



COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Rome, 18 - 22 July 2016

FAO's PROGRAMME OF WORK IN FORESTRY UNDER THE REVIEWED STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

I. INTRODUCTION

1. As foreseen in the programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system put in place by the Conference in 2009, the Organization's Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2014-17 was reviewed during 2014, taking into account trends and developments in the external environment and the guidance provided by the Regional Conferences, Technical Committees, Programme and Finance Committees and the Council. The MTP 2014-17 (reviewed)¹ was approved by the FAO Conference in June 2015.

2. There has been strong and consistent support expressed by the FAO governing bodies during 2015 and 2016 for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in order to realize the full impact of the Strategic Framework (see Annex 1). While global developments and emerging trends highlighted in the MTP 2014-17 (reviewed) remain relevant, several important global developments occurred in 2015 which will provide the broad framework for FAO's work in the future:

- a) the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the United Nations in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda setting the framework for mobilizing the means of implementation;
- b) the Paris Agreement, adopted as an outcome of the UN Global Climate Change Conference (COP21), which aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty;
- c) the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action on Nutrition;
- d) UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) and the Sendai Framework.

3. The quadrennial review of the FAO Strategic Framework and preparation of a new MTP 2018-21 will take place during 2016, through the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees, for approval by the Council and Conference in the first half of 2017. This offers the opportunity to

¹ C 2015/3

This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page; an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications. Other documents can be consulted at www.fao.org



further focus FAO's work to yield more concrete results, particularly at the country level. The FAO Council has welcomed the alignment of FAO's Strategic Framework with the SDGs, noting that there would be opportunity for bringing further coherence while preparing the MTP 2018-21.

4. In this broad context, the present document first provides a brief overview of FAO's achievements in forestry contributing to the Strategic Objectives (SOs) in the 2014-15 biennium. It then outlines key global and sector specific developments and trends, which will influence FAO's future work in forestry. Taking into account these and the specific recommendations from the Regional Forestry Commissions, the document identifies priority areas of work to be considered in the preparation of the MTP 2018-21.

II. ACHIEVEMENTS IN FAO'S WORK IN FORESTRY IN 2014-15

5. With the approval of the Organization's new Strategic Framework, FAO aligned its forestry work in 2014-2015 to contribute to the five Strategic Objectives (SOs) (listed in Annex 1) as well as the recommendations of the 22nd Session of COFO. A more detailed description of the achievements of FAO's work in forestry in the 2014-15 biennium is presented in document COFO/2016/7.5, complemented by the FAO report *Moving Forward: Selected achievements of the FAO Forestry Programme 2014-2015*. Key achievements are highlighted below.

6. To *strengthen the provision of key forestry information (SO2)*, FAO created a forest policy database, providing public access to the forest policy and national forest programme documents of 130 countries. FAO also helped countries to develop capacity for National Forest Monitoring Systems and supported 18 countries in completing their first national forest assessments (NFAs). FAO launched the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2015 at the World Forestry Congress (WFC) in Durban, South Africa, and broadened the scope of Open Foris to include new assessment tools such as Collect Earth as part of its 2015 strategic partnership agreement with Google.

7. To promote restoration of *degraded lands (SO2, SO5)*, FAO created the Forest and Landscape Mechanism, helping countries like Rwanda to meet their commitment to the Bonn Challenge of restoring of 150 million hectares of degraded land by 2020. FAO also organized the first Drylands Monitoring Week in January 2015, which resulted in the "Rome Promise on Monitoring and Assessment of Drylands for sustainable management and restoration" and launched global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands at the UNCCD COP in October 2015.

8. FAO's work to *reduce rural poverty and improve food security (SO1, SO3)* and to build capacity of family farmers and small forest producers was strengthened, with the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) solidifying its work with 10 countries and engaging in a strategic Partnership with We-Effect to build capacity of forest and farm producer organizations. For example, with FFF's support, Guatemala formed the Probosque Law, which mandates that one percent of revenues in the national budget would be distributed to small forest producers benefitting 7.5 million people in 1.5 million families, 30 percent of which are women. FAO developed a cross-sectoral assessment framework on forest and food security policies and promoted policy dialogue between countries on this issue.

9. FAO promoted *sustainable value chains (SO4)* by strengthening small-scale forest enterprises (SSFE), including through regional workshops in Latin America and Africa. The lessons emerging from these regions will contribute to the development of guidelines and best practices aiming to improve SSFE development for income generation while ensuring sustainable forest management (SFM). Regional and national trainings on Market Analysis and Development (MA&D), key activities to strengthen small enterprises, gender equality and market access, were also held.

10. On *climate change (SO2, SO5)*, FAO continued to support countries in their efforts to participate in REDD+. FAO enabled 70 percent of all country reference emission levels to be

submitted to the UNFCCC. In addition, FAO supported countries in addressing safeguards, governance assessments, land tenure regimes, legal preparedness and forest law enforcement. Over 50 countries have benefitted from FAO support for REDD+. FAO conducted the first international on-line conference on “The Economics of Climate Change Mitigation Options in the Forest Sector”, which was held from 6–27 February 2015 and featured 51 technical presentations, more than 31 country case studies, and attracted more than 900 participants from over 110 countries.

11. To help *curb illegal logging and trade (SO4)*, the FAO Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme provided support to over 30 countries in improving forest governance. Among others, the programme helped to resolve border disputes in Belize and Guatemala; and explored the potential of certification to contribute to the broader governance processes including in Viet Nam and in collaboration with the Forest Stewardship Council and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

12. To *build resilience (SO5)* in rural areas, FAO produced the report “Mapping the Vulnerability of Mountain Peoples to Food Insecurity”, which uses a specially designed model to provide an up-to-date picture of the world’s mountain areas. Technical assistance was provided to analyse 10 year MODIS images related to vegetation fires and Nepal received support on landslide prevention and stabilization in the wake of the 2015 earthquake.

13. Through collaborative efforts of FAO and the Government of South Africa, the *XIV World Forestry Congress (SO6)* was held for the first time on the African continent in September 2015, and attracted close to 4000 people from 142 countries. It resulted in a new vision for forests and forestry to 2050 and beyond, which will be integrated in FAO’s future work on forests.

14. As reported in COFO/2016/7.5 Annex III, FAO strengthened the capacity and provided technical support for *gender mainstreaming* and the collection of gender-disaggregated data in the forest sector; supported the economic empowerment of women including access to, and control over, resources in the forestry value chain through enterprise development; applied gender analysis in forest-related projects and programmes; established a network of national focal points for sharing experiences and lessons learned on fostering gender equality in the forest sector; and promoted collaboration among women networks at various levels.

III. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FOREST SECTOR

15. FAO’s *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015*² showed that, while deforestation rates are declining globally, they are still alarmingly high in some regions, especially in the tropics and sub-tropics and this trend is likely to continue in the coming years. Furthermore, the *State of the World’s Forests 2016* points out that agriculture is still the main driver of deforestation, albeit with regional differences. Large-scale commercial agriculture accounted for almost 70 percent of deforestation in Latin America while in Africa, small-scale agriculture is the main driver. As human populations continue to increase, it is likely that demand will continue for conversion of more forest land to agriculture.

16. 2015 was a decisive year in the international development arena, with several milestone agreements being achieved that will shape FAO’s future work and will also strongly influence FAO’s work in forestry. The most important developments are described below.

² <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4808e.pdf>

A. Agenda 2030 and the SDGs

(see COFO agenda items 4, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1)

17. Agenda 2030 represents a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred universal vision for ending poverty and hunger and combatting inequalities. It is transformative and inclusive, reflecting the priorities and needs of all countries. The new agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, which are to be achieved in the next 15 years. The different goals and targets are strongly inter-dependent, aiming at a balance of different dimensions of sustainability.

18. Goal 15 calls for protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managing forests, combatting desertification and halting and reversing land degradation and halting biodiversity loss. Under this goal, Target 15.2 specifically calls for halting deforestation restoring degraded forests and substantially increasing afforestation and reforestation globally by 2020 – a formidable task in view of the trends outlined above.

19. Forest actions are also essential to the achievement of other SDGs such as SDG1 on eliminating poverty; SDG2 on ending hunger, achieving food security and adequate nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture; SDG6 on availability and sustainable management of water; SDG7 on access to affordable, reliable and modern energy and SDG13 on climate action.

B. Climate change and the Paris Agreement

(see COFO/2016/6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 9)

20. Global action to combat climate change received a significant boost in December 2015 through the Paris Agreement adopted by member countries of UNFCCC. This ambitious agreement aims to limit temperature increase to well below 2 degrees Celsius and calls for increased action on adaptation as well as increased finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. The Agreement is built upon a transparent framework of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and by 22 April 2016, 175 countries had submitted their NDCs.

21. Forests will play an important role in the implementation of this milestone agreement, in mitigation as well as in adaptation efforts. The main mitigation mechanism is Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), however, the agreement also acknowledges forests' potential for adaptation including joint approaches and the importance of non-carbon benefits. The majority of the NDCs mention forestry and land use mitigation and adaptation measures.

C. ICN2 and the Framework for Action

(see COFO/2016/7.4)

22. At the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) in Rome, participants adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action on Nutrition. World leaders renewed their commitments to establish and implement policies aimed at eradicating malnutrition and transforming the food system to make nutritious diets available to all.

23. Forests and trees will play a role in implementing the Framework for Action. Forest products directly contribute to meeting nutritional requirements of populations, by providing staple foods, protein and micronutrient rich food sources. Wood fuel from forests contribute significantly as source of energy for food processing and water sterilization. Additionally, forest products can be an important safety net for vulnerable households especially during hungry seasons when food is in short supply.

D. Other global forest-related events

(see COFO/2016/8.1, 8.2)

24. The main outcome of the XIV World Forestry Congress, which took place in Durban, South Africa in September 2015, was the Durban Declaration, constituting a new vision of forests and forestry for 2050. The vision outlines forestry's contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It links forest actions with efforts to achieve food security and integrates them with other forms of land use and with efforts to combat climate change. Because of its comprehensive and forward-looking nature, the vision could provide a solid input to also shaping the international forest agenda nationally and internationally, including in FAO.

25. At its 11th session in 2015 the United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF) agreed on a Ministerial declaration entitled "The forests we want: beyond 2015" and a draft resolution on the "International arrangement on forests beyond 2015". The UNFF11 resolution, which was subsequently approved by the 70th UN General Assembly, recommended extending the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) until 2030 and strengthening its work in supporting the sustainable management of the world's forests. In addition, it calls for strengthening the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to support the UNFF and to engage in joint efforts to implement sustainable actions on forests and strengthen their contribution to achieving internationally agreed development objectives.

IV. PRIORITIES FOR FAO'S FUTURE WORK IN FORESTRY

26. Taking into consideration the trends and developments described in the previous section as well as key recommendations of the six Regional Forestry Commissions (see Annex 2), this section briefly describes priorities for FAO's work in forestry with a view to the development of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2018-2021.

27. FAO's work in forestry will be guided by and contribute to national and global efforts to achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in various ways. In accordance with its mandate as a global data provider, FAO will be responsible for monitoring four forest-related indicators through the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) and the Mountain Green Cover Index, using innovative tools and strengthening the capacity of countries to apply these. FAO will also have a key role, in partnership with the CPF, to improve existing forest-related indicators and strengthen indicators of the socio-economic contributions of forests to sustainable development (SO2).

28. To address **climate change** (SO2 and SO5), in the context of the Paris Agreement FAO will provide technical support to countries in implementing their NDCs and will work to significantly scale up financing for this purpose in collaboration with global and regional partners, including development banks. FAO's support to countries for REDD+ will move from REDD-readiness to assisting countries in implementation of REDD+ and moving towards results-based payments. FAO will contribute to the UNFCCC process by conducting the first land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) assessment as a basis for future monitoring. FAO will support adaptation measures, especially in drylands, as well as joint approaches to mitigation and adaptation, particularly by restoration of degraded forests, through the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism. In addition to specific climate change related measures, FAO will continue to assist countries in sustainably managing their diverse forest resources as it is generally recognized that SFM is key to ensure forests' contributions to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Resilience to climate change will also be strengthened through FAO's work on prevention, management and mitigation of forest fires and pests and diseases.

29. To ensure forests contribute to **food security and adequate nutrition** (SO1, SO5) of rural communities, FAO will assist governments and relevant stakeholders to develop inclusive and harmonized policy frameworks and investment plans for forestry, agriculture and food security and nutrition. FAO will also help countries to generate the evidence needed for such policy development

by suggesting appropriate indicators and data collection methodologies that will allow countries to quantify the role of forests in food security and nutrition. In addition, FAO will work with countries to carry out forest tenure reform processes that ensure food security benefits of forests for local populations. Given the vulnerability of mountain people to food insecurity, FAO, through the Mountain Partnership, will promote measures to strengthen the resilience of mountain ecosystems and the role forests and trees play in supporting sustainable agriculture in mountain areas.

30. To improve **assessment and monitoring of forest resources** (SO2, SO4) at global and national level, FAO will further develop and refine innovative and low-cost tools for data collection and analysis, for example, the Open Foris software tools for multi-purpose land monitoring, including through its partnership with Google. FAO will strengthen the capacity of countries to improve their own data collection by using innovative and low-cost technologies. FRA 2020 will be adapted to respond to the challenges of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. FAO will also assist countries to improve their statistics on forest products by improving indicators for wood fuel production and use and for non-wood forest products and by strengthening the capacity of countries to collect data on these.

31. With **youth employment and empowerment** (SO3) emerging as a priority in the regions and at the XIV World Forestry Congress in Durban, education is essential to create future opportunities for rural youth. The work of the Advisory Committee on Forest Knowledge could be strengthened in this regard, to not only explore opportunities to train youth in forests and farming techniques but also to analyse and fill key gaps in employment that may provide promising future job opportunities for youth. In addition, FAO will further develop knowledge products and training material to support labour and workplace standards in the forestry sector and promote decent employment.

32. Strengthening **forestry value chains** (SO4) contributes to **reducing poverty** (SO3) in rural areas and to ensuring the contribution of forest products to the bio-economy in the context of sustainable development. FAO will promote small and medium scale enterprise development and the development of effective producer organizations, taking an integrated approach to forest and farm management, especially addressing communities, indigenous peoples and family farmers. FAO will strengthen the capacity of forest and farm producer organizations and their members to develop viable businesses, to access markets and finance and improve their advocacy and governance skills. Special attention will be given to the improvement of wood energy value chains, as wood energy continues to be the primary source of energy for cooking and other purposes in many developing countries, particularly in Africa. Many forest dependent people are subject to poverty, vulnerability, marginalization and social exclusion, with limited opportunities for livelihood improvement. FAO will increasingly explore the use of social protection measures in forestry to address these issues.

33. An effective contribution of forestry to the 2030 agenda will not be possible without improving **forest governance** (SO2, SO4) including policy, legal and institutional frameworks. FAO will continue to provide policy assistance to countries as well as supporting key countries on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). More than ever, this work will be linked to the country support to REDD+ to help countries comply with required safeguards.

34. FAO will continue to support to the statutory bodies relating to forestry, as well as the development and publication of the *State of the World's Forests*, co-organizing the XV World Forestry Congress in 2021 and continued support to and leadership of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

35. FAO will continue to mainstream work addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in its work on forestry contributing to the Strategic Objectives, building on the achievements set out in paragraph 13bis above and document COFO/2016/7.5 Annex III.

V. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

36. The Committee may wish to consider to:
- take note and provide any comments on the developments and trends identified with respect to the forestry sector;
 - Provide guidance on the main priorities for FAO's work in forestry to be taken into account in the review of the Strategic Framework and the preparation of the Medium Term Plan 2018-21.

Annex 1: Main components of FAO's Strategic Framework

FAO's vision

A world free of hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

Three Global Goals of Members:

- eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, progressively ensuring a world in which people at all times have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life;
- elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all, with increased food production, enhanced rural development and sustainable livelihoods; and
- sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Strategic Objectives

1. Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
2. Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner
3. Reduce rural poverty
4. Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems
5. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

Additional Objective

6. Technical quality, knowledge and services

Cross-cutting themes

Gender

Governance

Nutrition

Climate Change

Core Functions

1. Facilitate and support countries in the development and implementation of normative and standard-setting instruments, such as international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and others
2. Assemble, analyse, monitor and improve access to data and information, in areas related to FAO's mandate

3. Facilitate, promote and support policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels
4. Advise and support capacity development at country and regional level to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes
5. Advise and support activities that assemble, disseminate and improve the uptake of knowledge, technologies and good practices in the areas of FAO's mandate
6. Facilitate partnerships for food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector
7. Advocate and communicate at national, regional and global levels, in areas of FAO's mandate

Functional Objectives

Outreach

Information Technology

FAO Governance, oversight and direction

Efficient and effective administration