

**IUFRO statement during the UNFF17 High-Level Roundtable**

*9 May, 9-11AM CET*

Excellencies, colleagues, honoured participants...

The prosperity and well-being of people depends fundamentally on the health of the world's forests and the services they provide. As underlined by several distinguished high-level panellists, forests can contribute to addressing global pressing challenges and are high on the agenda of many multilateral agreements, conferences and events.

To ensure better coherence between the various agreements, declarations, and related goals and targets, enhanced understanding of the contributions of forests and trees, as well as the synergies and trade-offs between the different goals and targets, is crucial.

IUFRO as the only global network for forest science collaboration, continues to improve the scientific knowledge base that supports our efforts to tackle threats to sustainable development and human well-being. The forest science community has much to offer in terms of generating a wealth of reliable data, information, knowledge and experience – all of which are vital to efficiently utilize the opportunities to “Build Back Better” and ensure a sustainable recovery.

It is essential that the voices of the international scientific community are heard and inform the work of policy-makers, practitioners, and the general public. IUFRO is dedicated to continuing to facilitate the contribution of scientific knowledge and experts in future UNFF sessions through background studies and speakers in Panels related to the various SDGs.

In this context, we would like to inform you that a global scientific assessment on Forests and Human Health is currently being conducted in the frame of the IUFRO-led CPF Joint Initiative Global Forest Expert Panels – in short GFEP. The outcomes of the assessment on Forests and Human Health are expected to be published in March 2023 and will provide reliable scientific information on the synergies and trade-offs between human health and the conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of forest ecosystems and trees in other land-uses. The study will also provide valuable input to the next, 18<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF18).

We call upon the Forum and its Member States to strengthen engagement with the scientific community, and reiterate our commitment to support the Forum's critically important work with the best available knowledge and scientific information on key topics to support evidence-based decision-making.

Thank you for your attention.