

Country/Organization: Major Groups

Date of Submission: 21st November 2013

**UNFF Intersessional Activities on the International Arrangement on Forests
Format for Soliciting Views and Proposals on the International Arrangement on Forests
United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
July 2013**

1. According to the multi-year programme of work adopted in 2007, the overall theme of the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF11) in 2015 will be “Forests: progress, challenges and the way forward for the international arrangement on forests (IAF).” At this session, the Forum will review the effectiveness of the IAF and decide on its future.¹
2. In preparation for UNFF11 in 2015, the Forum has made a number of decisions during the last fourteen years.² Most recently, Member States through Resolution 10/2 of UNFF10 decided to undertake several intersessional activities to ensure UNFF11 has a strong basis to review the effectiveness of the IAF and make a decision on the future of the IAF.
3. One of the three components of the intersessional activities on the IAF, as outlined in Resolution 10/2 of UNFF10, is to solicit views from Member States and other relevant stakeholders on the IAF. Specifically, the Resolution invites countries, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations, other relevant organizations, relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, instruments, organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders to submit views and proposals to the Forum’s Secretariat on the six key issues set out in paragraph 5 of the same resolution, and the full range of options on the future international arrangement on forests. The UNFF Secretariat should provide the compilation of these views and proposals to the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG1) on the IAF³.
4. This format has been prepared by the Forum’s Secretariat to facilitate submission of the inputs on the IAF to AHEG1. The electronic version of this format is available at: (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/docs/Views-on-IAF.doc>). Member States and other relevant stakeholders are invited to download this format and use it to submit their views and proposals in English. The explanation in each box should not exceed 150 words. Member States and other stakeholders are kindly requested to submit the original copy of the completed format in word processing software, with a scanned copy of the official letter from their respective organization/ministry/mission, via email to: unff@un.org, with copy to Mr. Hossein Moeini-Meybodi at: moeini-meybodi@un.org, and Ms. Thida Sam at: sam2@un.org. All inputs should be sent to the UNFF Secretariat by **30 October 2013**.

¹ Resolution 1 of UNFF7 and its annex (E/2007/42), please see:

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/349/31/PDF/N0734931.pdf?OpenElement>

² ECOSOC Resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49, Resolution 1 of UNFF7 and its annex (E/2007/42) and Resolution 2 of UNFF10 and its annex (E/2013/42)

³ OP 5 and 6 of Resolution 2 of UNFF10 and paragraph 2 of its annex- Please see:

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/321/90/PDF/N1332190.pdf?OpenElement>

**Format for Soliciting Views and Proposals on the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)
July 2013**

Ministry / Organization: Major Groups Partnership on Forests (MGPoF)

Name of official submitting the views: Joe Cobbinah on behalf of MGPoF

Address: Forestry Research Institute of Ghana

Phone/Fax: 233-3220-60123/233-3220-60121

E-mail: joe.cobbinah@ymail.com

A stepwise approach beginning with strengthening of the current IAF at regional levels and ultimately leading to a legally binding instruments on all types of forests.

Section A: Full range of options for the IAF

A.1 Please select (with X in front of the options below) and explain the preferred option for the future of the IAF:

- ☒ A legally binding instrument on all types of forests
- ☒ Strengthening of the current IAF
- ☐ Continuation of the current IAF
- ☐ Other options (please describe) -

Section B: Performance of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and its processes since 2000, and future options for UNFF

B.1 Please explain if you consider the current UNFF structure and its biennial sessions as sufficient to take necessary actions and to provide policy advice and guidance on all issues related to all types of forests and at all levels: The biennial sessions are sufficient

Other potential actions to increase effectiveness include : a) active engagement of civil society (MGs) b) institution of clear mechanisms for policy implementation, c) promotion of bilateral and regional intersessional initiatives/meetings and communication on common goals and d) establishment of Regional Liaison position at UNFF secretariat to monitor and coordinate regional activities and also work with regional organizations in the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals of actions.

B.2 Please describe the UNFF's performance and list its key achievements in implementing its principal functions, as stated in ECOSOC resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49⁴: The principal function of UNFF is to develop policies and oversee the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals of action. So far the work of the forum has focused largely on policy discussions. The principal achievements of the forum thus far is mobilizing governments and multilateral institutions to build common understanding around a number of issues relating to sustainable management of forests, formulation and implementation of national forest programs and development of C& I of sustainable forest management.

B.3 Please provide your view on the future options for the UNFF: Continue with the core mandate to facilitate multilateral intergovernmental forest related policy processes, b) serve as a forum to develop initiatives and monitoring and evaluating of progress made in SDGs relating to forests, c) secure political commitments of governments and gain optimum participation of developing countries by holding some of the biennial meetings in non-UN cities and d) foster stronger enabling environment for the implementation forest policies e) strengthen the cross-sectoral linkages between forest and other sectors f) support active participation of civil society groups in the activities of UNFF and f) set up forest Trust Fund to support international capacity building and activities of the forum.

B.4 Please describe the potential roles for UNFF in implementing the UN post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs: To catalyse actions to protect and sustainably manage forests which is and will remain the principal goal of the forum beyond 2015 the forum should work closely with the Open-Ended Working Group on SDGs in ensuring that forests and forest related issues are adequately addressed through specific SDG for Forests or through a cross-cutting Integrated Landscape SDG that place premium on land, forests, biodiversity, water and renewable natural resources.

B.5 Please describe the role and impact of Country-Led Initiatives and ad hoc expert groups in the work of the UNFF: CLI and AHEG provide crucial and focused technical inputs for negotiations during the biennial sessions, b) enables discussions of more concrete issues and increase the building of political momentum, c) allows wider participation of technical experts who in many cases do not have the means or opportunities to participate in the biennial sessions, d) provides opportunities to bring the minds of many to bear on country specific issues. CLIs and AHEGs are essential parts of the IAF and should continue and be complimented by OLIs (organized by CPF members) and MGLIs (organized by Major Groups).

B.6 Please indicate how effective you consider the engagement of major groups in the work of the UNFF and provide suggestions on their further engagement: The Major Groups represent a cross section of forest stakeholders including women, Indigenous people, forest workers and small scale forest owners. Their active engagement is not only necessary for the legitimacy of the UNFF processes but also crucial for SFM. In spite of the vital contributions made by the group in the past in shaping various policies and commitments there has been a steady decline of resources for their intersessional preparatory activities and participation in the biennial meetings. Their participation in UNFF should go beyond the 3-hour MSD slot. The group

⁴ Please see these documents at:

- http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/2000_35_E.pdf
- http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/iaf/2006_49_E.pdf

should be facilitated to consult their constituents through organized intersessional activities.

B.7 Please explain the role and impact of the International Year of Forests and the International Day of Forests in promoting greater awareness and strengthening political and public commitment for forests: •The IYF and Day of Forests are major milestones in the work of UNFF. Both initiatives have led to a variety of actions to promote awareness of citizens of the vital role of forests in our economic, social, and environmental well being. More media coverage could have amplified some of the positive responses from countries and civil society. Regrettably in many countries the events did not go beyond the day of launch. • Linking public events to current political processes on the occasion could further increase their impact and ultimately influence policy-making processes.

Section C: The Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (Forest Instrument) and the four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs)

C.1 Please indicate progress in the implementation of the forest instrument:

- ☐ Adequate
☒ Inadequate
☐ Not sure

C.2 Please provide suggestions on how to improve progress: A clear implementation strategy based on best practices should be developed by expert group.
An accountability mechanisms to monitor implementation of commitments are needed.
The cross-sectoral linkages and spill-over benefits of effectively implementing the four GOFs need to be recognized and emphasized..

C.3 Please indicate progress in achieving the GOFs:

	Adequate	Inadequate	Not sure
GOF1:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GOF2:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GOF3:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GOF4:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.4 Please provide suggestions on how to improve progress:Progress has been slow in many countries because the implementation capability is non existence. There is the need to establish the link between implementation and means of implementation.

C.5 Please explain how implementation of the forest instrument has contributed to the implementation of forest-related international conventions, and vice versa: The forest instrument contains actions to promote SFM. The instrument provides options for addressing biodiversity conservation (CBD Aichi targets 5, 7, 11, 14 and 15), climate change (reducing emission from deforestation forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks and enhancement of carbon stocks through afforestation and reforestation) and desertification (reversing land degradation and restoring lands and improving affected ecosystems).

C.6 Please describe how the forest instrument and the GOFs can contribute to the post-2015 UN development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: The central message of the forest instrument and the GOFs is sustainable management of all types of forests. Forests are integral part of landscapes that provide essential resources for sustainable development. Sustainable management of forests is crucial in capturing all the goods and services by forests. The forest instrument and the GOFs can therefore contribute to the post-2015 UN development agenda and the SDGs if internalized by member states.

Section D: The Forum's Secretariat

D.1 Please indicate if you consider the structure, human and financial resources of the compact Secretariat of the UNFF adequate to fulfill its mandates:

- ☐ Adequate
☒ Inadequate
☐ Not sure

Additional explanation:

D.2 Please provide suggestion(s) on strengthening the Secretariat of the Forum to enable it to fulfill its functions more effectively: Propose the setting up of Regional Liaison position to coordinate, monitor and work closely with regional organizations and other stakeholders in the implementation of policies and initiatives.

D.3 Please provide suggestion(s) on how the Forum Secretariat's role, as a CPF member and as CPF secretariat, should be strengthened: The secretariat should play the role of a facilitator for shaping the discourse within CPF and between CPF and other opinion groups. I

Section E: CPF and CPF Member Organizations

E.1 Please explain the impacts and sufficiency of the programs and actions taken by CPF and CPF member organizations in implementing resolutions and supporting the work of UNFF since its inception: Noticeable contribution of CPF include a) Formulation and implementation of national forest program (NFP) led by FAO, b) ITTO criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Forest Management of Tropical forests and providing experts for the various activities of the forum.

E.2 Please describe how the CPF and its member organizations can further contribute to the work of the UNFF, and how to ensure availability of necessary resources for its activities in support of the work of the Forum:

- Providing expert opinion on issues
 - Shaping the discourse of how forests can cater to the agenda of different interest groups.
- Intergrating agreed policy implementation into their work programs based on the appropriateness to their institutional mandates .

Section F: Financing options and strategies

F.1 Please provide views on financing options and strategies, including the creation of a voluntary Global Forest Fund, to generate resources from all sources for sustainable management of all types of forests and trees outside forests: A mix bag of financing schemes should be pursued. This include
A) public funding (public funding could be boosted through effective engagement with politicians), b) A Global Forest Fund to be administered by a multilateral Institution c) Private sector financing with clear guidelines to allay the distrust of private financing of forests d) portfolio of Innovative Financing Mechanisms eg water services, conservation concession, bioprospecting, debt swaps and climate related schemes (REDD+, CDM).

F.2 Please suggest concrete steps that UNFF, CPF members and other organizations should undertake to develop forest financing options: Percentage of GDP mechanism must be established as a means of financing the Global Forest Fund.