

Concept Note
Expert Meeting to review progress in implementation of the major groups workplans and input to the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF14)

9 -11 January 2019, UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand

Background and Rational:

According to resolution E/2000/35 that established the Forum, the participation of a wide range of forest-related stakeholders, including major groups, as identified in Agenda 21¹, is considered a key component of sustainable forest management (SFM). Through this resolution, accredited major group organizations with ECOSOC and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) are encouraged to participate in Forum sessions.

In April 2017, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UNSPF²: the global framework for action at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests, and to halt deforestation and forest degradation. The UNSPF states that effective implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM) depends on the contributions of all relevant stakeholders, including forest owners, indigenous peoples, local communities, local authorities, the private sector (including small, medium and large forest-based enterprises), non-governmental organizations, women, children, youth and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations at all levels³.

In addition, Forum endeavours to work with major groups and other relevant stakeholders to identify ways to enhance their contributions to the achievement of the global targets at all levels and their interactions with the Forum and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), including through networks, advisory groups and other mechanisms, to raise awareness, foster information exchange and dissemination and facilitate coordinated inputs⁴.

At UNFF12, member States further welcomed the initiatives undertaken by major groups in contributing to the development and implementation of the UNSPF and the Forum's 4POW⁵. The Forum encouraged major groups and other relevant stakeholders to continue their involvement in the work of the Forum, including by elaborating proposals or work plans on how they can contribute to

¹ The following Major Groups were identified in Agenda 21: Business and Industry, Children and Youth, Farmers, Indigenous People, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Local Authorities, Scientific and Technological Community, Women and Workers and Trade Unions

² A/RES/71/285

³ E/CN.18/SS/2017/2 paragraph 49

⁴ E/CN.18/SS/2017/2 paragraph 50

⁵ (E/CN.18/2017/8) paragraph 11

the implementation of the UNSPF and the Forum's 4POW, and to present such proposals or plans to the Forum at UNFF13⁶.

At UNFF13, member States welcomed the joint workplan developed by the major groups to accelerate achievement of the global forest goals and complementary workplan developed by the children and youth major group. The member States invited major groups to inform the Forum at UNFF14 on progress made in implementing the workplans. The Forum also invited major group partners to undertake initiatives to accelerate the contributions of forests to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) under review in 2019 and to inform the Forum of progress made at UNFF14.

Technical discussions during UNFF14 will focus on three thematic priorities: i) Forests and climate change; ii) Forests, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and employment; and iii) Forests, peaceful and inclusive societies, reduced inequality, education, and inclusive institutions at all levels. In addition, UNFF14 agenda item 6 will address "Enhancing global forest policy coherence and a common understanding of sustainable forest management".

The United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS) will convene an expert meeting to review progress in implementation of the major groups workplans including acceleration in achieving of the global forest goals; major groups initiatives to accelerate the contributions of forests to achieving the (SDGs) under review by the HLPF in 2019; and discuss civil society's contributions to technical discussion on the three UNFF14 thematic priorities.

Objective:

The objective of this expert meeting is to review progress in implementation of the major groups workplans including acceleration in achieving of the global forest goals; major groups initiatives to accelerate the contributions of forests to achieving the (SDGs) under review by the HLPF in 2019; and to discuss civil society's contribution to technical discussions on the three UNFF14 thematic priorities. The expert meeting will also discuss major groups' contributions to the UNFF14 agenda item 6 on enhancing global forest policy coherence and a common understanding of sustainable forest management.

Expected Output

The results of this meeting will include a final report on progress in implementation of the major groups' workplans including acceleration in achieving of the global forest goals; major groups initiatives to accelerate the contributions of forests to achieving the SDGs under review in 2019; and civil

⁶ (E/CN.18/2017/8) paragraph 7

society perspectives on UNFF14's thematic priorities. This report will also include:

- Actions for promoting and or advancing global forest policy coherence; and
- Actions for promoting and or advancing a common understanding of SFM.

Date and Venue:

The expert meeting will take place from 9 to 11 January 2019, at UNESCAP in Bangkok, Thailand.

Participation:

Approximately 30 key experts from UNFF Major Groups and other stakeholders will participate in this expert meeting in their personal capacity.

Format:

The expert meeting will be held from 10 am to 6 pm daily and will include a discussion on the major groups workplans including acceleration in achieving of the global forest goals; major groups initiatives to accelerate the contributions of forests to achieving the SDGs under review in 2019; civil society perspectives on UNFF14's thematic priorities, and major groups contributions to the global forest policy coherence and a common understanding of SFM.

Language:

The expert meeting will be conducted in English