

United Nations Forum on Forests
Minutes of the Third Meeting of UNFF18 Bureau (Virtual)
27 April 2023, 8:30 am-10:00am, NY time

Participation

Bureau Members: Ambassador Zéphyrin Maniratanga (Burundi), Mr. Javad Momeni (Iran), Mr. Ismail Belen (Türkiye), Ms. Leticia Maria Zamora Zumbado (Costa Rica)

UNFF Secretariat: Ms. Juliette Biao, Mr. Hossein Moeini Meybodi, Ms. Njeri Kariuki

UNFF Secretary: Mr. Ziad Mahmassani, Ms. Jori Joergensen

Key Actions/Decisions

1. **The Bureau reviewed the organizational preparations for UNFF18 and agreed on the distribution of tasks among its members during UNFF18.**
2. **The Bureau approved circulation of the draft decisions on the provisional agenda of UNFF19 and its dates and venue (to be issued as respectively E/CN.18/2023/L.1 and L.2), for approval by UNFF18 on 12 May.**

Provisional Agenda

- 1- Adoption of the provisional agenda
- 2- Final preparations for UNFF18
 - a) Scenario for the opening meeting of UNFF18 including the election of remaining Bureau Members/possible secret balloting
 - b) Organization of work of UNFF18, including the arrangements for the panel discussions, closing meeting, and outcome of the session
 - c) Division of work among Bureau members
 - d) Meetings of the Bureau during UNFF18
 - e) Side Events
- 3- Preparations for UNFF19
 - a) Date and venue of UNFF19
 - b) Provisional agenda of UNFF19
- 4- Update on the recent and upcoming intersessional activities in preparations for the IAF midterm review
- 5- Other matters

1. Adoption of the provisional agenda

Ambassador Maniratanga, Chair of the UNFF18 Bureau, welcomed members of the Bureau, and the newly endorsed Bureau member from GRULAC, Ms. Zumbado from Costa Rica, the UNFF Secretariat, the UNFF Secretary and the Deputy UNFF Secretary to the third meeting of the UNFF18 Bureau. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda for the meeting, which was adopted without modification.

2. Final preparations for UNFF18

a) Scenario for the opening meeting of UNFF18 including the election of remaining Bureau Members/possible secret balloting

UNFF Secretary informed that as earlier communicated to the Bureau, two States from among the Eastern European Group (EEG) had presented candidates for the position of Vice-Chair in the Bureau of UNFF18. These are Mr. Jaroslav Kubišta, from Czechia, and Ms. Maria Sokolenko, from the Russian Federation. The UNFF Secretary explained that as there are currently two candidacies for the one vacancy from among EEG States, a secret-ballot would need to be conducted on 8 May 2023 in the morning to fill the vacancy. He informed that information on the candidatures and the expected secret balloting procedure would be communicated to delegations in advance of UNFF18.

The Bureau agreed on the recommended order of items in the opening meeting, beginning with the opening remarks by the Chair, ECOSOC President and USG Li, followed by consideration of agenda item 2 on the organization of work of UNFF18, and subsequently, consideration of agenda item 1 (Election of officers). In this regard, under item 2, the Forum would first be invited to elect the candidate endorsed by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, Ms. Leticia Zamora Zumbado from Costa Rica, by acclamation. Then, the election of the Bureau member for EEG would be conducted by secret ballot. Pursuant to ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 on the establishment of the Forum on Forests, and its operative paragraph 4, as the Forum is composed of all States Members of the United Nations and States members of the Specialized Agencies, all 197 States members of the Forum would be eligible to participate in the secret ballot for the election of the EEG Vice-Chair.

While the counting of the ballots would be conducted under the supervision of Member State Tellers, the morning meeting would continue in parallel to consider the remaining items per its programme of work. The Secretary informed that the result of the voting would be announced before the end of morning meeting on Monday, May 8th. In response to queries from the Vice-Chairs Mr. Belen and Mr. Momeni, UNFF Secretary confirmed that the rules of procedure of ECOSOC Functional Commissions are applicable to the Forum. The voting results is based on a simple majority of those present and voting. The quorum for the Forum to take decisions is a majority of the representatives. This would be 99 members for the UNFF.

b) Organization of work of UNFF18, including the arrangements for the panel discussions, closing meeting, and outcome of the session

The UNFF Secretariat provided detailed explanations about the arrangements for Tuesday morning panel, focusing on technical discussions on the thematic priorities, Tuesday afternoon panel, organized by the private sector, focusing on regenerative agriculture, and the panel on Thursday afternoon focusing on forests, energy, and livelihoods, as the emerging issues. The Secretariat informed that as UNFF18 was a technical session, no resolution or decision was expected as an outcome by the Forum at this session. There would be no negotiated outcome for UNFF18. The main outcome of UNFF18 would be a Chair's summary which would provide a summary of technical discussions and would include the Chair's proposal for transmission to UNFF19, and a Chair's summary of UNFF's input to 2023 session of the HLPF. The draft Chair summary will be shared with UNFF18 participants on Thursday evening via e-mail. On Friday

morning, delegations will be invited to provide their initial factual comments on the draft Chair's summary. After conclusion of UNFF18, delegations would have one more week to share their factual comments, if any, on the draft Chair's summary. The final Chair's summary will be included as an annex in the report of UNFF18.

c) Division of work among Bureau members

The Bureau discussed division of work among its members for the chairing of the meetings during UNFF18. Accordingly, it was tentatively agreed that Ambassador Maniratanga, would conduct the discussions during the meetings of UNFF18 on Monday and Friday morning, and Wednesday afternoon, Mr. Momeni would conduct the discussions during UNFF18 on Monday afternoon, and Wednesday morning, Mr. Belen would conduct the discussions during UNFF18 on Tuesday morning, and Thursday afternoon, Ms. Zamora would conduct the discussions during UNFF18 on Tuesday afternoon, and the to-be-elected Bureau member from Eastern European Group would conduct the discussions during UNFF18 on Thursday morning.

d) Meetings of the Bureau during UNFF18

The Bureau agreed to meet regularly during UNFF18, and as needed, to take stock of the discussions during the session. Accordingly, the Bureau will meet on Monday 8 May, Wednesday 10 May, and Friday 12 May 2023, and before the morning meeting of the Forum, at the office of the UNFF Secretariat.

e) Side Events

The UNFF Secretariat informed that a total of 15 side events would be held during UNFF18. Each day, there would be three side events during lunch time. The venue of the side events would be CR4, CR8 and Room A. Ten of these side events would be held in a hybrid format. The side events will be organized by governments, CPF member organizations, UNFF regional partners, and UNFF Major Groups. The complete list of side events would be posted on the UNFF18 webpage shortly.

3. Preparations for UNFF19

a) Date and venue of UNFF19

b) Provisional agenda of UNFF19

The Secretary of the Forum recalled the draft decisions that had been shared with the Bureau on 17 April on the proposed date and venue of UNFF19, and its provisional agenda. Accordingly, taking into consideration available conference servicing facilities, UNFF19 would be held from 6 to 10 May 2024 in UNHQ in New York. He also explained that the provisional agenda for UNFF19 was prepared in accordance with the program of work for UNFF19, adopted in ECOSOC resolution 2021/6. After his explanations, the Bureau agreed with issuing the proposed draft decisions to be before the Forum for adoption during its meeting on 12 May.

4. Update on the recent and upcoming intersessional activities in preparations for the IAF midterm review

The Director of the UNFF Secretariat provided detailed explanations on the activities carried out in follow up to the provisions of ECOSOC resolution 2022/17, in which, the Forum agreed to undertake intensive activities in preparations for the midterm review of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF). She informed about the upcoming expert group meeting, which would be held at UN Office in

Nairobi, Kenya from 20 to 23 June 2023 to discuss issues related to the GFFFN and implementation of the UNSPF. The outcome of this meeting will be a Co-Chairs summary. She also informed that the open ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group on the preparations for the IAF midterm review would be held during the second week of October 2023 at UN Office in Vienna, Austria. The outcome of AHEG will be a Co-Chairs summary, which would be submitted to UNFF19.

5. Other matters

Mr. Belen asked for an update on the proposed China office for the GFFFN. The Director of UNFF Secretariat informed that an update was under preparation, and would be presented during UNFF18 on Wednesday, May 10th, under agenda item 3f. Mr. Belen also asked about the possibility of JUSCANZ, as a group, participating during UNFF18. The Secretary of the Forum indicated that it would be up to the members of groups of States, such as JUSCANZ, to coordinate and participate as a group in the work of UNFF18.

The Director of the UNFF Secretariat informed the Bureau on her recent visit to Finland, and the outcomes of this trip. She attended a seminar, organized by Finland on UNFF. During this visit, she met with several officials, as well as representatives of private sectors. Several areas for collaboration were identified during this visit, including, joint support to UNFF member countries on awareness and policies on the interlinkages of forests, water, and food security, organization of a Country-led Initiative on engagement with private sector, and collaboration on monitoring, assessment, and reporting.

Before conclusion of the meeting, the Chair thanked all participants for their active involvement in the discussions and expressed satisfaction with the results of the discussions and adjourned the meeting.

The meeting finished at 9:45am