

## **United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat**

### **Workshop on Reporting on Global Forest Goals and targets of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests 2017-30**

**FAO Headquarters, Rome, 14-16 November 2018**

#### **Report of the workshop**

##### **Introduction**

1. The main objective of the workshop was to clarify the reporting process to the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) at its 15<sup>th</sup> session in 2020 and in particular to develop Explanatory Notes aimed at helping countries to prepare their national reports for submission to UNFF. In addition, the workshop aimed to advance work on methodologies for monitoring progress on Global Forest Goal 2 (GFG 2) and reporting on socio-economic issues related to forests and forestry and work on Indicators 13 and 14 of the Global Core Set of Forest-related indicators (GCS).

2. The workshop was organised by the UNFF secretariat (UNFFS) and hosted by FAO. Fifty experts from forty-member states and three organizations participated in the workshop in a personal capacity. They came from the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, China, Chile, Dominica, Finland, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Samoa, Serbia, Suriname, Tanzania, Ukraine, United States, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. The following organizations were represented: FAO, Forest Europe, UNFCCC and UNFF secretariat. Out of the fifty participants, thirteen were men, a 74% male representation, and thirteen were women, a 26% female representation.

3. Participants were welcomed by Mr. Hiroto Mitsugi (Assistant Director General, FAO), who recalled that on 27 April 2017 the UN General Assembly had set a new agenda for forests by adopting the first ever UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-30 (UNSPF) with six Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and 26 associated targets.

##### **Discussions of the expert workshop**

4. All power-point presentations shown during the workshop are available on the UNFF website: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/documents/national-reports/expert-meeting-on-reporting-2018/index.html>

##### ***Setting the scene***

5. UNFFS explained that the UNSPF builds on the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and sets a shared global vision and mission on forests, and that its GFGs include ground breaking targets to increase forests globally by 3% and to eradicate extreme poverty for all forest dependent people, by 2030. The reporting challenge is to provide the best possible information on progress towards the GFGs with the minimum reporting burden.

6. UNFFS also introduced the Reporting Format which had been adopted at UNFF13 in May 2018 following initial discussions at an expert meeting in Brasilia (February 2017), a pilot exercise and a further expert meeting in Nairobi (November 2017).

### ***Forest Resources Assessment***

7. FAO made a presentation on the *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (FRA 2020)*, explaining that the core data source would be FRA country reports. Participants welcomed the development of the new FRA Platform.

### ***Global Core Set of Indicators***

8. FAO outlined the origins and development of the Global Core Set of forest-related indicators (GCS), explaining that their aim is to reduce reporting burdens by measuring progress towards sustainable forest management (SFM) and related SDGs in a consistent way. UNFF13 had welcomed the progress made with these GCS and had acknowledged their value. However, a good deal of work is needed to develop some of the indicators, especially those classed as “tier 3”. It was noted that there would be more detailed discussion of GCS indicators 13 and 14 later in the meeting.

### ***Explanatory notes for reporting on UNSPF***

9. UNFFS introduced the Background Document containing proposals for Explanatory notes for reporting on the UNSPF.

10. Participants gave detailed consideration to the Background Document during group sessions facilitated by Mr Simon Bridge (Canada).

### ***Reporting on Global Forest Goal 2***

11. Participants were briefed about the issues related to reporting on GFG 2 and the challenges associated with a lack of methodologies and socioeconomic forest-related data for assessing progress. It was noted that the GFG 2 targets are politically important but difficult to measure, but that without adequate data the contribution of forests is often underestimated.

### ***The State of the World's Forests 2018***

12. FAO provided an overview of findings from *The State of the World's Forests 2018<sup>1</sup>* (SOFO 2018), highlighting in particular the findings relevant to GFG Targets 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4. These include information on the proportion of rural people living on less than \$1.25 a day and residing in and around forests, the share of income deriving from forest resources among the rural poor, the prevalence of people depending on woodfuel, and percentage of household income from non-wood forest products (NWFPs). It was also noted that there is further socio-economic data in SOFO 2014 and that SOFO 2016 focuses on food security and land-use change.

### ***Monitoring and reporting on forest-related socio-economic data***

13. FAO also made presentations on sources of socio-economic data and related methodologies. FAO paper 179 on *National socioeconomic surveys in forestry<sup>2</sup>* contains a set

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<sup>1</sup> Weblink to SOFO 2018

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6206e.pdf>

of survey modules on forest and wild products that can be used to provide information on the socioeconomic contributions of forests to household welfare and livelihoods. In addition, an example was provided from an Integrated Land Use Assessment in Zambia to demonstrate the use of interviews with key informants, focus groups and household surveys to gather socio-economic data. However, it was noted that it can be difficult to aggregate the findings from different surveys carried out for different purposes using different methodologies. Furthermore, wider surveys, such as Living Standards Measurement Studies and the World Programme for Census of Agriculture, often contain little or no forest-related socio-economic data.

14. Mr Mahendra Joshi reported on his findings from a literature review exploring the challenges associated with developing indicators for GFG targets 2.1 and 2.3. He noted that there is no recognised definition of “forest dependent people”. In a developing country context, the term is often used to describe local communities and indigenous peoples living in or near forests, but it can also include urban populations that rely on forest products such as wood fuel. In an industrialised country context, the term can refer to people living in communities where there is heavy dependence on employment in forest-related industries.

#### *Socio-economic data collection – country experiences*

15. Participants from three countries made presentations outlining their experiences with regard to socio-economic data collection.

- In the Philippines, a process has been developed to gather socio-economic data from field officers and other sources. Challenges include weak baseline data on forest dependent people. Data collection could be strengthened through more effective cooperation and by mainstreaming socio-economic analysis relating to forest-dependant people, for example by including relevant questions in the national census.
- In Kenya, there are data sources relating to poverty, gender inequality and food security. These data are disaggregated at “ward” level to provide information about people living in or near forests, although it is recognised that adjacency is not necessarily the same dependency. A report on the well-being of forest-adjacent people will be published in 2020.
- In Peru, the National Forest Inventory now includes collection of socio-economic data from 323 sample population centres located within 5 kilometres of forests. Information is being collected on a range of variables including employment, NWFPs and the contribution of forests to household well-being (through, for example, medicine, housing, food, firewood and water), and participation in forest management.

During discussion, participants highlighted the importance of data sharing between agencies. They also noted that given the difficulty of defining “forest dependency”, it can be easier to design sample surveys around the concept of “forest adjacency” or ease of access to forests.

#### *Further work on GCS indicators 13 and 14*

16. Recognising that GCS indicator 13 (number of forest dependent people in extreme poverty) and GCS indicator 14 (contribution of forests to food security) are closely related to

GFG 2, participants considered how they might be developed by CPF in order to become usable indicators. The following suggestions were made:

- Develop a definition of “forest dependant people”, or definitions of sub-groups of “forest dependant people”. This could be done by (i) considering existing national definitions and methodologies for collecting socio-economic data about forest dependant people, drawing *inter alia* on information contained within Country Reports to UNFF; (ii) reviewing these different national approaches through a CPF-led initiative (probably in 2020) in order to develop internationally agreed definition(s) and methodologies for data collection and analysis.
- Improve understanding of the contribution of forests to food security by developing indicators that draw on the different dimensions of food security (namely, food availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization, stability and nutrition) and also recognise the contribution of ecosystem services provided by forests. This should build on existing work, such as SOFO 2016.
- Develop methodological guidelines and data collection models drawing on current experience in countries and regional processes, while recognising that different approaches are appropriate in different countries. There should also be a platform with on-line tools for the collection and dissemination of socio-economic data relating to forest-dependant people and the contribution of forests to food security. This would build on existing data, promote data availability, provide transparency and facilitate the sharing of experiences. In addition, there should be greater coordination with national statistical offices, using increased understanding of the relationships between forests and poverty eradication and food security to design appropriate national census questions.

### ***Reporting cycles***

17. Participants were briefed on the timing of the likely reporting cycles for UNFF and the timeline for FRA 2020.

18. For UNFF, the aim is to send the Reporting Format and Explanatory Notes to countries after UNFF 14, in May 2019, and request the submission of Country Reports by mid-November 2019. The analysis of Country Reports for the purposes of the Secretary-General’s Report to UNFF15 will need to be completed by mid-February 2020 in order to allow time for translation into other UN official languages.

19. UNFF has not yet decided upon the details of timing for future reporting cycles.

20. For *FRA 2020*, it is likely that preliminary results and key findings will be published early in 2020, so that they are available for SDGF reporting purposes and to provide input to the Secretary-General’s Report to UNFF15. The full *FRA 2020* report would then be published, in all official UN languages, at the FAO Committee on Forestry meeting to be held later in 2020.

21. During discussion it was noted that the Country Reports will be placed on the UNFF web-site in the language in which they are transmitted to the UNFF secretariat and there will

be no “validation” process. A number of participants asked about the possibility of a further workshop on reporting, possibly at the time when countries have developed initial drafts, and the UNFF secretariat said that this would be subject to the availability of resources.

### ***Use of the information submitted in national reports***

22. Participants shared views on the request from UNFF13 that the UNFF secretariat should prepare, based on the initial round of reporting and in consultation with countries, CPF members and relevant stakeholders, a concise “flagship” publication on progress towards achieving the GFGs and targets for release by the end of 2021. It was noted that the Forum would consider initial proposals regarding this flagship publication in 2019 at UNFF 14. Following an interactive, brainstorming discussion, it was suggested that:

- The publication should be a visionary, forward-looking document that would help shape policy making. It should also highlight progress that has made.
- It should be written in plain language that engages non-experts, including policy-makers, legislators, and the interested public. Thus, it should be attention-grabbing, interesting, informative and authoritative. It should also be easy to translate into local languages.
- It should target young minds, inspiring the next generation to understand the importance of SFM, and attracting some of them to consider a career in forestry.
- It may be sensible to have multiple products. These could include a core “reference document” available on-line, the concise flagship publication itself, infographics designed for social media and inter-active “forestry dash-boards” for tracking progress.

### ***Revision of Explanatory Notes***

23. Participants considered a revised version of the Explanatory Notes that contained amendments reflecting their discussions during the meeting. A number of further suggestions were made and the UNFF secretariat agreed to take these into account, noting that UN editors may make further changes. On this basis, participants agreed on the Explanatory Notes and recommended that the document should form part of the official documentation for UNFF 14.

### ***Conclusion***

25. FAO and the UNFF secretariat thanked participants for their energy and valuable contributions during the workshop.