysis revealed that roughly 820 million rural people in the tropics live in or near forests and savannahs and suggested that around 40 percent of these people (or 251 million) lived on less than USD 1.25 a day. A regional breakdown was also provided. Until further data is available, these figures and methodology offer an approach to developing a baseline for assessing progress towards this target in quantitative terms. However, this may prove challenging as there is still considerable academic debate about the meaning of the term "forest dependent people"¹⁸.

¹⁵ See page 54 of FAO (2018) *State of the World's Forests 2018*. (Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I9535EN/i9535en.pdf>.)

¹⁶ Goal 2 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among others, Sustainable Development Goal targets 1.1, 1.4, 2.4, 4.4, 5.a, 6.6, 8.3, 9.3, 12.2, 12.5, 15.6 and 15.c, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 4, 14 and 18.

¹⁷ See pages 10-11 and 65-71 in of FAO (2018) *State of the World's Forests 2018*. (Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I9535EN/i9535en.pdf>.)

¹⁸ See for example Who are forest-dependent people? A taxonomy to aid livelihood and land use decision-making in forested regions Peter Newton, Daniel C. Miller, Mugabi Augustine Ateenyi Byenkya, Arun Agrawal. *Land Use Policy* 57 (2016) 388–395 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2016.05.032>

35. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to eradicate extreme poverty¹⁹ for all forest-dependent people. They may refer to, and provide, relevant national definitions of forest-dependent people and related data on poverty reduction.

Target 2.2 Increase the access of small-scale forest enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets

36. At present it is not possible to assess progress towards this target in quantitative terms as no credible statistical information is available on access by small-scale forest enterprises to financial services, or their integration into value chains and markets. While SDG indicators 9.3.1 and 9.3.2²⁰ are potentially relevant, neither relate specifically to forest enterprises and they are both still Tier 3²¹.

37. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase access by small-scale forest enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and the integration of small-scale forest enterprises into value chains and markets.

Target 2.3 The contribution of forests and trees to food security is significantly increased

38. *SOFO 2016 (Forests and Agriculture: Land-Use Challenges and Opportunities)*²² examined the contribution of forest and trees to food security in some detail, but this analysis was based largely on country case studies. The contribution of forests and trees to food security was also considered in *SOFO 2014*²³ and *SOFO 2018*²⁴. These studies also recognise the indirect contribution of forests to agricultural land productivity. However, at present, there are no robust data sources at the global level for metrics that provide quantitative information about the contribution of forests and trees to the various dimensions of food security, namely food availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization, stability and nutrition. Although SDG indicator 2.3.2 (average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status) refers to the average income of small-scale food producers employed in the farming, pastoral and forestry sectors, it is a currently Tier 3 indicator and does not provide disaggregated forest-related data.

¹⁹ The World Bank Group currently defines “extreme poverty” as people living on less than \$1.90 a day (2011 purchasing parity power prices). See <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/746163-what-is-the-1-90-poverty-line-and-based-on-this>.

²⁰ SDG indicator 9.3.1 is Proportion of small-scale industries in total industry value added. SDG indicator 9.3.2 is Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit.

²¹ Tier 3 means that no internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested. (see <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>).

²² See, in particular, chapter 4 of FAO (2016) *State of the World's Forests 2016* (Available at <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofo/2016/en/>)

²³ See pages 30-33, 48,78-79 of FAO (2014) *State of the World's Forests 2014*. (Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3710e.pdf>)

²⁴ See pages 15-19 and 65-71 of FAO (2018) *State of the World's Forests 2018*. (Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I9535EN/i9535en.pdf>).

39. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase the contribution of forests and trees to food security. This may include references to data that is available at the national level on the contribution of forests and trees to food security.

Target 2.4 The contribution of forest industry, other forest-based enterprises and forest ecosystem services to social, economic and environmental development, among other things, is significantly increased

40. This target has social, economic and environmental dimensions. In order to assess progress towards this target in quantitative terms it is proposed that the following data series are used:

Social: changes in employment in the forestry and logging sector. Numerical information ('000 years fulltime equivalents) from *FRA 2020* Tables 7a (Employment in forestry and logging) will provide a global overview. *FRA 2015* reported that employment in forests was around 12.7 million people full-time equivalent in 2010. However, as explained in *SOFO 2018*²⁵, it will need to be recognised that this figure takes no account of either indirect employment (for example, in enterprises that supply goods and services to forest enterprises, or add value to forests products) or the informal sector. (*SOFO 2018* referred to estimates suggesting that, directly and indirectly, the formal forest sector provides over 45 million jobs and that in addition around 40-60 million people are involved in the informal forest sector.)

Economic: changes in value added by the forest sector and its contribution to the global economy. *SOFO 2014* states that, overall, the value added in the forest sector amounted to just over USD 600 billion in 2011 and accounted for about 0.9 percent of the global economy²⁶. This information will require updating. Furthermore, as explained in *SOFO 2014*, consumption benefits relating to energy, shelter, food security and health are recognized as more significant than monetary income from the sector, but it is difficult to obtain the relevant data²⁷ on these other economic benefits.

Environmental: Targets 2.5 and 3.1 already relate to biodiversity, climate change and conservation. To avoid overlap it is proposed that the environmental dimension for this target is assessed by reference to Targets 2.5 and 3.1, together with information from *FRA 2020* Table 7a (Designated Management Objective) on the proportions of forests managed for soil and water conservation as a designated management objective, and as a primary management objective. (Further information about the environmental importance of management for soil and water conservation is summarised in *FRA 2015*²⁸ and *SOFO 2018*²⁹.)

41. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase the contribution of forest industry, other forest-based enterprises and forest ecosystem services to social, economic (including the informal sector)

²⁵ See pages 18 and 38 of *FAO State of the World's Forests 2018*.

²⁶ See page 20 of *FAO State of the World's Forests 2014*

²⁷ See page xi and 29-40 of *FAO State of the World's Forests 2014*

²⁸ See pages 31-32 of *FAO 2016, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015*:

²⁹ See pages 28-31 of *FAO State of the World's Forests 2018*

and environmental development, among other things. In order to consider “other things” that may be relevant in this context, country correspondents may wish to refer to the list of national policies and measures contained in paragraph 6 of the UNFI.

Target 2.5 The contribution of all types of forests to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation is enhanced, taking into account the mandates and ongoing work of relevant conventions and instruments

42. In order to assess progress towards the biodiversity conservation element of this target in quantitative terms the UNFF secretariat will use the following data series:

- Numerical information (‘000 ha) from FRA2020 Table 1e (specific forest categories) on changes in the area of primary forest.
- Numerical information from FRA2020 Table 3a (designated management objective) on the proportions of forests managed for conservation of biodiversity as a designated management objective, and as a primary management objective.

If disaggregated information for forests becomes available, it may be possible to supplement these data series with information from SDG indicator 15.1.2 (proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type) and SDG indicator 15.5.1 (Red List Index).

43. It will be more challenging to assess progress towards the climate change mitigation and adaptation element of this target. If sufficient progress is made, it may be possible for the UNFF secretariat to use GCS indicator 3 (net greenhouse gas emissions/removals and carbon balance of harvested wood products) to assess progress in terms of climate change mitigation, or indicators contained in reports to UNCCD. Another possible approach is to repeat the analysis carried out for *SOFO 2018* which revealed that at least 120 countries had mentioned forests in their submissions to UNFCCC (Nationally Determined Contributions, National Communications, National Adaptation Programmes of Action and National Adaptation Plans) to UNFCCC³⁰.

44. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to enhance the contribution of all types of forests to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation. They may also refer to relevant national communications to CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC.

Global Forest Goal 3

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 forests³¹.

³⁰ See pages 55-7 of FAO (2018) *State of the World's Forests 2018*

³¹ Goal 3 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among others, Sustainable Development Goal targets 7.2, 12.2, 12.6, 12.7, 14.2, 14.5, 15.2 and 15.4, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 7, 11, 12 and 16.

Target 3.1 The area of forests worldwide designated as protected areas or conserved through other effective area-based conservation measures is significantly increased

45. The UNFF secretariat will use numerical information ('000 hectares) from *FRA2020* Table 3a (designated management objective) on the proportions of forests managed for conservation of biodiversity as a designated management objective, and as a primary management objective, and from Table 3b (forest area within legally established protected areas) to provide a global overview.

46. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase the area of forests designated as protected areas or conserved through other effective area-based conservation measures.

Target 3.2 The area of forests under long-term forest management plans is significantly increased

47. The UNFF secretariat will use numerical information ('000 hectares) from *FRA 2020* Table 3b (forest area with long-term forest management plan) to provide a global overview.

48. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase the area of forests under long-term forest management plans.

Target 3.3 The proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests is significantly increased

49. Country Reports will provide information about the challenges, and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests. While many forests are sustainably managed without certification, Country Reports may also refer to the proportion of forest products from certified forests (including forests certified under internationally and/or nationally approved schemes).

Global Forest Goal 4

Mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships³²

Target 4.1 Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

50. Analysis carried out for *SOFO 2018*³³ revealed that in 2015 ODA disbursement on forestry was about USD 800 million, which was less than 1 percent of total ODA. This information, derived from OECD databases, will be updated by the UNFF secretariat. However, it is more difficult to obtain comprehensive information at the global level about

³² Goal 4 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among others, Sustainable Development Goal targets 12.a, 15.7, 15.a, 15.b, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.16, 17.17, 17.18 and 17.19, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 19.

³³ See pages 65-66 of FAO (2018) *State of the World's Forests 2018*: will need updating

other sources of finance for SFM, although every effort will be made to draw upon information that is available. Analysis of responses to question 4(c) in Country Reports will provide information about the sources of increased finance for SFM.

51. Country Reports will also provide information about the challenges in mobilising funds and actions taken at the national and sub-national level to mobilize significant resources to finance SFM. The response to question 4(a) can be used for any clarification that is considered necessary³⁴. If there is a decrease in financial resources for SFM this can be noted in the section on challenges in response to question 4(c)³⁵.

Target 4.2 Forest-related financing from all sources at all levels, including public (national, bilateral, multilateral and triangular), private and philanthropic financing is significantly increased.

52. The sources of information are the same as for target 4.1.

Target 4.3 North-South, South-South, North-North and triangular cooperation and public-private partnerships on science, technology and innovation in the forest sector are significantly enhanced and increased.

53. This target relates to the second part of the Goal (“...and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships.”) Analysis of responses to question 4(d) in Country Reports will provide information on the numbers of countries engaged in different types of international cooperation to promote SFM.

54. Country Reports will also provide further information about actions taken at the national and sub-national level to enhanced and increase North-South, South-South, North-North and triangular cooperation and public-private partnerships on science, technology and innovation in the forest sector.

Target 4.4 The number of countries which have developed and implemented forest financing strategies and have access to financing from all sources is significantly increased.

55. Analysis of responses to question 4(e) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries that have developed or implemented forest financing strategies, and their time-frames.

56. Country Reports will also provide further information about the challenges in mobilising funds, and other actions taken at the national and sub-national level to increase access to financing from all sources.

Target 4.5 The collection, availability and accessibility of forest-related information is improved through, for example, multi-disciplinary scientific assessments

57. This target also relates to the second part of the Goal (“...and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships”.) Country Reports will provide information about the actions taken at the national and sub-national level to improve the collection, availability and

³⁴ For example: on the scale of any increase in financial resources; on whether the country is a donor or recipient of ODA; on the nature of any REDD+ benefits; on funding for SFM that is subsumed within more general funding for conservation measures.

³⁵ Other challenges may include, for example, a need for additional funding for capacity building.

accessibility of forest-related information. This information will be provided in the responses to question 4(a).

Global Forest Goal 5

Promote governance frameworks to implement SFM, including through the UN Forest Instrument, and enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda³⁶.

Target 5.1 Increase number of countries which have integrated forests into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies

58. Analysis of responses to question 5(c) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries that have integrated forests into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies.

59. Country Reports will also provide further information in response to question 5(a) about action aimed at integrating forests into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies. The response to question 5(a) can be used for any comment on effectiveness of such action and any necessary clarifications with regard to question 5(d)³⁷.

Target 5.2 Forest law enforcement and governance are enhanced, including through significantly strengthening national and subnational forest authorities, and illegal logging and associated trade is significantly reduced worldwide.

60. Analysis of responses to question 5(d) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries that have taken steps to prevent and reduce illegal international trafficking in forest products, wildlife and other biological resources, and the type of action taken. (This may include steps that are being taken to continue action that was initiated before 2015.) In addition, information from *FRA 2020* Table 6a (policies, legislation and national platform for stakeholder participation in forest policy) may ~~will~~ provide information on the existence of traceability system for wood products. The UNFF secretariat will use further information from CITES that is relevant to assessment of progress towards this target.

61. Country Reports will also use the response to question 5(a) to provide further information about action aimed at making progress towards this target, and its effectiveness. As the target relates to enhancing forest law enforcement and governance and reducing illegal logging and associated trade, this is broader than question 5(d). For some countries, the actions they report may be part of a wider regional initiative³⁸

Target 5.3 National and subnational forest-related policies and programs are coherent, coordinated and complementary across ministries, departments and authorities, consistent

³⁶ Goal 5 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement, among others, of Sustainable Development Goal targets 1.4, 2.4, 5.a, 15.c, 15.9, 16.3, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.10 and 17.14, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2 and 3.

³⁷ For example, explaining if the country uses another name for its national sustainable development plan/poverty reduction strategy; commenting if necessary on the extent to which forests are integrated into the national sustainable development plan/poverty reduction strategy; or making a note if there is no national sustainable development plan/poverty reduction strategy.

³⁸ This would include, for example, action by EU member states in relation to the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan.

with national laws, and engage relevant stakeholders, local communities and indigenous peoples, fully recognizing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

62. Analysis of responses to question 5(e) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries that have mechanisms in place to ensure cross-sectoral coordination among government agencies. (In this context “mechanisms to ensure cross-sectoral coordination” are mechanisms that contribute towards this target: these would, for example, include mechanisms to achieve coherence between national and sub-national policies/programs as well across ministries etc. at the national level.)

63. The second part of this target relates to stakeholder engagement. Information from *FRA 2020* Table 6a (policies, legislation and national platform for stakeholder participation in forest policy) will provide a global overview of the number of countries with a national platform for stakeholder participation in forest policy.

64. Analysis of responses to question 5(f) in Country Reports will provide information on the types of mechanisms that countries have in place to involve stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous peoples, in SFM policy formulation, planning and implementation.

Target 5.4 Forest-related issues and the forest sector are fully integrated into decision-making processes of land use planning and development.

65. Analysis of responses to question 5(g) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries that have mechanisms in place to involve the forest sector in cross-sectoral coordination among government agencies in charge of land use planning and development, and the types of mechanism that are in place. If necessary, the box in 5(g) may be used to comment on how far forest-related issues are integrated into land use planning and development. (It may be appropriate to make a cross-reference to question 5.1 if land use plans are a component of national sustainable development plans).

Global Forest Goal 6³⁹

Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the UN System and across CPF member organizations, as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders⁴⁰.

Target 6.3 Cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation to promote SFM and halt deforestation and forest degradation is significantly enhanced at all levels.

66. Country Reports will provide information in response to question 6(a) about actions taken at the national and sub-national level to enhance cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation to promote SFM and halt deforestation and forest degradation.

³⁹ Targets 6.1 and 6.2 are not included under goal 6 in the Reporting Format as they address actions taken by the international community, and not those taken at the national level. Information about progress towards these targets will be requested from CPF members.

⁴⁰ Goal 6 and its targets support and contribute to the achievement of, among others, Sustainable Development Goal target 17.14.

Target 6.4 A greater common understanding of the concept of SFM is achieved and an associated set of indicators is identified.

67. Analysis of responses to question 6(c) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries where there are criteria and indicators for SFM, the types of indicators, and the purposes for which they are used.

68. Analysis of responses to question 6(d) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries where action has been taken to promote a greater understanding and awareness of SFM, and the nature of such action, which could include for example publications, media campaigns, educational programmes or motivational events.

Target 6.5 The input and involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the UNSPF and in the work of the Forum, including intersessional work, is strengthened.

69. Analysis of responses to question 6(e) in Country Reports will provide information on the number of countries where Government has taken action to involve major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the UNSPF, and the nature of such action, which may include for example strengthening of stakeholder engagement, capacity building, partnerships and devolving public forest management rights.

D. Explanation of terms used in the Reporting Format

What is meant by legislative, policy, financial and institutional actions?

70. The reporting format adopted at UNFF13 requests information from countries about legislative and policy actions, institutional actions, financial actions, and technical and scientific actions taken to support implementation of the UNSPF. It is proposed that, for the purposes of the Country Reports, the responses to questions should focus on the following types of action:

Legislative actions. These may include improvements to national or sub-national legislation and regulations that govern and guide SFM; and the strengthening of forest law enforcement.

Policy actions. These may include national or sub-national policies, programmes or strategies that explicitly encourage SFM and are contained in formal statements or documents produced by governments or other public sector bodies setting out goals, proposals for action and underlying principles.

Institutional actions. These may include actions to strengthen institutions, including public sector bodies and/or bodies that promote the interests of the private sector, communities or civil society; and actions to establish or strengthen partnerships, including public-private sector partnerships and joint programmes with stakeholders, to advance implementation of SFM.

Financial actions. The responses to questions 1(a)(iii), 2(a)(iii) and 3(a)(iii) may include actions aimed at mobilising increased financial resources for achieving particular targets. The response to question 4(a) may include details of broader actions, including for example creation of enabling environments to encourage investment in SFM and the development of national forest financing strategies.

Technical and scientific actions. These may include actions to promote capacity-building for science and technology, to develop and apply scientific and technological innovations, to facilitate access to and transfer of technology, to analyse threats to forest health and vitality and to incorporate scientific expertise into forest policies and programmes.

What are “major groups”?

71. Agenda 21, adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, formalized nine sectors of society as the main channels through which broad participation would be facilitated in UN activities related to sustainable development. These are called "Major Groups" and are as follows: Women; Children and Youth; Indigenous Peoples; Non-Governmental Organizations; Local Authorities; Workers and Trade Unions; Business and Industry; Scientific and Technological Community; and Farmers.

Terms and Definitions used in FRA 2020

72. In order to provide continuity and consistency of data over time, a number of forest-related terms have been carefully defined for the purposes of *FRA 2020*. These are contained in FAO FRA Working Paper 188, *Global Forest resources Assessment Terms and Definitions*⁴¹. These definitions should also be used for the purposes of Country Reports.

What does “significantly” mean in the context of the GFGTs?

73. Several of the GFGs and their targets use the word “significantly” (as, for example in “significantly increase” or “significantly enhance”). The relevant Oxford Dictionary definition of “significantly” in this context is “in a sufficiently great or important way as to be worthy of attention”.

What is the “informal economy”?

74. The informal economy can be broadly defined as economic activity that is not subject to government regulation, monitoring or taxation.

What does “mobilise” mean, as used in GFG4?

75. In this context, “mobilise” means securing financial resources and using them to finance SFM.

What is meant by North-South, South-South, North-North and triangular cooperation?

76. The “North” means developed countries and the “South” means developing countries. Thus, for example, North-South cooperation refers to the exchange of expertise between one or more developed countries and one or more developing countries, and South-South cooperation means cooperation between two or more developing countries. Triangular cooperation involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries

⁴¹ Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I8661EN/i8661en.pdf>

supported by a developed country(ies)/or multilateral organization(s) to implement development cooperation programmes and projects⁴².

What is a public-private partnership?

77. This term can be used in different ways, but one definition of a public-private partnership (PPP) is as “a long-term contract between a private party and a government entity, for providing a public asset or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility, and remuneration is linked to performance”. PPPs typically do not include service contracts or turnkey construction contracts, which are categorized as public procurement projects, or the privatization of utilities where there is a limited ongoing role for the public sector.⁴³

What about other terms?

78. As explained above, there are some terms (such as “forest degradation” and “forest dependent people”) that do not have an internationally accepted definition. In cases such as this Country Reports may refer to, and provide, relevant national definitions.

Thanks

79. The efforts of all those involved in preparing Country Reports are greatly appreciated. They will have an invaluable role assessing the progress that is being made towards sustainable management of the world’s forests.

⁴² For more detail see Framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation, Note by the Secretary-General, High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. Seventeenth session New York, 22-25 May 2012, SSC/17/3 - available at <http://undocs.org/en/SSC/17/3>.

⁴³ Based on information at <https://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/overview/what-are-public-private-partnership>.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFRQ	Collaborative Forest Resource Questionnaire
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests ⁴⁴
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FRA2020	Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GCS	Global Core Set of forest-related indicators
GFFFN	Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network
GFGT	Global Forest Goals and Targets (as set out in the UNSPF)
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SOFO FAO)	The State of the World's Forests (biennial publication by
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNFF11/UNFF12/UNFF13 etc	Eleventh/Twelfth/Thirteenth etc Session of UNFF
UNSPF	United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests 2017-30
USD	United States Dollar
VNC	Voluntary National Contributions

⁴⁴ The Collaborative Partnership on Forests consists of 15 organizations: the Centre for International Forestry Research, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Tropical Timber Organization, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Agroforestry Centre, the World Bank, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

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