

## **EU submission on elements for the UNFF11 Ministerial Declaration**

The European Union and its Member States thank the Bureau and the Secretariat for the opportunity to provide elements for a ministerial declaration to be adopted by the high level segment of the UNFF11 session.

We believe that the adoption of such a declaration represents an opportunity for the international community to provide a clear vision about the contribution of forests and global forest policy and governance including in the context of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and all other forest-related processes. It should also serve to reiterate the commitment by countries to promoting sustainable forest management and combating deforestation and forest degradation, through a more effective IAF, which is fit for purpose. Regarding the content of the declaration, the EU would like to suggest the following initial views:

### **Forest and SFM for transformative action**

- Stress the importance of the multifunctionality of forests and importance of sustainable forest management to address major global, social, economic and environmental challenges, such as climate change, conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and their services, desertification, deforestation and forest degradation, biodiversity loss, water quality and scarcity, soil erosion and degradation, disaster risk reduction, poverty reduction, food security, supply of fuel and shelter, gender equality, and promotion of the issues related to forest-dependent indigenous and local communities;
- The declaration should also reflect the readiness to tackle medium and long-term challenges and opportunities (including growing need for forest products, e.g. wood as renewable construction material, fibre and source of energy) for the sustainable management of the forest resource base for green economy / bio-based economy;
- Highlight the importance of strengthening forest governance, including secure land tenure rights and stakeholders participation;
- The general message should focus around strengthening the political commitment to sustainable forest management and its potential to support transformative change across

sectors, including through stakeholders participation and establishment of partnerships. It could underline the need for improved common international understanding of the concept of SFM.

#### **Commitments to a more effective future IAF<sup>1</sup>**

- Note major developments in international forest and forest-related policies since the last revision of the IAF;
- The declaration should enhance the added value of an intergovernmental process that promotes holistic and coherent cross-sectoral policy approaches to forest-related issues;
- Support UNFF11 to set-up basic preconditions for a more effective international arrangement on forest to advance policy dialogue, including with major groups, and to foster collaboration, cooperation and synergies across all forest-related organisations, conventions and other processes; scale up implementation of NLBI and positioning the future international arrangement on forests into the wider post-2015 development agenda.

#### **Message to the post-2015 sustainable development agenda process**

- Highlight the role and potential of forests and their sustainable management to contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development, and in that context, their important contribution to the delivery of any forest-specific targets and of a wider range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets;
- Highlight the potential role of the post-2015 IAF, to contribute to a solid, efficient and effective approach to the review, monitoring and accountability of the post-2015 agenda. For example, through forest resources assessment and forest data and statistics, including existing criteria and indicators processes;
- Highlight the potential of ensuring coherence between GOF and SDGs.

#### **Message to the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Financing of Development**

- Highlight that, notwithstanding some progress made, challenges remain at all levels with regard to the mobilization, from all sources, of financing for forests and sustainable forest management and call upon UNFF-member states, financing institutions and private sector to ensure that investments and development finance take appropriate

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<sup>1</sup> To be further elaborated on the basis of progress made on the future international arrangements on forests.

account of the role of forests in poverty eradication and sustainable development, and to give financing for SFM more priority and relevance, including through recognition of the global public goods that forests deliver;

- Stress the need to improve access and build capacity to ensure the effective use of many available existing funding opportunities at the national, regional and international level (need to improve links to, knowledge about and access to all existing sources);
- Invite the FfD conference to include financing for forests and sustainable forest management as part of their consideration of means of implementation for the post-2015 agenda, including both enabling policy frameworks and mobilization, and the effective use of financial resources coming from a range of complementary sources.

#### **Message to the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference**

- Stress the importance of forests and sustainable forest management in both climate change mitigation (for example through sequestration, storage and substitution as well as reduction of emissions from the land use sector) and adaptation, and recognise the role of the UNFCCC in addressing the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases from deforestation and forest degradation;
- Encourage parties to take appropriate actions at national level and reinforce international cooperation;
- Highlight the potential role of post-2015 IAF to promote cross-sectoral/landscape approaches as an important mechanism to halting deforestation and forest degradation.

Before concluding the European Union would like to encourage the Bureau and the Secretariat to publish the received comments on the website of the UNFF. This will enhance transparency of the preparatory process and could encourage member states and groups to interact with each other. The EU encourages the Bureau to start development of a draft declaration on an informal basis as soon as possible.

Please accept these views from the European Union as a contribution to the preparation of a hopefully successful UNFF11 session.