



CONCEPT NOTE | Panel Discussions

Item 3 (a) Thematic priorities for 2023-2024 biennium in support of the implementation of the UNSPF

Item 3(d) Interlinkages between the Global Forest Goals and targets and the Sustainable Development Goals under review by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2023, the work towards Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework¹ and other international forest-related developments

Tuesday 9 May 2023 (AM), CR4, UNHQ, New York

I. Background

The UN Forum on Forests at its eighteenth session (UNFF18) will hold technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests. The technical discussions include an interactive exchange of experiences and lessons learned on thematic priorities among members of the Forum, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations, regional and subregional organizations and processes, and major groups and other relevant stakeholders. The interactive exchange will include consideration of the science-policy interface and cross-sectoral and emerging issues and will take into account youth, gender and regions perspectives.

For the biennium 2023-2024, the Bureau of the Forum decided that the thematic priorities for the eighteenth and nineteenth sessions to be as follows: (i) Enhancing forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits (based on Global Forest Goal 2); (ii) Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests (based on Global Forest Goal 3); and (iii) Mobilizing financial resources and strengthening scientific and technical cooperation; promoting governance frameworks to advance implementation; and enhancing cooperation, coordination and coherence, for sustainable forest management (based on Global Forest Goals 4, 5 and 6)².

In light of growing call for action to halt deforestation and address the increased level of inequality and poverty around the world, food and energy insecurity, and given the prospect of global recession and the increased prices of foods and goods, the Bureau considered it important to devote part of the technical discussions of the Forum on its thematic priorities to interaction with representatives of the multilateral and regional funding institutions and banks. This provides a unique opportunity for these partners to share information on their activities in support of sustainable forest management, and also the opportunities that they could offer to further assist Members of the Forum in achieving the GFGs.

¹ The post-2020 global biodiversity framework was adopted as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

² Concept note on thematic priorities for eighteenth and nineteenth session of the Forum is available on the Forum website at <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/UNFF18-19-Thematic-Priorities-web.pdf>.

Intersessional Work

To ensure a solid foundation for productive technical discussions on the thematic priorities at UNFF18, as well as for the Forum's input to the 2023 HLPF, the UNFF Secretariat commissioned two background papers to identify the challenges, gaps, opportunities and required actions, including suggested measures for accelerating the achievement of the thematic priorities. The two background papers are:

1. Background Paper #1: UNFF18-19 thematic priority #1: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits; and
2. Background Paper #2: UNFF18-19 thematic priority #2: Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.

Furthermore, in response to the letter of the ECOSOC President dated 10 November 2022, the UNFF18 Bureau prepared and submitted its input to the 2023 session of HLPF and preparations for the 2023 SDG Summit in February 2023³. This input will be accompanied by the Chair's summary of discussions to be considered at UNFF18 for submission to ECOSOC as the UNFF's input to the 2023 session of HLPF.

The Secretariat Note, contained in document E.CN.18/2023/2, includes further background information that provides a basis for the discussions during this panel.

II. Objectives and Modalities of the Panel

The main objectives of the panel discussions are to identify transformative actions that are needed to be undertaken by countries, organizations and stakeholders to ensure achievement of the UNFF18 thematic priorities by 2030, namely: GFG2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The presentations by the panellists will be focused on the following guiding questions:

- What actions and measures can be taken by countries and organizations to accelerate progress towards achievement of the UNFF18 thematic priorities by 2030, namely, GFG2, 3, 4, 5 and 6?
- How can multilateral environment funds and regional development banks further support Member States to achieve the GFGs?
- How can forest-based actions be applied, replicated and upscaled to accelerate progress in SDGs under review by the HLPF, namely, SDG6 ,7, 9, 11 and 17?
- How can the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 leverage co-benefits and address trade-offs with the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework?

After the initial presentation by the panelists, the moderator will open the floor for interactive discussion on the above-mentioned questions, and reactions to the presentation by the panelists. There will be no pre-determined list of speakers for the interactive discussions. Delegations who wish to speak should request the floor during the interactive discussions. The maximum duration of each intervention is three minutes.

Delegations are requested to e-mail a copy of any prepared statement to estatements@un.org at least two hours before the meeting, including the title and date of the meeting as well as the name and delegation of the speaker.

³ The UNFF18 Bureau's input to the 2023 HLPF is available at: <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-HLPF-input-unff-bureau.pdf>.

In the event of high number of requests for the floor, the Chair may further limit the duration of the interventions. The time limit will be strictly enforced. Interactive discussions are strongly encouraged. Key points of the panel discussion will be reflected in the Chair's summary of discussions.

III. Composition of the Panel

Moderator: Ms. Sheam Satkuru, Executive Director, International Tropical Timber Organization

Panellists:

1. Mr. Ulrich Apel, Senior Environment Specialist, Global Environment Facility (seven minutes)
2. Mr. Mikko Ollikainen, Manager, Adaptation Fund (seven minutes)
3. Ms. Vanessa Ushie, Acting Director, African Natural Resources Management and Investment Centre of the African Development Bank (seven minutes)
4. Mr. Qingfeng Zhang, Chief of Rural Development and Food Security Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank (seven minutes)

IV. Panel Coordinator

For further information, please contact Mr. Ryo Nakamura (nakamura@un.org) at the UNFF Secretariat.