

**UNFF Expert Group Meeting on  
The Quadrennial Programme of Work 2021-2024  
Conference Room VIII- Palais des Nations  
14-15 November 2019, Geneva-Switzerland  
Concept Note**

## **I. Background**

In accordance with the Quadrennial Programme of Work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) for the period 2017-2020<sup>1</sup>, the fifteenth session of the UNFF (UNFF15), to be held on 4-8 May 2020 at UNHQ in New York is expected to adopt the Quadrennial Programme of Work (4POW) of the UNFF for the period 2021-2024, including consideration of its priority actions and resource needs.

The UNFF14 Chair's summary also contains an indicative list of intersessional activities to be undertaken by the Secretariat in preparation for UNFF15, including elaboration of draft elements for the 4POW 2021-2024 in consultation with Members of the Forum, taking into account the post-2020 cycle of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)<sup>2</sup>.

To facilitate an informed decision by UNFF15, the Secretariat circulated a brief questionnaire (contained in Annex I of this Concept Note) on 19 August 2019 to Members of the Forum to gather their initial ideas and suggestions on the 4POW 2021-2024<sup>3</sup>. The Secretariat will organize this expert group meeting on 14-15 November in Geneva to consider the results of the survey and, elaborate possible elements for the next 4POW, with the view to making a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024. In advance of the expert meeting, the Secretariat will circulate a concise discussion paper which contains the review of survey results and possible elements for the 4POW 2021-2024 for consideration by the expert meeting.

## **II. Objective**

The expert group meeting provides an opportunity for Members of the Forum, as well as partners, to review and discuss the results of the survey and elaborate possible elements for the next 4POW, with a view to making a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024, taking into account lessons learned from the implementation of the 4POW 2017-2020 as set out in Annex II of ECOSOC resolution 2017/4 (paragraphs 1-6 and tables 1-4)<sup>4</sup>. Based on its review, the expert meeting is expected to make a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024 for consideration by UNFF15.

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<sup>1</sup> E/RES/2017/4

<sup>2</sup> Report of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, contained in document E/2019/42-E/CN.18/2019/9

<sup>3</sup> The Secretariat requested responses to the survey by 23 September 2019.

<sup>4</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/184/62/PDF/N1718462.pdf?OpenElement>

### **III. Format and the Expected Outcome**

The expert meeting will be from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm on 14 November 2019 and from 10:00 am to 1:00pm on 15 November in Conference Room VIII at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting will be conducted in English. The programme of work for the meeting is contained in Annex II of this concept note.

The outcome of the expert group meeting will be a concise summary of the discussion, including a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024. A brief overview of the discussion and outcome of the expert meeting will be incorporated in the relevant official document for consideration by UNFF15.

### **IV. Participants**

The expert meeting will bring together experts from Member States, member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional and subregional organizations and processes, as well as major groups and other relevant stakeholders.

### **V. Contact Persons**

For all substantive issues related to the expert meeting, including the responses to the survey, please contact Mr. Ryo Nakamura at [nakamura@un.org](mailto:nakamura@un.org). For all logistical issues related to the EGM, including issuance of required passes, please contact Ms. Yan Lang at [yan.lang@un.org](mailto:yan.lang@un.org).

## Annex I: Questionnaire on the Forum's 4POW 2021-2024

1. Thematic priorities: The 4POW 2021-2024 consists of two technical-policy biennium: 2021-2022 and 2023-2024. Consistent with Annex II of ECOSOC resolution 2017/4, the Forum's odd- and even-year sessions for each biennium will be thematically linked on the basis of the GFGs and targets, taking into account the post-2020 programme of work of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). In order to carry out this guidance, would it be useful for the work programme to (check one):
  - a.  Identify three GFGs and associated targets as thematic priorities for a technical exchange of experiences among Member States and partners and a subsequent policy review in each biennium (progress on all GFGs are reviewed in the four-year period), taking into account the post 2020 HLPF programme of work? OR
  - b.  Leave the decision on which GFGs will be the themes for each biennium to the Bureau (current practice) in order to take into account, the post-2020 HLPF programme of work, which is expected to be agreed upon before the end of 2019? OR
  - c.  Other (please explain- Maximum 100 words)
  
2. Operational priorities: The 4POW 2021-2024 represents the Forum's contribution to implementing the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF). In your view, what are the Forum's main operational priorities in support of the UNSPF during this timeframe (check all that apply):
  - a.  Means of implementation for sustainable forest management (including GFFFN operations and resources)
  - b.  MAR (follow up on the flagship publication and timing for 2nd round of national reporting)
  - c.  VNCs (announcements, implementation support and follow up)
  - d.  Communication and outreach (including International Day of Forests)
  - e.  Preparations for mid-term review of the International Arrangement on Forests in 2024<sup>5</sup>
  - f.  Preparations for the High-Level Segment at the Forum's session in 2024,
  - f.  Other (please list)
  
3. Other elements: In addition to the Forum's thematic and operational priorities, what other elements should be reflected during 4POW 2021-2024 (check all that apply):
  - a.  Contribution of CPF and its member organizations to UNSPF 2030 implementation,
  - b.  Contribution of regional/subregional and Major Group partners to UNSPF 2030 implementation
  - c.  Post-2020 global framework for biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity
  - d.  The initial global stock-taking under the Paris Agreement (to be conducted in 2023)
  - e.  Other (please list)

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<sup>5</sup> Consistent with section XII of ECOSOC resolution 2015/33 and paragraph 66 of the UNSPF 2030

4. Technical sessions: Based on the experience of the 4POW 2017-2020, how could the Forum’s technical sessions in 2021 and 2023 be organized to enhance the exchange of experiences and interaction among Member States, CPF and its member organizations, and regional/subregional and Major Group partners, and to address the science-policy interface (check all that apply):
- a.  Reduce the number of panels to allow more time for exchange of experiences among participants
  - b.  Include a panel on the science-policy interface on the thematic priorities identified for each biennium
  - c.  Minimize/eliminate the time allocated for opening general statements
  - d.  Provide space for exhibits and/or training activities to highlight best practices
  - e.  Other (please list)

## Annex II: Provisional agenda and program of work

Expert Group Meeting on the 4POW 2021-2024  
14-15 November 2019, Geneva-Switzerland  
Conference Room VIII- Palais des Nations

<b>14 November 2019</b>	
10:00 am- 1:00 pm	<p><b>Agenda item 1.</b> Election of the Co-Chairs</p> <p><b>Agenda item 2.</b> Adoption of the agenda and programme of work</p> <p><b>Agenda item 3.</b> Development of a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mandate for the development of the 4POW 2021-2024 and relevant provisions of the UNFF11 resolution (UNFFS)</li> <li>b. Presentation of the Discussion Paper, including the results of the survey and possible elements for the 4POW 2021-2024 (consultant)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(discussion among participants)</i></p>
3:00 pm- 6:00 pm	<p><b>Agenda item 3.</b> Development of a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Possible elements for the 4POW 2021-2024</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(discussion among participants)</i></p>

<b>15 November 2019</b>	
10:00 am- 1:00 pm	<p><b>Agenda item 3.</b> Development of a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Finalization of a proposal on the 4POW 2021-2024</li> </ul> <p><b>Agenda item 4.</b> Summary of discussions of the EGM</p> <p><b>Agenda item 5.</b> Closure of the EGM</p>